

Fulvous Whistling-Duck
17 Jul 1994
Goose L., Clinton Co., IA
*S. Dinsmore, *****
IBL 64:107, 65:11, 81

Record Number: 94-22
Classification: A-O

DOCUMENTATIONS

Stephen J. Dinsmore (13 Jul), 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames 50014 [3 Nov 1994*]
Susan Barrell Grove (17 Jul), 2600 Glen Burnie Dr., Raleigh, NC 27607
Peter C. Petersen (18 Jul), 235 McClellan Blvd., Davenport 52803
Mark Proescholdt (20 Jul), Box 65, Liscomb 50148
Beth Proescholdt (20 Jul), Liscomb 50148
Jim Fuller (22 Jul), 6 Longview Knoll NE, Iowa City 52240
Thomas H. Kent (22 Jul), 211 Richards St., Iowa City 52246
Pam/Reid Allen (23 Jul), 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines 50265
Jeff Dankert (23 Jul), 4402 Markle Rd. #7, La Crosse, WI 54601

PHOTOGRAPHS

Reid Allen, 23 July, P-0420

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 64:107; 65:11
Records Committee: IBL 65:81

VOTE: 2 A-P, 4 A-O, 1 A-O/A-P

A-O, Identification not in question. In favor of wild bird is lack of bands, toe markings, etc., flight capability, and general wariness cited by several observers. I am influenced, however, by lack of any definite pattern of vagrancy as shown by uniform sighting dates in midwest (Kent, pers. comm.) and the knowledge that this species is commonly kept in captivity in Iowa (F. Moore, pers. comm.). This appears to be exactly the type of sighting for which category A-O is perfect. The origin really is "unknown."

A-O, Although convincingly identified and photographed, vagrancy of wild birds to upper Midwest is not, and perhaps will never be confirmed. That unmarked birds are frequently kept in captivity clouds this record.

A-P, The identification of the bird is not in question. Although I don't know the basis for other states' evaluations of records of this species, I will vote for acceptance as a wild bird based on established vagrancy patterns across the country. Perhaps all of the extra-limital records are suspect, but at least we could be consistent with other states. Origins of waterfowl are certainly difficult to establish. We do, however, routinely accept records of well-described Eurasian Wigeons, another bird held in captivity. Where do we draw the line? It would appear to be based on vagrancy patterns. The bird in question did not have any indications that it was other than a wild bird. I seriously doubt the the captive population of Fulvous Whistling-Duck, even though it is considered common, approaches the population of this species in the wild. We can never be 100% positive of origin, but when I consider the odds of a captive bird escaping versus a wild, free-flying bird appearing in Iowa, the scales tip heavily in favor of wild.

A-O, No doubt about the identification. I was prepared to accept this species until Francis Moore presented preliminary research showing the frequency of captive birds. Other states seem to accept it. Unfortunately the vagrancy pattern does not help much, i.e., there is no pattern, except for lack of records in the northern Great Plains. I would be willing to reopen the discussion at any time.

A-O, I have no doubt that this bird was a Fulvous Whistling-Duck. I am very concerned about the origin of this bird. Lack of a band on the legs and lack of other signs of captivity do not necessarily make this a wild bird. I have seen up to 12 to 15 of this species in a fully enclosed, caged pond that did not have any bands and could easily fly around inside the cage with[out?] hitting its wings, tail or body on the caging material. Two of the Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were walking around outside the cage and as I watched flew a short distance with no problem at all. The

sight record pattern for this species also rules out a wild bird origin as shown at our recent meeting. I went to an exotic bird/animal swap meet and saw a pair of this species for sale along with many other species of waterfowl. They did not show feather wear nor did they have bands on their legs. I am going to go to another of these shows/sales later in September and see if there is any reason to believe that any Fulvous Whistling-Ducks are from other than a waterfowl breeder.

A-O, Unfortunately, origin of this bird is questionable. Most vagrant records are in fall, with a small peak of occurrence in spring. Mid-July could be considered a fall occurrence, however. Data from surrounding states shows a "baseline" of a few reports for every month, an indicator of escaped birds year round, while the spring and fall peaks strongly suggest occurrence of wild vagrants as well. This bird showed no signs of captivity, although the fact that it was alone suggests an escape rather than a wild bird, the latter usually accompanied by others. I vote A-O only because of uncertainty over origin, and could be persuaded otherwise. This report requires discussion and perhaps a wait until it can be determined whether other vagrants occurred this summer, establishing a highly suggestive pattern of vagrancy. ... [later after viewing photos], A-P, Neck length and visible white area in wing sufficient to eliminate Cinnamon Teal in photo.



Fulvous Whistling-Duck P-0420
Goose L., Clinton Co., IA
23 Jul 1994 Reid I. Allen

94-22

>002 19408 14444-01AU 67%

Fulvous Whistling-Duck P-0420
Goose L., Clinton Co., IA
23 Jul 1994 Reid I. Allen

94-22

>010 19408 14444-02AU 67%

94-22

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species: Fulvous Whistling-Duck

Number: 1, probably a female

Location: Goose Lake, Clinton Co., IA

Habitat: shallow marsh

Date: 17 July 1994

Time: 1:30-2:10 p.m.

Observer: Stephen J. Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA 50014

Others who saw bird: Susan B. Grove, m.ob.

Description of bird(s): We arrived at Goose Lake at 1:30 p.m. and walked east on the dike that crosses the middle of the marsh. Within a couple of minutes I spotted a bird which I immediately recognized as a Fulvous Whistling-Duck. The bird was resting on a muskrat hut on the east side of the marsh, south of the dike. We watched the bird for 25 minutes as it rested on the hut. It took flight once, moving about 50 feet to another muskrat hut. The bird remained standing there for the duration of the observation. The most conspicuous features of the bird were the upright posture and generally tawny/buff appearance. The bird was the same size as nearby Mallards, though it had a distinctly erect posture, a longer, slimmer neck, and longer legs. The long legs appeared dark. The head shape was similar to that of a Northern Pintail. The bill was bluish-gray. The eye was dark. The underparts, including the belly, breast, and foreneck, as well as the cheek, were a rich tawny color. The crown, hindneck, mantle, and wings were dark-colored (nearly black). The dark mantle was marked by several lateral buffy stripes. The dark line on the hindneck was continuous, suggesting the bird was a female. There was a thin, white line along the flank, just below the wing. I saw the bird very briefly in flight, and noted the buffy upperwing coverts, narrow white band across the uppertail, and that the legs dangled beyond the tail tip. The underwing was also dark. The bird did not vocalize. I examined the bird carefully for bands or any other indication that the bird may have escaped from captivity recently, but found no evidence to support this (no bands, bird capable of flight and somewhat wary).

Similar species and how eliminated: The long legs, upright posture, and long neck were clearly features of a whistling-duck. The extensive rufous color on the belly, dark back edged with tawny, lack of any white on the upperwing, and dark bill and legs eliminate Black-bellied Whistling-Duck.

Viewing conditions and equipment: Viewing conditions were excellent with the sun behind us and mostly clear skies. Estimated viewing distance was as close as 75 m. I used 10x42 binoculars and a 20-60x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species: I saw several Fulvous Whistling-Ducks in coastal North Carolina during fall 1993. That is my only experience with this species.

References consulted: NGS Field Guide to the Birds of North America

How long before field notes made: written after initial observation

How long before this form completed: written 23 July 1994

94-22

Susan Barrell Grove
2600 Glen Burnie Drive
Raleigh, North Carolina 27607

July 27, 1994

Fulvous Whistling Duck at Goose Lake, Clinton County, Iowa

I was birding with Steve Dinsmore at Goose Lake on the afternoon of July 17, 1994 when we observed a Fulvous Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) sitting alone on top of a muskrat hut. It was located east of the dyke in the northern section of the lake and visible under good lighting conditions (clear skies and afternoon sun). We watched this bird with binoculars and spotting scope for approximately 40 minutes (1330-1410) from two different locations on the dyke. Steve was also able to take photographs.

My first view of the bird was through a 7x42 Zeiss binocular at a distance of about 150 meters. The bird appeared rather dark and conspicuously long legged. It was roughly the same size as the Mallards perched on adjacent huts but certainly larger than the Wood Ducks in the vicinity. When I then scrutinized the bird through Steve's Kowa TSN-4 spotting scope, it was very distinctive. Although the bird was in a resting position facing me I could see a number of features. The overall body color was a rich brown, contrasting with very dark wings. The head was also brown with a dark, flat crown but no other distinctive markings. The bird's neck was long and slim, more goose-like than duck-like. Also I could briefly discern an area of lighter feathers on the throat of the bird. In addition, the bill and legs appeared to be a bluish grey. I proceeded to cautiously move closer to where the bird was sitting, to about 75 meters, and confirmed the above characteristics with a better view. At that point the bird had moved about 10 meters to another nearby muskrat hut. Perched there in full view, it did not move much except to look around and preen as we continued to watch it.

Bird present 7-17-
Died 7-26
at least
order to work
from Missouri

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Fulvous Whistling-Duck 2. Number: one (1) 94-22

3. Location Goose Lake, 1 mi W town of Goose Lake, Clatsop Co.

4. Date: 18 July 1994 5. Time Bird seen: 4:53 to 4:55 C.S.T.

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): Large, fairly slow flying duck with rich tawny body, head + neck, dark (nearly black) wings, back + tail, obvious white rump band. Bill + legs grey. looked like top of head was also dark. In flight neck seemed long, head + legs were kept lower than body, wings very broad.

7. Description of voice, if heard: did not vocalize.

8. Description of behavior: few with head + legs slightly lower than body, legs projecting beyond tail. Bird circled near me once during flight.

9. Habitat - general: marshy lake
specific: flew from SE corner (landing in cattails in SW corner)

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain: Black-bellied Whistling Duck - body rusty, bill + legs red, wings black + white, quite different

11. Distance (how measured)? closest - 75m. (est.) 12. Optical equipment: 10x40 Zeiss binocs

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): sun just up, at 90° angle initially, then behind observer fully on bird, clear day

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

15. Other observers: Steve Dinsmore on 17 July, no one with me. Later mob.

16. Did the others agree with your identification? —

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: Steve Dinsmore

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description: Checked Master Guide on 17 July to re-familiarize myself with ID points. This did not influence the above description.

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 10 minutes.

Signature: Robert Petersen Address: 735 McClellan Blvd.

Date: 18-7-94 City, State: Lansing, Ia. 52803

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Fulvous Whistling - Duck How many? 1 94-22Location? Goose Lake - (Clinton County)Type of habitat? open marshland with muskrat housesWhen? date(s): July 20, 1994 time: 1:30 p.m. to 2:20 p.m.Who? your name and address: Mark Proescholdt, Box 65, Liscomb, Iowa 50148others with you: Beth Proescholdt, Russ Widner, Kelly McKayothers before or after you: Steve Dinsmore, Tim Schantz, Jim Fuller, Gerald White
others

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

We finally spotted this duck after much searching. It was on a small muskrat house all by itself. It was a tawny brown duck with a grayish bill. It had a complete, thick black stripe down the back of its tawny brown neck. It had a dark grayish upper back and had creamy-colored spots on its sides between its dark back and its tawny body. It had grayish legs, no leg bands, a dark eye, and a pointed crown on its head similar to the shape of a Ring-Necked Duck. It may have had a dark line through its dark eye. The duck had light or whitish on its very undertail tips. The uppertail tips were white with a small black stripe at the very tail tip. It had faint cream-colored markings under its chin on its neck. It was a lovely duck!

Kenn Kaufman states in Audubon's Master Guide to Birding that this duck "wanders sporadically, and singles or small flocks may turn up practically anywhere in North America."

Similar species and how eliminated:

I can't think of a similar species.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

Partly sunny at first - sun high and looking SSE. Then mostly cloudy. Good viewing. 180-200 yards estimated. 8x30 Binocs, 22x Scope, KOWA scope - 20x, 40x, 60x, and Kelly's scope, too.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

Have never seen one before.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Natl. Geog. Birds of N. America, Robbins' Birds of N. America, and R.T. Peterson's Guide to the Birds (east)

How long before field notes made? made while this form completed? July 22, 1994
viewing duck

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Fulvous Whistling Duck How many? 1 94-22Location? Goose Lake, Clinton CountyType of habitat? broad open marsh, southeast areaWhen? date(s): July 20, 1994 time: 1:30 to 2:20 PMWho? your name and address: Beth Proescholdt, Liscomb 50148others with you: Mark Proescholdt, Russ Widner, Kelly McKayothers before or after you: many observers

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

After waiting & watching for three hours (+ finally seeing a note from a birder of yesterday that it had been seen in SE. corner - not SW), suddenly Mark said, "I have it." And there it was - a tawny bird on a tawny grassy clump. It stood, it turned, it preened & gave us looks from all angles - remaining on clump the 50 minutes we watched. It was a large duck, larger than the Wood Ducks around with bright tawny head + undersides, dark wings seen when it preened + dark back. The dark brown thin line on hind neck was continuous, so probably a ♀, the long legs were dark grayish blue, as was bill. There were distinct white "slashes" on flanks, more or less parallel to folded wings + a white semi-circular line on rump. There was lighter color on throat, but I couldn't see

Similar species and how eliminated: ^(over) Black-bellied Whistling Duck also a long-legged duck but coloring entirely different - Wood Ducks in marsh similar color at first glance, but entirely different shape

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain: :

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

good light from side, approx 200-250 yards
 Nikon 8x30 binocs, 22x Bushnell scope, Kowa 20x, 40x scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

I have seen a Fulvous once in Florida
 References and persons consulted before writing description: consulted all our guides before seeing bird, so we knew what to look for.

How long before field notes made? at once this form completed? July 24, 1994

the faint white lines the others were seeing. Once when it "hunkered-down" it appeared as only a clump on top the tawny grassy spot, looking like additional weeds or debris.

This was a great look at a Fulvous Whistling Duck and a great bird for Iowa.

Kenn Kaufmann in Audubon Master Guide wrote: "wanders sporadically in singles or small flocks, may turn up practically anywhere in N. America". Since this bird had no band on either leg it surely could have been at Goose Lake as a result of natural movement, & not because it was an escape.

This was our second attempt to find it after Steve Dinsmore found it on July 17th,

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD

94-22

SPECIES: Fulvous Whistling Duck (Adult)

LOCATION: Goose Lake (Clinton County)

HABITAT: Shallow lake and marsh

DATE & TIME: 22 July, 1994 (8:25-40 AM)

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240

OTHERS: Discovered by Steve Dinsmore. With me was Tom Kent. Seen previously and after by many observers.

BACKGROUND: Steve Dinsmore had reported finding a bird of this species at this location on 17 July, and I looked for it later that day, as well as on 18, 20 July without success. On 22 July, it was located about a hundred yards south of the east end of the dike sitting on a clump of green vegetation, and near a group of Canada Geese. Tom Kent and I watched it through the telescope as it preened, and then slept.

DESCRIPTION: In size, the bird was only about half that of the Canada Geese nearby, but a little larger than a female Wood Duck that came swimming by. The general appearance was a long-necked and long-legged duck which was brown below and black above. The breast, belly, sides of head and neck were a rich reddish brown color, lighter on the front. The back was black with fine brownish scalloping across its sides, and just black in the center. The neck was quite long, and there was a black band which extended from the back up the rear of the neck, and came to a point and ended on the rear of the head. The eye was dark, and seemed to be set toward the top of the head. The bill was gray. There was a line of white scallops on the side just below the wing. The rump was white, and the tail was black. The legs were long and gray, and no bands could be seen. The bird did not fly nor stretch its wings. No vocalization was heard.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Female Mallard, Pintail, Wigeon, and Gadwall all have a mottled brown plumage, and do not have a black back or tail, and lack the obvious white scalloping under wing. The Ruddy Shelduck has a similar unmottled brown plumage, but which includes the back, and it has a very light head and a dark ring around the neck, and also lacks the white scalloping.

DISAGREE: No disagreement about identification.

VIEWING CONDITIONS & OPTICS: The bird was viewed with a KOWA TSN-4 telescope (20-60X) looking south. The day was mostly clear, and the sun was from the northeast. Viewing conditions were excellent.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: I have seen these birds, sometimes in large numbers, on four previous trips to Florida and Texas.

FIELD NOTES & REFERENCES: Field notes were written down in the car immediately after viewing, and this form was typed on 25 July. No field guides were used at the time of the observation, but the National Geographic guide was looked at afterwards.

94-22

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Species: Fulvous Whistling-Duck; **Number:** 1

Location: Goose Lake, Clinton Co., Iowa

Date: 22 July 1994; **Time:** 8:30 to 8:45 a.m.

Name and address: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246.

Others before/with/after: Found by Steve Dinsmore and seen by many; Jim Fuller with me.

Habitat and circumstances: natural marsh

Description of bird: The bird was sitting up on a small spit in the middle of the marsh. It turned around several times but did not fly. It looked smaller than a Mallard but was tiny compared to adjacent Canada Geese and about 25% larger than a Wood Duck that swam nearby. It appeared long-necked and long legged. The head shape reminded me of a Pintail. The bill was blue-gray -- darker toward the tip. The eye was dark and was high and forward on the head. The face, neck and underparts were tan (tawny), but somewhat lighter on the breast. The back and wing were dull black with faint barring. The white on the sides looked like two short white wing bars with some more white posteriorly between the wing and body. The upper tail was white with a broad black tip. The amount of white on the sides and whiteness of the tail suggest an adult, but I have no experience with juveniles.

Voice: I heard some funny sounds earlier from the other side of the dike. The only "whistling" ducks I have heard before were 500 Black-bellied all singing at once. There is no way I could determine whether the sound I heard came from this bird.

Similar species: The similar Lesser Whistling-Duck of southern Asia has a rufous rump and less white on the sides. After viewing the duck, I visited the Arrowhead Game Farm, which is 4 miles south of the lake. I was told that they import Ring-necked Pheasant, Bobwhite, and Chukars from Missouri and release them for hunters to shoot. They recover about 80%. Chukars have survived the winter and hatched young, but they do not survive, apparently due to disease. In the past they have raised Mallards, but no other ducks. I was given the name of Richard Schlecht, who lives near Miles, which is 5 miles east and 5 miles north of the lake (10853 580th Ave; 319-682-7712). He and his daughter may keep some exotic waterfowl. I called and talked to the daughter on 25 July. They keep only Pekin and Rouen (Mallard-like) ducks, and these are clipped and not able to fly. She knew of no others in the area that keep waterfowl.

Any one have reservations?: no

Light: looking south with sun in the east; **Distance:** estimated 100 yards; **Optics:** 20x scope.

Previous experience: I have seen this species in Delaware, Florida, and Texas.

References before/after viewing: none until time of final typing.

Time of notes: while viewing; **Final typing:** 32 hours.

DOCUMENTATION

94-22

SPECIES: **Fulvous Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*)**
HOW MANY: One (1)
LOCATION: Clinton County, Goose Lake
HABITAT: Marshy lake divided by dike running through middle of ponds.
DATE: July 23, 1994

TIME & LENGTH OF
OBSERVATION: 10:10 - 10:35 a.m. Bird observed standing and preening.

FIRST OBSERVATION
MADE BY: Steve Dinsmore, July 17, 1994

DOCUMENTER'S NAME &
ADDRESS: Pam & Reid Allen (photograph), 1601 Pleasant Street,
West Des Moines, IA 50265

OTHERS WHO SAW BIRD: Reid Allen
Eugene Armstrong, Eloise Armstrong

DESCRIPTION OF BIRD: This Mallard-sized duck was not easy to locate as it was nestled in amongst cattails. Also, the fact that it did not move around very much also made it difficult to at first locate. The bill was black, the face head and back sides of the neck, along with the breast, belly were a cinnamon, buffy orange color. There was a thin black stripe which ran from the hind neck down to the back of the bird. This stripe did not extend all the way over the top of the head of the bird. The eye was dark. There were some white streaking marks on the sides of the flanks of the bird. The wings and back were dark although there were some horizontal streaks across the back and wings which were the same coloring as the breast and belly of the bird. The underthroat and lower neck area appeared to be speckled greyish in coloration. The legs were a darkish dull color. This bird stood almost motionless for a long time, rather gooselike in its stance. Even as it preened it did not seem to move around very much. The bird was not observed flying.

SIMILAR SPECIES AND
HOW ELIMINATED: A juvenile Black-Bellied Whistling-Duck does not have the cinnamon, buffy orange coloration on the sides of the face. Also, the white flank streakings are not as prominent and the back is not dark. The belly of the Fulvous Whistling-Duck is all the same coloring.

VIEWING CONDITIONS: Partly cloudy sky, with periods of bright sun. Viewed from a distance of approximately 100 meters.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE
WITH SPECIES: This bird has been observed at different times in South Texas.

EQUIPMENT: Bushnell 8 x 36 Custom Binoculars; Kowa TSN-4 Spotting Scope.

REFERENCES CONSULTED: After Field Notes made:
National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds of North America, Second Edition, c. 1983, 1987.
The Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding, Vol. 1, c. 1983.

Fulvous Whistling-Duck Documentation continued

94-22

HOW LONG BEFORE
FIELD NOTES MADE: As bird was being observed.

HOW LONG BEFORE THIS
FORM COMPLETED: August 3, 1994.

PHOTOGRAPHIC
INFORMATION: Photographic slides (2) enclosed. Photographs taken by Reid I.
Allen with a MInolta X700 camera and Kowa TSN-4 spotting scope with 800 mm photographic
adaptor.

DOCUMENTATION
For A Bird Sighting in Iowa

94-22

SPECIES Fulvous Whistling - Duck 1
LOCATION Clinton Co., Goose Lake, Marsh
DATE Saturday 23 July 94 3:24 p.m.
OBSERVER Jeff Dankert 4402 Markle Rd #7 La Crosse, WI 54601
OTHERS with Fred Leshar, Kelly McKay(?), one other unidentified birder
PREVIOUS Many other birders had seen the bird before me.

DESCRIPTION After a 3-hour wait on the dike at Goose Lake, Kelly McKay(?), walked/waded along the southeastern edge of open water in hopes of locating the bird. At about 3:24 p.m. the bird flushed from some cattails and flew west. Viewing with binoculars, I saw the dark wings, long neck, (held slightly below the horizontal in flight), tawny/buff neck and body, long legs extending beyond tail, and the single, broad white band at the base of the tail. The bird was in the air for no more than 20 seconds, and landed in some cattails at the west edge of the marsh.
Its unmistakable characteristics left no doubt to its identity.

VIEWING CONDITIONS Sunny but hazy, bird observed flying at 80-140 yards (est.),
8x42 Leicas

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE None

REFERENCES National Geographic Guide, other birders present

94-22

**DOCUMENTATION FORM
Unusual Bird Sightings in Iowa**

Species: Fulvous Whistling-Duck

Location: Goose Lake, Clinton County, Iowa

Habitat: Marsh, some open water, some heavily vegetated

Date: 24 June 1994

Time: 12:25 to 12:35

Name and Address: Ann Johnson, 532 120th Avenue, Norwalk, Iowa 50211

Other Observers: None at the time; found by Steve Dinsmore the previous Sunday

Description of bird: This bird was a stake-out and I searched the marsh for about an hour before finally finding it. It was a notable rusty color, more on the brown than red vein. While it was in the water/stubble I observed a duck with a rusty head and breast. The back was darker with rusty colored feather edgings. Significant white streaks were apparent on the flank. The bill and eye were dark. The neck was a bit lighter, but due to the posture of the resting bird details were hard to ascertain. After several minutes a Great Blue Heron came in and circled over the area where the duck was resting. The duck became agitated, its long neck becoming apparent, and it eventually took flight. I put the scope on it in flight and observed a broad white tailband on a black tail followed by a fairly broad black terminal band. The wings were all dark. The feet and legs appeared dark blue with no band visible on either leg. As it flew the long legs were dangling. The bird disappeared into a heavily vegetated area of the marsh. The bird did not call.

Similar species and how eliminated: The long neck and long legs identify this bird as a whistling-duck. Black-bellied Whistling-Duck is eliminated by the rusty head, dark bill, and dark wings with no white wing patches.

Viewing conditions (light, distance, optics): Optics consisted of 7X26 binoculars and spotting scope with 15X60 zoom eyepiece. Sky was bright and sunny with the sun high in the sky. The bird was initially observed at approximately 100 yards and flew to an area about 300 yards away.

Previous experience: I have seen these birds in several southern states over the past few years.

References consulted during observation: None

References consulted before completing documentation: NGS Guide

Field notes made: Immediately after observation

Documentation completed: On return home