

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

C. Newton 8/12/80

1. Species King Rail 2. Number 1  
3. Location Cone Marsh  
4. Date: 22 July 1980 5. Time Bird Seen: ~7:30 to 7-32

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 large rail - noticeably <sup>(2x)</sup> larger than a lesser yellowlegs only a few feet away from the bird. It was ~~brown~~ light brown with barring on the flanks. Cheeks were same color as neck & bill was yellowish-brown and not red as in Virginia rail. Wings & back were darker, rustier brown. Bird emerged from clump of grassy vegetation in wet marsh & was feeding in mud.

7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard.

8. Description of behavior: Walked out of grass in mud - feeding on mud.

9. Habitat - general: marsh.

specific:

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:  
a Virginia rail would have had gray cheeks & been about the same size as a lesser yellowlegs.

11. Distance (how measured)? ~100 yds  
(estimate)

12. Optical equipment: Leitz 8x42  
trinorbs

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): light was good - I was looking north, sun was low in south west.

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: I've seen King rails and in Massachusetts and Virginia rails in numerous places, including Iowa

15. Other observers: None

16. Did the others agree with your identification?

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:  
consulted Robbins & Zimm & Peterson - after identification - they confirm identification

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 2 hrs

Signature: Carol S. Newton Address: 408 Wales St.

Date: 10 August 1980 City, State: Iowa City IA 52240