

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Am. Avocet 2. Number 1

3. Location Johnson Co, IA

4. Date: 10-21-79 5. Time Bird Seen: ~ 10 to 10:30 AM

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):

v. large shorebird (larger than gr. yellowlegs). bill: v. long, up-curved, blue-grey in color (as were the v. long legs). head + body plumage white (with a dingy wash over head + neck). Wings black, with a broad white bar, visible at rest as well as in flight.

7. Description of voice, if heard: —

8. Description of behavior: wading, resting on shores of pond; fed by lowering head and submerging bill, which it would sweep rapidly from side to side as it

9. Habitat - general: shallow pool with muddy edges; rather large walked forward.

specific: reservoir flood plain - weedy flats, willow thickets. surrounded by fields, second-growth woods

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:

unmistakable: white plumage, upturned bill rule out godwits, stilt, willet etc.

11. Distance (how measured)?  
50 ft - 100 yds (est)

12. Optical equipment:  
25X60 scope  
8X40 binocs.

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):  
grey cloudy day; sun behind obs. at least part of the time.

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:  
have seen this species many times: MASS, VA, FLA, Utah; also bl-n stilt, other lg. shorebirds (whimbrel, both godwits), etc.

15. Other observers:  
CS Newton, C. Bender F, R. Hollis, many members of the IC bird club.

16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: —

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

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? plumage description copied from notes made on spot.

Signature: Michael C Newton Address: 408 Wales St

Date: 12-9-79 City, State: Jones City IA 52290