

Ohde

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? ✓ Sora How many? 1

Location? Ventura Marsh, 1/2 mile SW of Ventura, Cerro Gordo Co., Iowa

Type of habitat? Dense cattail marsh, completely frozen.

When? date(s): December 30, 1982 time: 10:30 A.M. to

Who? your name and address: Bill Ohde, R.R. 1, Clear Lake, Iowa 50428

others with you:

others before or after you:

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.

I followed small thin tracks in light snow on ice for 40-50 yards and the bird flushed within 3 feet of me. Flew about 30-40 yards with typical weak rail flight, just over the cattail tops. Chicken-like yellow bill evident at close range. Dab grayish-colored, starling-sized bird, with legs hanging beneath in flight. Normal flight, no sign of injury.

Bill R. Ohde
Wildlife Research Technician
Iowa Conservation Commission
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Similar species and how eliminated: Virginia rail - bill clearly seen.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: excellent lighting, flushed from practically under my feet (3 feet or less), seen with naked eye.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have worked in marshes for 5 years, have flushed many Soras and Virginia rails, have monitored nests of both species.

References and persons consulted before writing description: Erwin Klaas, I.S.U.

How long before field notes made? none taken this form completed? 6 days

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240