

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Greater Scaup (Agthya marila) How many? 1Location? Borrow pit along I-29 South of Council Bluffs (Northbound Lane)
Mills Co.Type of habitat? Deep water pondWhen? date(s): March 28, 1982 time: 12:20 p.m. to 12:30 p.m.Who? your name and address: Francis L. Moore, 264 Western Ave., Waterloo, IA 50701others with you: Noothers before or after you: No

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.

When I first observed the bird it looked larger than the other scaup that I had been seeing the last few weeks. When I viewed it through the telescope I could see that it had more of a rounded looking head than those other scaup viewed previously that day. I could not get a good angle to see any color difference on the bird's head. This bird also appeared to have a heavier bodied look to it also. The bird was alone on the borrow pit pond with a male Red-breasted Merganser on the other side of the pit to the right side, about 150 yards away. No other birds around to get a good size comparison with. As I was moving toward the water to get a better (and closer look) at the bird it flew and went toward the North. As it flew I got the telescope on the bird and watched it as it flew from the area. The white speculum of the secondaries was extended into all but the first few primary flight feathers. No voice heard.

Similar species and how eliminated: Lesser Scaup has a definite pointed shaped head, and appears smaller than this bird did, also does not have as long a white wing stripe into the primaries.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Good viewing, sun was to my right as I faced south, bird to my left about 60 to 70 yards away measured by eye using 7x35 mm Bausch + Lomb Roof Prism Binoculars and Bushnell Spacemaster telescope with 20x eyepiece

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen several Greater Scaup, some in Iowa, some in Virginia, lots of experience with Lesser Scaup.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None.

How long before field notes made? time of observation this form completed? 2 days

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