

IDENTIFICATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What species? Tundra Swan How many? 2
 Location? Princeton Marsh 3/4 mi N of pumping station on dike
 Type of Habitat? Patch of open water surrounded by ice - river backwater
 When? date(s): Thurs Dec 19, 1991 time: 10:00 to 10:15
 Who? your name and address: Ann M Barker, 25368-250th St, Princeton, Ia 52766
 Others with you: Don Moeller, Diann Heysinger
Bernie Carpenter
 Others before or after you: unknown

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, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Two very large white forms were observed without binoculars on a distant open water patch. Through binoculars, we could see that they were swans by their general shape with very long necks; and that one was darker than the other. Using a spotting scope at 50-60 power from a closer distance, we observed them feeding, dipping, preening and swimming together for 10-15 min. Larger than Canada Geese with very long necks held straight more or less rather than curved. Both were all white except for legs which were black, and bills. One was "dirty white"; the other bright white; we assumed the bright one was an adult and the other an immature bird. There were no bands on either bird (legs or neck). They were silent. Bills of both birds were held more or less level rather than downward. The adult's bill was all black - any yellow was not visible from this distance. Black of bill came up to, but did not include the eye. Bill of the immature was pink or flesh colored at the base, dark or black at the tip.

Similar species; how eliminated: Trumpeter Swan - immature had definite pink at base of bill, Trumpeter immature would show black at base. Both were seen straight on; white of forehead at base of bill appeared to come down between the eyes, unlike the Trumpeter, whose bill appears more straight across between the eyes. Black of bill did not include the eye as it would in Trumpeter. Mute Swan - birds in question had no knob at base of bill and necks were held straight rather than curved. ~~Neck~~ not raised.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? No
 If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment. Good light, 200 yds² (approx); Kowa TSN4 scope c 20-60x zoom eyepiece

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Some with all³ swans,

References and persons consulted before writing description: Robbins guide

How long before field notes made? 6 hrs this form completed? 3 wks

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).