


BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Swan, Whistling 2. Number: 1

3. Location Sand Pt, Coralville Reservoir, nw of Iowa City IA

4. Date: 12-13-75 5. Time Bird seen: 1 Pm to 2 Pm

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):

Very large waterfowl, waterline length  $2\frac{1}{2}$  x that of mallards with which it sometimes associated. Neck very long,  $\sim \frac{2}{3}$  length of body. Plumage pure white. eye dark. Bill black, with a long lobe of black running back to, or almost to, eye. Usually carried head + neck low as it was feeding steadily, but when it swam carried major portion of neck (except for base) vertical:  $\rightarrow$  

7. Description of voice, if heard: —

8. Description of behavior: feeding in shallow water, would extend head + neck below surface but did not tip up. Sometimes associated with a small flock of mallards.

9. Habitat - general: edge of reservoir: grassy flats now submerged by an increase in water  
specific: level. area has large 'marshy' areas of flooded grass, extensive areas of open water, some harvested cornfields, some fields of winter rye

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

- mute swan: eliminated by all-dark bill, vertical posture of neck.
- trumpeter swan: eliminated by range.
- snow goose: eliminated by large size, lack of black in wingtips
- white pelican: eliminated by proportions of neck + bill, lack of black in wingtips.

11. Distance (how measured)?  $\sim \frac{1}{2}$  mile. cat from map. 12. Optical equipment: 25X60 scope

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):  
dull cloudy day: ~~no~~ no shadows; sun at  $\sim 90^\circ$  to bird-observer line.  $\rightarrow$  obs ..... bird  
could see patterns on mallards OK. PN

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:  
have seen many mute + whistling swans in Md., Va., Mass. (mute only). Have seen trumpeters once (Wash. State). Also have seen many snow geese, and some white pelicans (Texas, N.D.)

15. Other observers: N. Halmi saw bird later in the day.

16. Did the others agree with your identification? ~~no~~ yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: None

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? made notes in field; transcribed 1 day later.

Signature Michael C Newlon Address: 128 Grove St.

Date: 14 Dec 1975 City, State: Iowa City IA 52240