

King Eider

10 Nov 1894

Mississippi R. opposite Keokuk, Keokuk Co., IA

W. E. Praeger

DuMont 1933, UI #25003, P-0050; Praeger 1895,1925,Anderson 1907,IBL61:84

Record Number: 89-AJ

Classification: NA

SPECIMEN

University of Iowa #25003

PHOTOGRAPH

T. H. Kent, P-0050

REFERENCES

Praeger, W. E. 1895. Two records from Keokuk Iowa. Iowa Ornithologist 1:52.

Praeger, W. E. 1895. Two records from Keokuk Iowa. Auk 12:85-86.

Praeger, W. E. 1925. The birds of the Des Moines Rapids. Auk 42:563-577. p 575.

Anderson 1907

Bent, A. C. 1925. Life Histories of North American Waterfowl Part II. Washington, D.C.: U.S. National Museum Bull. 130 p 119.

DuMont 1933

Musgrove, J. W., and M. R. Musgrove. 1943. Waterfowl in Iowa. Des Moines: State Conservation Commission. p 109.

Newlon, M. C, and T. H. Kent. 1981. Fifth record of King Eider in Iowa. IBL 51:126-129.

Records Committee: IBL 61:84

VOTE: 3 A-S, 3 NA

NA. Not enough to evaluate in material provided. Would revote if I can see photos or specimen.

NA. This bird was/is correctly identified. However, a bird "shot opposite the city" of Keokuk does not necessarily place it in Iowa.

A-S. I assume specimen is still available.

NA. I have examined and photographed the specimen. The feathers extend well down the culmen but not to the nostrils on the sides. It is an immature bird, presumably male. Thirty years after the sighting, Praeger says, "...shot opposite the city." Earlier he reported junco shot on the Illinois side as being from Keokuk. I think this is best considered an Illinois record.

A-S. Evidence clearly links U of I specimen with its provenance.

REVOTE AT MEETING: 7 NA



King Eider
Lee Co.

10 Nov 1894 collected by Wm E.

P-0050

89-AJ

89-aj King Eider; 10 Nov 1894; Mississippi R. opposite Keokuk, Keokuk Co., IA;
W. E. Praeger; DuMont 1933, UI #25003 P-0050.

Praeger, W. E. 1895. Two records from Keokuk Iowa. Iowa Ornithologist. 1:52.

TWO RECORDS FROM KEOKUK,
IOWA.— On the 16th of December 1892, I shot a specimen of *Junco hyemalis shufeldti* on the Illinois shore, just opposite the city. It was with several other Juncos, all, as far as I could tell, of the common variety.

On the 10th of November, 1894, a boy brought me a *Somateria spectabilis* that he had shot on the Mississippi. It was a male in brown plumage, but showing a few white and black feathers. The stomach contained nothing but fine quartz gravel.—Wm. E. Praeger, Keokuk, Iowa.—Auk.

Praeger, W. E. 1895. Two records from Keokuk Iowa. Auk 12:85-86.

On the 10th of November, 1894, a boy brought me a *Somateria spectabilis* that he had shot on the Mississippi. It was a male in brown plumage, but showing a few white and black feathers. The stomach contained nothing but fine quartz gravel.—Wm. E. PRAEGER, Keokuk Iowa.

Praeger, W. E. 1925. The birds of the Des Moines Rapids. Auk 42:563-577. p 575.

***Somateria spectabilis*.** KING EIDER.—On November 10, 1894 I happened to meet a boy who was proudly carrying a Duck he had shot opposite the city. It was a young male King Eider. The skin is now in the museum of the University of Iowa.

Anderson, R. M. 1907. The birds of Iowa. Proc. Davenport Acad. Sci. 11:125-417. p 575.

Subgenus ERITONETTA Coues.

51. (162). *Somateria spectabilis* (Linn.). King Eider.

Like the preceding, the King Eider is an Arctic species and there is only one record of its occurrence in Iowa.

Wm. E. Praeger, Keokuk, Iowa: "On the 18th of November, 1894, a boy brought me a *Somateria spectabilis* that he had shot on the Mississippi. It was a male in brown plumage, but showing a few black and white feathers. The stomach contained nothing but fine quartz gravel." (Iowa Orn., i, 2, 1895, 52. Reprinted from The Auk). E. S. Currier also states there is a "male in Mr. Praeger's collection, killed on Des Moines Rapids" (Lee county).

89-aj King Eider; 10 Nov 1894; Mississippi R. opposite Keokuk, Keokuk Co., IA;
W. E. Praeger; DuMont 1933, UI #25003 P-0050.

Bent, A. C. 1925. Life Histories of North American Waterfowl Part II.
Washington, D.C.: U.S. National Museum Bull. 130. p 119.

Casual records.—Has wandered south on the Atlantic coast to Georgia (Ossabaw Island, December 1, 1904, St. Catherine Island, December 3, 1904, and Brunswick, April 25 and May 5, 1890), on the Pacific coast to central California (San Francisco, winter of 1879-80), and in the interior to Alberta (Calgary, November 4, 1894), and to Iowa (Keokuk, November 18, 1894).

DuMont, P. A. 1933. A Revised List of the Birds of Iowa. Iowa City: University of Iowa Studies in Natural History, vol. 14, no. 5. p 41.

Somateria spectabilis (Linnaeus). King Eider

Accidental. Anderson (1907) says: "Wm. E. Praeger, Keokuk, Iowa: 'On the 18th of November, 1894, a boy brought me a *Somateria spectabilis* that he had shot on the Mississippi. It was a male in brown plumage, but showing a few black and white feathers. The stomach contained nothing but fine quartz gravel' (Iowa Orn., i, 2, 1895, 52. Reprinted from the Auk)." The specimen, referred to above, is No. 25003, in the collection of the University of Iowa Museum. However, the date on the label, in Praeger's hand-writing, reads, Nov. 10, 1894, and is so recorded in the Auk, XII, p. 86.

Musgrove, J. W., and M. R. Musgrove. 1943. Waterfowl in Iowa. Des Moines: State Conservation Commission. p 109.

KING EIDER, 162 *Somateria spectabilis* (LINNAEUS). DuMont in *Birds of Iowa* lists a specimen taken in November, 1894, at Keokuk, Iowa, now in the collection of the State University of Iowa.

starting in October 1970 at Ingham Lake, Emmet County (Musgrove and Musgrove 1977). This individual was seen by several Iowa Conservation Commission personnel and probably was correctly identified but no photographs were taken.

Literature cited

Kent, T. H. 1981. Field reports. *Iowa Bird Life* 51:24-34.



Brant Mount
Sloane, Iowa — July 27, 1981

- Kleen, V. M. 1981. Middlewestern prairie region. *Am. Birds* 35:187-191.
Musgrove, J. W., and M. R. Musgrove. 1977. *Waterfowl in Iowa*. Fifth edition. State Conservation Commission, Des Moines. 130 p.
Palmer, R. S. 1976. *Handbook of North American Birds*. Vol. 2. Yale Univ. Press, New Haven. 521 p.
JAMES J. DINSMORE, STEPHEN DINSMORE, and MARK DINSMORE, 4024 Arkansas Drive, Ames, Ia. 50010.

Fifth Record of the King Eider for Iowa — A previously-undescribed specimen of the King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*) exists in the collection of the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History and was recently examined by the authors. The specimen (SUI no. 33585), a female or immature, was collected on 8 November 1970, by Mr. Steven Slack, at Lake Odessa, Louisa Co., Iowa, and was brought by him to the museum for identification. It represents the fourth specimen and fifth record of this species for the state. The previous records are:

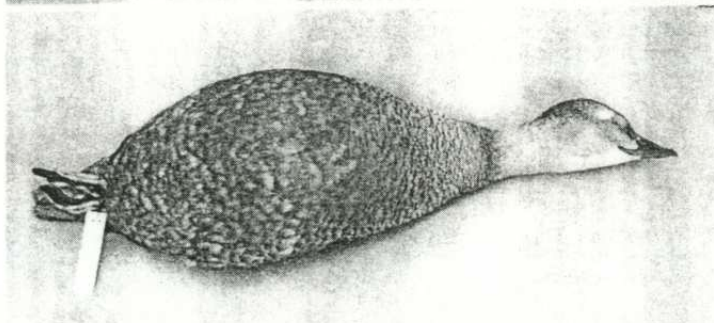
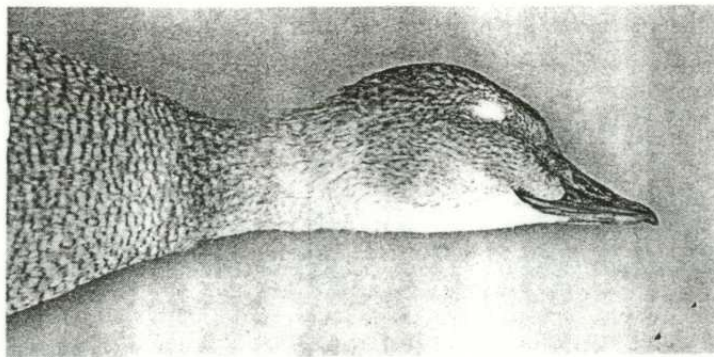
1. An immature male shot on the Mississippi River at Keokuk, 10 November 1894 (Praeger, 1895), specimen no. 25003 in the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History. (There are several later references to this record that differ either as to place or date: Anderson (1907); Praeger (1925); Bent (1925). These are presumably erroneous.)

2. Another immature male, shot on 18 November 1950 on the Mississippi River opposite New Boston, Illinois (Morrissey, 1951). The specimen is in the Putnam Museum, Davenport.

3. A sight record from Bellevue, Jackson Co., Iowa, on 20 December 1964 (IBL 35:24, 1965). (Brown (1971) and Musgrove (1977), apparently in error, list this record for 1954.)

4. An immature shot on Ingham Lake near Wallingford, Emmet Co., Iowa, on 8 November 1971 (Petersen, 1972).

In the north-central United States the King Eider is a fairly frequent vagrant. There are about thirty records for the states of Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan (Musgrove, 1977; Brown, 1971; DuMont, 1933; Bohlen, et al., 1979; Green and Janssen, 1975; Petersen and Fawks, 1977; *American Birds* 1973-1980). The records extend from October to March, with a single May record from northern Minnesota, but more than two-thirds of the records are from November and December. Most are from the Great Lakes, the major rivers, or other large bodies of water. The majority of the birds are immatures. There are no records of this species from Missouri, Oklahoma, or South Dakota, and only a single record from Kansas (Easterla and Anderson, 1967; Whitney et al., 1978; Johnston, 1965, Sutton, 1967), suggesting that these birds are arriving from the



Female or immature King Eider. University of Iowa specimen No. 33585.
Photo by T. H. Kent

north and continuing on eastward rather than southward.

The source of the King Eiders seen in the north-central states is not certainly known. King Eiders breed on tundra from the northwest coastal plain of Alaska to the southwest shore of Hudson Bay, throughout the Canadian arctic archipelago, and on the eastern and western coasts of Greenland (Palmer, 1976; Bellrose, 1976). Adults and juveniles differ in their migration timetables: adults migrate in late summer to traditional moulting grounds and move to their wintering areas only in late fall; juveniles do not undergo a moult migration but migrate directly to the wintering areas. Both adults and juveniles apparently linger in the arctic until forced to move south by the freezing of the sea. Birds from the western arctic migrate along the coast and winter off Alaska and the Aleutian islands; birds from the eastern arctic migrate, mostly over water, to western Greenland and then south to the coasts of Canada and the extreme northeastern United States. Neither migration route seems likely to produce vagrancy to the north-central United States. Palmer (1976) speculates that small numbers of birds, lingering late in open leads in the ice, may be forced by the onset of winter to migrate directly south instead of taking the traditional coastal routes. Since juveniles tend to remain further north than adults in the fall, this would explain their more frequent occurrence as vagrants.

We thank Dr. George Schrimper, Curator of the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History, for access to the specimen.

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Second Annual Midwinter Eagle Count, 2 - 20 January 1980, with Target Count Dates 11 & 12, 1980 — This is the 21st Annual Count of the Eagles on the Mississippi River and its tributaries, with some Wildlife Refuges away from the river. This year Carl Becker, Endangered Species Board of the Illinois Department of Conservation, was the state's coordinator. Elton Fawks, Bald Eagle Research, had charge of the Mississippi River counts. The National Wildlife Federation funded his part. Michael Pramstaller of the Raptor Information Center had charge of the overall count.

Eagles found in Illinois and along the bordering Mississippi follows:

Location	Adults	Immatures	Total	Plus Unknown Eagles
Mississippi River	532	194	726	46
Illinois River	314	141	455	5
Kankakee River	34	11	45	(New for count)
River totals	880	346	1226	plus 51
Ill. Wildlife Refuges	33	57	90	plus 6
Misc. from state	18	3	21	
Percentage	931	406	1337	plus 57
	(70)	(30)		
Additional river totals	54	11	65	
Wisconsin, Minnesota	7	5	12	
Kentucky to Hickman	992	422	1414	
		(30)		
Percentage	(70)			
Kentucky away from river	34	30	64	
Tennessee from river	144	128	272	
Grand totals	1170	580	1750	plus 57 for 1807
Percentage	(67)	(33)		

Percentages increase away from the Mississippi each year.

1979 totals were 1257 568 1824 plus 41 total 1866
 Due to the very limited distribution of Golden Eagles along the Mississippi most of the unknown eagles would be Bald Eagles. On the river above Illinois figures were used that was closest to the target date. This depressed the totals as larger numbers were counted before and after the dates used. All of the figures above were from the dates of 7-13, 1980. The upper river figures used was for a limited portion of the river. - ELTON FAWKS, 510 Island Ave., East Moline, Ill. 61244.

New late nesting records for the Field Sparrow and Mourning Dove in Iowa — A Field Sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*) nest containing two eggs was found 22 August 1981 while Christyna Laubach and the author were conducting a nest survey of the Sheeder Prairie Preserve located 8 km west and 1.6 km north of Guthrie Center, Guthrie County, Iowa. The nest was situated approximately 0.75 m above the ground in the crotch of a small American plum (*Prunus americana*) tree near the

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