

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Yellow Rail 2. Number 1

3. Location Snake Creek Marsh - Greene County

4. Date: Sept. 30, 1985 5. Time Bird Seen: Approx 2:30 P.M. to 2:31 P.M.

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):

Bird was a small rail about size of sora - at least no larger. Bill was short. The head was very buffy ^{on sides}. The back and wings were quite dark - almost blackish. The secondaries from body out about 1-1½" and about 1" wide ~~no~~ showed to be very white on both wings. These were the largest white patches I've seen on yellow rails - some seem almost as white line. As bird flushed at our feet both times I really only got a good look at the back.

We found the rail while I was showing the Armstrongs where I had found the sharp-tailed sparrows earlier in day. We re-found these also!

7. Description of voice, if heard: none heard

8. Description of behavior: Flushed at our feet in typical rail fashion + flew short distance - we flushed in 2 X

9. Habitat - general: marsh

specific: bullrush + duck weed

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain: White wing patches eliminates sora.

11. Distance (how measured)?

5 or 6 ft. when flushed

12. Optical equipment: mostly eyes

but I did get it in 10x40 binocs one time

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

bright overcast day

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

I have seen yellow rails, soras + Virginias before.

15. Other observers: Gene + Elaise Armstrong

16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: same

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

None

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 5 hrs.

Signature: Robert X. Myers Address: R.R. 2, Box 153

Date: Sept. 30, 1985 City, State: Perry, Iowa 50220