

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck  
24 Oct 1993

Record Number: 93-21  
Classification: A-S

Blue Lake, Monona Co., IA

\*Hulsebus, \*J. Dinsmore

P-0409, ISU spec, IBL 64:11, 68; 65:83

#### DOCUMENTATIONS

T. J. Hulsebus, 2114 7th Ave. North, Denison, IA  
Jim Dinsmore [2/23/94, 8/19/94]

#### PHOTOGRAPHS

T. J. Hulsebus, P-0409

#### SPECIMEN

Iowa State Univ. #2611

#### REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 64:11

Records Committee: IBL 64:68; 65:83

VOTE: 2 A-S, 4 A-E, 1 holding vote

A-E, Being one of the most common ducks raised in captivity and no records of nesting within many hundred miles I would treat all records as A-E until more records are reported or until I see other members comments I would vote with most other states.

A-E, When a bird shows feather wear, has a band, or toes clipped, we can easily assume this is an escaped bird. Is the absence of the same reason enough to assume the bird is a genuine vagrant? Since this duck regularly feeds in corn and sorghum fields, an escaped bird could probably survive in the wild in our region for a long period of time. I also find it difficult, if not impossible, to contemplate establishing a "pattern of vagrancy" for a species for which we have no idea which records represent true vagrants. Evidently, the species is expanding northward in Texas (American Birds 45:5, 46:5). Thus spring birds could be migrational overshoots, while fall birds could be post-breeding wanderers. I don't know the answer to this problem. I would suggest that when the committee meets, we try to establish some guidelines so that the committee votes in a consistent manner. This was possibly a wild bird but for now, I'll remain conservative on this species. {The Nebraska record was considered a wild bird, primarily for two reasons. 1) It showed no sign of captivity such as bands, feather wear, etc. 2) It was shot almost directly north of the Cheyenne Bottoms region where southern vagrants are regularly found. Whether it actually was a wild bird is anybody's guess.}

--, I am seeking information on the status of this as a cage bird in the Midwest, and have not yet received the information. I would like to withhold this vote.

A-S, I think the sharp nails and excellent plumage condition is supportive of a wild bird. Distributional information supports extralimital sightings north of its Texas range. It would be interesting to no if the duck flared at the sight of the hunter as he readied to shoot?

A-E, My experience in both Texas and Arizona has been that these birds are expanding their range somewhat northward and, consequently, the likelihood of vagrancy may be increasing. If this were a bird uncommon in waterfowl collections, it would be easier to determine the vagrancy pattern. I think we need to be careful to not be seduced into contributing to erroneous conclusions by committees such as ours who essentially determine that pattern based on inexact data. By the same token, I feel it is important to maintain as much detail as possible because if the situation changes in the next few years, we no doubt should re-evaluate our conclusions on individual records. Perhaps some research into this species existence in mid-west breeders' collections is in order.

A-S, Vagrancy pattern not as strong as I would like to see (vs. escapees). Inclined to treat this species as other states do. Sightings have been in "wild" situations.

A-E, I recommend we keep this species at A-E for the present. I spoke with a former waterfowl breeder and was told that Black-bellied Tree (Whistling) Ducks were kept with some frequency in captivity in Iowa and the immediately surrounding states. I am going to work with this individual some more and see what I can find about the presence of this and other species of waterfowl in

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captivity in this part of the country.

REVOTE (at meeting, 14 Aug 1994): 7 A-S



Black-bellied Whistlin P-0456  
Blue Lake, Monona Co., IA  
24 Oct 1993 Terry J. Hulsebus

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Black-bellied Whistlin P-0457  
Big M., Butler Co., IA  
1 Nov 1993 T. H. Kent

94-AA

Black-bellied Whistlin P-0456  
Blue Lake, Monona Co., IA  
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Black-bellied Whistlin P-0457  
Big M., Butler Co., IA  
1 Nov 1993 T. H. Kent

94-AA

Notes on Black-bellied Whistling Duck

shot by Terry Hulsebus of Denison, IA (2114 7th Avenue North)  
Hulsebus has training in ornithology at NW Missouri State (with Dave Easterla), knows his birds well, and knew what the bird was when he shot it.

shot at Blue Lake near Onawa on 24 October 1993  
bird was flying along and was heard calling before shot  
not seen with any other birds when flying  
No sign of bands or marks on bird, nails are sharp, no obvious wear to wing or tail feathers, no smell to bird

See photos but the identity of the bird is not a problem

I got the bird on 15 November and typed these notes on 19 November from the written notes I took when I talked to Hulsebus and from a letter from him.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jim Denison". The signature is written in dark ink and is located in the lower-left quadrant of the page.

93-21

Male Black-bellied Whistling Duck  
Dendrocygna autumnalis  
taken October 24, 1993  
Blue Lake, Iowa 2 mi. W, 1 mi. So.  
Onawa, Monona Co., Iowa  
taken by Terry J. Hulsebus  
Denison, Iowa

This duck was flying by itself when shot and whistled audibly twice while circling a flooded woods before the shot was taken. The hunter suspected the identity of the duck while in flight.

*T. J. Hulsebus*

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*Black-bellied Whistling Duck*