

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? YELLOW RAIL How many? 1Location? Muskrat Slough in Jones County, IowaType of habitat? Grass about 12" high along edge of marsh. Some water standing  
in grass. About 20 feet from edge of marsh. (water's edge)When? date(s): 1 May, 1982 time: 7:30 AM to Who? your name and address: Carl J. Bendorf 825 7th Ave. Iowa City, IA. 52240others with you: Tom Kent, Tom Staudt, James Huntington all of Iowa City.others before or after you: none

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.

As we walked through grass along edge of marsh, a small rail flushed almost from under our feet. It flew very weakly several feet off the ground for a distance of about fifty feet straight away from us. The size was perhaps 2/3rds that of a Sora. The color was basically brownish with some yellowish straking. There was a very noticeable white patch on the trailing edge of each wing in the area of the secondaries. The bird was only visible for approximately five seconds and we saw only the upper surface of the bird as it flew away. The bill was not really noticeable, so it presumably was short in length.

The bird could not be flushed again.

## Similar species and how eliminated:

Sora is eliminated by the presence of the white patch on the wing and Virginia Rail is eliminated by wing patch and absence of long bill.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

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

Clear sky, good light at our backs. Distance estimated as ranging from five to fifty feet.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: First for Yellow Rail.  
Very familiar with Sora and Virginia Rail.

References and persons consulted before writing description: noneHow long before field notes made? 2 days this form completed? 30 days

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