

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? White-winged Scoter How many? four(4)Location? Lake Anita State Park, one mile south of Anita, IowaType of habitat? Large, open lakeWhen? date(s): November 6, 1981 time: 8:20 am to 8:45 amWho? your name and address: R. Craig Hensley 13 Ridge Road, Atlantic, Iowa 50022others with you: Noneothers before or after you: None that I know of

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.

I observed these birds swimming about the lake. These birds were larger than a duck and appeared almost submarine-like, similar to a loon. The overall color was dark brown with the exception of two white patches. One patch was in the area of the eye while the other was on the wing. This white patch, and subsequent positive identification, was confirmed when one of the birds rose out of the water and flapped its wings. These birds continually dove under water for 15-20 second intervals. They were accompanied by a small flock of Buffleheads. The birds were silent. I was able to get pictures of them, although they were quite far from me. If there is any question as to positive identification, I am willing to supply you with the slides.

Similar species and how eliminated: The surf scoter and black scoter are similar. However, the specimens that I observed had the white wing patch that these two species do not have. In addition, two of the birds seen had white about their eyes, as neither of the other two have.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NA

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Early morning 30 minutes after sunrise; distance was anywhere from 50 to 100 yards; used 8 x 35 power binoculars and 35mm camera & 230mm Lens

Previous experience with species and similar ones: None, my first siting of this species.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Consulted the most recent addition of Peterson's Field Guide

How long before field notes made? 5 minutes this form completed? several weeks

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