

DOCUMENTATION FORM  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What species? American Avocet How many? \_\_\_\_\_

Location? Mark Twain NWR, Wapello District, Horseshoe Bend  
Division

Type of Habitat? Shallow mud flats on Rush lakes.

When? date(s): 8-17-99 time: 10:00 to entire day

Who? your name and address: Tim Tubison, Mark Twain NWR, 10728 Cty X61

Others with you: Kathy Maycroft - Refuge Manager. Wapello, IA 52653.

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

I observed 12 birds together on a narrow spit of mud flat. The birds were about the size of a pigeon, with long gray legs, a very long slightly upcurved bill, tan to buff colored head and neck, white belly and undersides, dark gray to black wing tops, and dark markings on the back. I never observed them feeding. They appeared to be resting and preening themselves on the mud spit.

Similar species; how eliminated:

The avocets were very distinct. I had no need to make comparisons. I used Audobon field guide to make a positive identification.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? NO

If yes, explain:

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

Clear sunny day. About 150-180 yds. Used 10x42 binoculars and a spotting scope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

First time sighting. Have observed shorebirds for the past 20 years of my career with the service

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Kathy Maycroft

How long before field notes made? 1 day this form completed? 8-18-99

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