

ILLINOIS

DOCUMENTATION FORM FOR UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTINGS
SUBMITTED TO ILLINOIS ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE (I.O.R.C.)

I.O.R.C. RECORD NUMBER

This form submitted as supporting documentation of (check all that apply):

- Unusual species; Unusual date; Unusual number;
 Unusual plumage; Unusual breeding record; Christmas Count record; Spring Count record;
 Breeding Census record; Other: _____

1. Species: Tundra Swan
 2. Number of birds: 200 Age/sex/plumage: Adults and Immatures
 3. Date(s): 12-27-97
 4. Location (incl. County): Mississippi River out from Thomsons Causeway; Carroll County
 5. Observers:
 Your name: Kelly J. McKay Phone: (309) 792-5981
 Mailing address: 6193 34th Avenue Moline, IL 61265
 Others agreeing with identification: Pat Carlson, Fred Lesber, Carol Rogers
 Observers NOT agreeing with identification: None
6. Physical description (size, shape, proportions; details of both color and pattern on the head, back, breast, undertail, wings, and tail; coloration of bill, eye, legs and feet) of details actually seen in the field:

We observed a large number of very large waterfowl out in the middle of the river. The birds were all white with no black in the wings. They had long necks and darkish colored bills. The immature birds were overall brownish. Because of the distance, no other field marks could really be observed. The birds did appear to have a curved slope from the bill to the forehead.

[OVER]

Species: Tundra Swan Date seen: 12-27-97 Observer: Kelly J. McKay

7. Description of behavior: Most of the birds were sitting on the ice sleeping, but ~50 were swimming and dipping their heads.
8. Description of vocalizations: none heard
9. Description of immediate and surrounding habitat(s): open water in the middle of the river, surrounded by iced-over swamp fields.
10. Viewing conditions:
Optical equipment (type, power): Leica Ultra 10x42 binoculars; Kowa TSU 822 20-60x scope.
Distance / how measured? 1.0-1.25 mile / estimated
Time(s) of observation: 1330 Total time of observation: 15 minutes
Weather (including larger weather patterns where relevant) / sky conditions / relative position of sun:
Sunny, virtually no clouds or wind. A lot of heat distortion. The sun was virtually overhead.
11. Previous experience with this and similar species: Considerable ~~experience~~ experience with this species and limited experience with similar species.
12. Reasons for eliminating other similar species and/or hybrids:
Mute Swan - has knobbed bill which is pinkish-orange.
Trumpeter Swan - most have wing or neck bands, tend to occur in lesser numbers. Also, no curve from bill to forehead.
Snow Goose - much smaller, with black primaries.
13. Were photos obtained? no By whom? _____ Attached? _____
14. Books & illustrations consulted, and advice received. How did these influence this description?
National Geographic Birds of North America - helped identify the field marks of this and similar species.
15. How long after observation were field notes recorded? 8 hrs.
16. How long after observation was this form completed? 10 days
17. Additional remarks: 200-400 Tundra Swans have been in this area since mid November and have been observed by several people at much closer distances

Signed Kelly J. McKay

Date ~~12-27-97~~ 1-6-98