DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? King Rail How many? 1

Location? Cone Marsh, Louisa Co. 75 yards from west end of dike

Type of habitat? Marsh, fairly dry.

When? date(s): May 1, 1986 time: 8:30 A.M to 8:35 A.M.

Who?your name and address: Timothy L. Dwyer 814 Woodlawn, Muscatine, Ia. 52761

others with you: None

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.

A large long billed rusty rail estimated at 16 inches long. Legs and bill were yellowish-orange, breast was rusty, belly was striped white and blackish. Top of head and around eye grayish with a white line from upper bill to eye. Cheeks were tawny. The bird was about eight yards away from me and was walking around and stopping, observing me. It was just off the dike in very low vegetation with sparse and scattered tall thin plants. I observed it for about five minutes and then left.

Similar species and how eliminated:
Too large and cheeks wrong color for Virginia Rail.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? —

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
Good morning sunshine at about 8 yards with 8X40 binoculars

Previous experience with species and similar ones: One seen in North Carolina, One seen at the same place about 7 or 8 years ago.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None

How long before field notes made? 1 hour this form completed? 3 weeks

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