

Eurasian Wigeon

6 Mar 1991

Riverton A., Fremont Co., IA

*S. Dinsmore, *E. Armstrong

IBL 61:90, 62:70, Dinsmore 1992

Record Number: 91-03

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATIONS:

Stephen J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010

Eugene Armstrong, Box 95, Booneville, IA 50038

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 61:90

Records Committee: IBL 62:70

Dinsmore, S. J. 1992. Eurasian Wigeon at Riverton Wildlife Area. IBL 62:83

VOTE: 7-A-D

A-D, S. Dinsmore does a good job of detailing a male Eurasian Wigeon. The light was good and distance not great. Really not a hard bird to identify.

A-D, Good description and sighting fits pattern of vagrancy for this species in the Midwest.

A-D, Male Eurasian Wigeon is ID'd by 1) buff crown mark. 2) deep cinnamon face. 3) light rufous breast.

A-D, Good description, and established vagrancy in the Midwest.

A-D, All necessary field marks noted to identify the male of this species. This is becoming a more common vagrant in the midwest in recent years.

A-D, Good details and documentations conclusively determine this bird as Eurasian Wigeon.

Orchard Oriole: 8 in the same tree with 7 Northern Orioles in Lee Co. points to a migration fallout on 25 Apr (RIC) [2nd earliest]. Another peak was 6 on 20 May at Rock Creek S.P. (MPr).

Purple Finch: The last were 3 on 9 May at a Fairfield feeder (DCP).

House Finch: Nesting was reported from Cass Co. on 10 Apr (MAP) and Boone Co. on 1 May (SRL).

White-winged Crossbill: A male visited a feeder n. of Montrose from 23 Feb to 9 Mar (Margaret Bailey fide JLF).

Common Redpoll: 8-10 were at a feeder near Plymouth on 10 Mar (CN).

Pine Siskin: Still at feeders were 25 in Davenport on 7 May (PCP) and 11 in Mason City on 8 May (RG).

Evening Grosbeak: A female appeared briefly at a Marshalltown feeder on 17 Apr (Betty Savage fide MPr).

CONTRIBUTORS

(* = documentation only)

Carol A. Alexander (CAA), Fairfield; Pam Allen (PA), West Des Moines; Reid Allen (RA), West Des Moines; *David Arbour (DA), Boone; Eugene Armstrong (EuA), Booneville; Eloise Armstrong (EIA), Booneville; Matt Bauman (MB), Iowa Falls; Carl J. Bendorf (CJB), Iowa City; Dick Bierman (DBi), Cherokee; *Dan Borchardt (DBo), Mason City; Gordon J. Brand (GJB), Newton; Marion M. Brewer (MMB), Cherokee; Dennis Carter (DeC), Decorah; Robert I. Cecil (RIC), Des Moines; Raymond L. Cummins (RLC), Centerville; David L. Dankert (DLD), Cedar Rapids; James J. Dinsmore (JJD), Ames; Stephen J. Dinsmore (SJD), Raleigh, NC; Dan C. Dorrance (DCD), Davenport; Jim Durbin (JD), Marion; Bery Engebretsen (BE), Des Moines; Peter Ernzen (PE), Ida Grove; *Nancy Exline (NE), Des Moines; James L. Fuller (JLF), Iowa City; Rita Goranson (RG), Mason City; Paul Hertzell (PH), Ames; Laura S. Jackson (LSJ), Boone; *Maridel Jackson (MJ), Ankeny; Ann M. Johnson (AMJ), Norwalk; Matthew C. Kenne (MCK), Algona; Thomas H. Kent (THK), Iowa City; Sharron R. Laub (SRL), Rippey; *Barb Miller (BMi), Des Moines; *Kathy A. Moye (KAM), Waterloo; Francis L. Moore (FLM), Waterloo; Curt Nelson (CN), Mason City; *Bill Ohde (BO), Columbus Junction; Babs K. Padelford (BKP), Bellevue, NE; Loren J. Padelford (LJP), Bellevue, NE; Marietta A. Petersen (MAP), Walnut; Peter C. Petersen (PCP), Davenport; D. Randall Pinkston (DRP), Iowa City; *Don Poggensee (DP), Ida Grove; Diane C. Porter (DCP), Fairfield; Beth Proescholdt (BPr), Liscomb; Mark Proescholdt (MPr), Liscomb; *B. J. Rose (BJR), Omaha; Douglas L. Rose (DLR), Glenwood; *James E. Scheib (JES), Iowa City; Lee A. Schoenewe (LAS), Spencer; Jim Sinclair (JSi), Indianola; *Mike Stegmann (MS), Garwin; Dale A. Stone (DAS), Lake City; Jan L. Walter (JLW), Mason City; *Harold W. White (HWW), Estherville; Helen Yoder (HY), Wellman; and Hank Zaletel, (HZ), Colo.

COMMENT

Swans are not only a difficult identification problem, particularly in first-year plumage, but they also present a problem of origin. Observers should provide as much detail as possible that might help in deciding whether a bird is wild. The presence of tags is obviously useful. Sometimes it is possible to tell whether Trumpeter Swans are from the Minnesota population, which are still considered introduced and not established in the wild, or from the South Dakota population, which are now considered wild. Jim Dinsmore described an untagged first-year bird in NW Iowa. Data such as this will be useful in determining when we should change the status of Trumpeter Swan from extirpated to regular. A Mute Swan was present

in NW Iowa through the end of the period. This would be a late date for a winter resident or migrant. In addition to knowing the plumage of the bird, it would be useful to know about tags, habitat, and whether it remained through the summer. Mute Swans are widely kept in captivity, so one could also ask people in the vicinity if they know where the bird came from. Obviously, we will not be able to determine the origin of every bird, but gathering information may lead to some useful conclusions.

Another continuing problem is what to do with birds reported at very unusual dates with no or fragmentary information. Is one field mark or sound identification enough to establish a record early date? Ideally, observers would be aware of unusual dates and provide full documentation. Should an undocumented early or late sighting be put into the record book while another is rejected based on a full documentation that indicates a suboptimal view? To what extent should the field reports editors try to judge the ability and experience of an observer? A full documentation usually eliminates these problems. In this report, we have not cited several record dates because of these problems. We have done this based on unusualness, difficulty of identification, and how well the observer is known to us. These decisions are always difficult and agonizing, but it seems better to abide by the principle, "If in doubt, leave it out" rather than include every record without question. One clear reason for leaving out an undocumented rare sighting is when the observer did not know that the bird or date were unusual.

We received about the same amount of data as in previous years. The list of observers appears to grow longer. We thank every one for their input. We were not able to enter all of the data for reports received after June 6th.

211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246, 6 Longview Knoll, RR #6, Iowa City, IA 52240, and 845 Cypress Ct., Iowa City, IA 52245

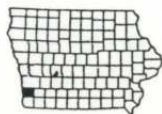
EURASIAN WIGEON AT RIVERTON WILDLIFE AREA

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE

At 10:35 a.m. on 6 March 1991 I saw a male Eurasian Wigeon at Riverton Wildlife Area in Fremont County. The bird was with a mixed flock of ducks, mostly Green-winged Teal. Only a few American Wigeon were present. The bird was the same size and shape as nearby American Wigeon. The head and neck were rufous-brown, much like the color of the head of a Redhead. The cap was a brighter buff color. The breast was also a light rufous color, paler than the head. The stubby bill was bluish-gray. The mantle, wings, and flanks were pale gray. The rump and undertail were black. In flight, the bird showed a large white patch on the secondary coverts and a dark-green speculum. The bird was not pinioned or banded, suggesting that it was of wild rather than captive origin.

I watched the bird until 11:05 a.m., when I went to notify other birders. I returned at 12:05 p.m. with Ross Silcock, and we watched the bird until almost 12:30 p.m. Other birders were able to locate the bird later in the afternoon, but it was not seen on subsequent days. This is the fourth record of a Eurasian Wigeon in Iowa. Like two previous Iowa records, the bird showed up in spring and in the company of American Wigeon.

2600 Glen Burnie, Raleigh, NC 27607



91-03

DOCUMENTATION FORM

SPECIES: Eurasian Wigeon

NUMBER: 1 male

DATE: 6 Mar 1991

TIME: 10:35-11:05 a.m., 12:05-12:25 p.m., and 4:40-5:22 p.m.

LOCATION: Riverton W.A., Fremont Co., IA

OBSERVER: Stephen J. Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA 50010

OTHER OBSERVERS: Ross Silcock, Eugene & Eloise Armstrong

DESCRIPTION OF BIRD(S): Throughout the observation period, the bird associated with a large flock of teal, mostly Green-winged Teal. However, the bird did spend quite a bit of time off by itself. The bird was the same size as several nearby American Wigeon, which it also resembled in general body shape. The head and neck were rufous-brown, much like the color of a Redhead. The cap was creamy buff color. The breast was also a lighter rufous color than the head. The bill was bluish-gray and much stubbier than the bill of a Blue-winged Teal. The mantle, wings, and flanks were light gray. In flight, the speculum was green and there was a large white patch on the upperwing coverts. The rump and undertail were black. I could detect no signs of recent captivity(i.e. pinioning, leg bands, etc.).

SIMILAR SPECIES AND HOW ELIMINATED: The combination of reddish head with buffy crown, gray mantle and flanks, black rump and undertail, and stubby, bluish-gray bill eliminates other waterfowl.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT AND VIEWING CONDITIONS: Excellent with a partly cloudy sky. Estimated viewing distance was 150 yards during initial observation and 200-250 yards during later observations. I used a Bushnell 20-45x spotting scope.

REFERENCES CONSULTED: NGS Field Guide to the Birds of North America

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH SPECIES: I have seen several Eurasian Wigeon in Massachusetts, as well as small numbers in Great Britain.

HOW LONG BEFORE FIELD NOTES WRITTEN: written during initial observation

HOW LONG BEFORE THIS FORM COMPLETED: 2 days

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD. 91-03

1. Species European Widgeon 2. Number: 1 male
3. Location Prairie Wildlife Unit
4. Date: March 6 - 1991 5. Time Bird seen: 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM

6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):

A male Widgeon with buff colored crown stripe
head was the bright color of a male Cinnamon teal
Beak appeared lighter in color over back and sides than American
other marks appeared to match American
Widgeon was bright Cinnamon shade to lighter color on chest

7. Description of voice, if heard:

8. Description of behavior:

9. Habitat - general: Wedge & water
specific:

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:

American Widgeon many markings like same but head
and upper neck were red Crown stripe was not white but buff

11. Distance (how measured)?

300 yd estimated

12. Optical equipment:

Hova 20-60

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

Looking north, light behind us, some heat shimmer but still good

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

None like this

15. Other observers:

None by Steve? Cinnamon seen by R. Sidoti; P. Louise Armstrong

16. Did the others agree with your identification?

Yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

None needed Bird was easily identified

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?

Done

Eugene Armstrong P. Louise Armstrong Address: Booneville, Iowa
Signature

Date: March 6 - 1991 City, State: Box 95 50038