

Fulvous Whistling-Duck

11 Jun 1963

Dewey's Pasture, Palo Alto Co., IA

G. J. Horak, G. W. Kaufmann

Horak and Kaufmann 1965, Musgroves 1977

Record Number: 81-AK

Classification: NA

REFERENCES

Horak, G.L., and G.W. Kaufman. 1965. Fulvous Tree Duck in Iowa. IBL 35:29.

Musgrove, J.W., and M.R. Musgrove. 1977. Waterfowl in Iowa, 5th Edition. State Conservation Commission, Des Moines.

VOTE (1981): 2-III, 3-IV, 2-V

III, Both observers were graduate students in wildlife biology and should know the species.

IV, Must rely entirely on unknown ability of observers. Not described. Easy to identify.

III, Details on field marks obviously lacking, but both observers specialists in waterfowl.

V, no details given.

IV, Contact Gerry Kaufmann at Loras -- he may have more complete notes available.

IV, Seen by 2 experienced observers --no tangible evidence -- no description of what was actually seen.

V, Possible, but absolutely no details on bird. If 'circling over the pothole flying over the observers' made 'identification positive', birding would be easy! Musgrove's comment in his last sentence is very true.

Fulvous Whistling Duck

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Horak, G. J., and G. W. Kaufmann. 1965. Fulvous Tree Duck in Iowa.  
Iowa Bird Life 35:29

**Fulvous Tree Duck in Iowa**—On June 11, 1963, a Fulvous Tree Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) was observed on Dewey's Pasture, five miles northwest of Ruthven, Iowa in Palo Alto County. The Fulvous Tree Duck is classed as rare in Grant's "Checklist of Iowa Birds" (*Iowa Bird Life*, Vol. XXXIII, 1963, p. 50), with a single sighting reported in 1931. Kortright (*The Ducks, Geese, and Swans of North America*, 1953, p. 376.) states that its breeding range is in southeastern United States and northern Mexico.

The duck was observed loafing on the top of a large muskrat house near the center of an open pothole. As the observers approached in hopes of taking pictures, the bird flew. It circled about the pothole and flew directly over the observers, making identification positive. While it made its slow flight, several Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) chased it. The tree duck was not seen again on later trips to the area. GERALD J. HORAK, Kansas Fish and Game Commission, Elmdale, Kansas and GERALD W. KAUFMANN, Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa.

Musgrove, J. W. and Musgrove, M. R. 1977. Waterfowl in Iowa 5th ed.  
State Conservation Commission, Des Moines. pp 111-112

FULVOUS WHISTLING DUCK, *Dendrocygna bicolor helva* WETMORE AND PETERS. (Formerly fulvous tree duck.) Recorded by Dr. F. L. R.

Roberts in *The Wilson Bulletin* (XLIV, page 180). This was a bird taken in the fall of 1931 in Iowa, possibly near Spirit Lake in Dickinson County; it was not preserved but was examined by F. P. Hopkins, whose description fitted the fulvous whistling duck. Paul Errington reported that at about the same time Frank Marnette of Spirit Lake observed one at a short distance. There are two sight records by W. J. Breckenridge on May 24, 1929, in Lincoln County, Minnesota. More recently, G. J. Horak and F. W. Kaufman report observation of a fulvous whistling duck in Palo Alto County in June, 1963. There is little doubt that this bird has occurred in Iowa, but collection records and specimens are lacking.