

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Common Scoter ♀ 2. Number 1  
3. Location Cone Marsh, Louisa Co, IA  
4. Date: 3-31-79 5. Time Bird Seen: 12:15 PM to 12-30 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):

size: size of 1. scaup, slightly larger than hooded mergansers, with <sup>both of</sup> which it was swimming.

plumage: uniform dark brown, darker on forehead, crown, nape. side of face below eye, upper throat, upper side of neck whitish. border of white patch sharp except at its lower edge on neck, where it blended into the brown of the lower neck.

bill: dark, sl. less heavy than that of scaup. no knob at base.

7. Description of voice, if heard: —

8. Description of behavior: swimming; associating with 1 pr. 1. scaup and 1 pr. hooded mergansers. Drove several times.

9. Habitat - general: large area of ponds, flooded fields + timber, bottomland  
specific: pond bordered by woods + flooded fields.

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

① ♀ bufflehead has much smaller white patch on face ② other ♀ scoters, harlequin duck have more than 1 patch + patches are smaller ③ ♀ muddy duck is

11. Distance (how measured)?

50-100 yds (est)

12. Optical equipment:

8x40 binoc.

25x60 scope

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

grey day; sun behind observer.

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

much experience with this (+ other spp listed in 10) in Mass, MD, Del, VA.

15. Other observers:

C Newton, (later: Tom Kent, Noel + Mona Brown)

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

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

Transcribed from notes made on spot

Signature: Michael C Newton

Address: 408 Wales St.

Date: 4-1-79

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10.

smaller + white does not extend into throat or neck, also differs in proportions (stockier, with heavier head + neck for size)  $\odot$  or hooded merganser has white sides, crest, side stripes, more slender bill.

*[Faint, mostly illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. Some words like "smaller", "white", "throat", "neck", "proportions", "stockier", "heavier", "head", "neck", "size", "hooded", "merganser", "white", "sides", "crest", "side", "stripes", "slender", "bill" are visible.]*

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