

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Black Scoter, ♀ How many? 1Location? Big Creek ~~re~~ S.P., Polk Co., IowaType of habitat? shallow bay at north end of reservoirWhen? date(s): Nov. 12, 1986 time: 3:20 to 3:40Who? your name and address: Beth Proescholdt, Liscomb, Iowaothers with you: Mark Proescholdtothers before or after you: Steve Drnsmore, Bob Myers

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.

At the north end of Big Creek, already partly frozen, we stopped by a protected bay that was quite calm on this day of strong cold winds. Close to shore was a lone dark bird - a brown, chunky short-necked bird with a pale face and throat - a large light area contrasting with the dark crown and nape. It had a strongly rounded head, a dark bill, a black foot noted when it scratched its head, a yellow nostril looking like a hole in the bill, a slightly lighter brown on its breast.

When first seen it was swimming and preening, then later diving a lot. It was larger than a Bufflehead beside it.

Similar species and how eliminated:

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
mostly clear, sun behind us, strong winds - wind-chill 20°-40° below - 40 yards closest to 70 yards (approx) - 8x30 binoculars, 22x Bushnell Spacemaster scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

I have seen only one Black Scoter before
References and persons consulted before writing description: field guides - National Geographic, Peterson, Robbins, - Audubon's Master Guide

How long before field notes made? at once this form completed? Nov. 28, 1986

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