

Middlewestern Prairie Region
(Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio)

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Northern Phalarope 2. Number: three
3. Location pothole 2½ miles East of Colo, Story Co, Iowa
4. Date: 23 May 1982 5. Time Bird seen: 4 pm to 4:30pm
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):
flying: nearllyblack wings with prominent white stripe down the length. very white
~~underneath~~ breast. swimming: very dark gray head, rusty patch on side of neck, white
chin, back very dark. typical phalarope shape.
7. Description of voice, if heard: ?
8. Description of behavior: swimming with head 'jerking' like Wilson's Phalarope.
9. Habitat - general: agriculture land - with 'trash' + 'stubble'
specific: pothole
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:
Wilson's Phalarope - does not have white stripe down wing. head not so dark.
Sanderling has white stripe down wing - details seen when swimming rule it out.
11. Distance (how measured)? guess 12. Optical equipment:
flying 20-150 yards; swimming 75-150 yards. 7 x 35 binoculars
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
heavy overcast, gloomy. because of distance and lack of light could make out identifying
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: details while
not seen this species before. Have seen many Wilson Ph in S. Dak. swimming and not much
15. Other observers: Mike Nolan more. White stripe in
wings when flying very
16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes obvious.
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: ?
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
A Field Guide To The Birds Peterson
Birds of North America Golden Press
we used the book while watching the birds as we had plenty of time and I'd never seen
Northern Phalarope before & wanted to be sure of proper id. We never saw the striping
shown in the pictures on the bird's back anything as obvious as in the books.
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?
5 minutes for notes, 2 hours for final typing
- Signature Address: 1120 Marston
- Date: 23 May 1982 City, State: Ames, Iowa