

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? White-winged Scoter, imm. How many? 1Location? Big Creek St. P., Polk Co., n. of Des MoinesType of habitat? open lakeWhen? date(s): November 7, 1984 time: 3:50 P.M. to 4:20 P.M.Who? your name and address: Beth Proescholdt, Liscomb, Ia.others with you: Phyllis Harris, Mark Proescholdt

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.

The lake was almost empty of birds on this 60° day with its brisk south wind. As we scanned the lake this bird was first noticed across the lake as it raised up on the water showing its light-grayish undersides. Then we saw the brown body, short neck, rounded head with two distinct white facepatches oval in shape, one between the eye + gray bill, + one after the eye + lower. Later as it flew toward us to within 60 yards ± white wing patches on the secondaries showed distinctly. As it settled on the water we could sometimes see the small thin white patch in its wing area. It appeared almost twice as large as the 2 Ruddy Ducks that it passed on the water. All this pointed to its being an immature White-winged Scoter.

Similar species and how eliminated: immature Surf Scoter - but when the bird flew + showed the white wing patches in its secondaries there was no doubt but that it was a white-winged Scoter.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

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

Sun behind us on a P.C. day - 60 yds to 160 ± yards (est.) - binoculars + 22x scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones: I have seen White-winged 2 or 3 times before, Surf Scoter once at Puget Sound

References and persons consulted before writing description: National Geog. guide, + Peterson's + Robbins guides

How long before field notes made? made while watching bird this form completed? Nov. 10, 1984

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