

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? King Rail How many? 1Location? Doolittle Prairie - (Story County)Type of habitat? wet prairie potholesWhen? date(s): April 27, 1985 time: 10:45 to 10:50 a.m.Who? your name and address: Mark Proescholdt, Liscomb, Iowaothers with you: Beth Proescholdt, Ramona Sommerlotothers 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.

We were watching broadwinged hawks going over and talking when Mom said 'there's a rail right beside me'. And four feet from where she was standing, a rail was standing and acting very unconcerned by our presence. It was a large rusty brown rail the size of a small hen with brownish cheeks. It was at least twice the size of Soras which we had been seeing. It went into the reeds in the center of the pond. I went in after it, and it emerged from hiding two feet away from me and slowly walked about 10 feet away into some more reeds. We all had very good looks at it.

Similar species and how eliminated: Virginia Rails are only  $\frac{1}{2}$  the size of this rail and Virginia rails have gray cheeks.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

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

cloudy, distances estimated, 7x35 binoculars

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Had good looks at another King Rail two springs ago.

References and persons consulted before writing description: R.T. Peterson's "Field Guide to the Birds", Natl. Geog. Birds of North America, Golden Guide's Birds of North America

How long before field notes made? immediately this form completed? May 27, 1985

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