

Middlewestern Prairie Region
(Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio)

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Oldsquaw 2. Number: 1
3. Location Cone Marsh, Louisa Co, Iowa.
4. Date: 8 April 1978 5. Time Bird seen: 9:30 AM to 10 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):
medium-sized, rather slender duck, about 1/3 as large again as bufflehead (calculable for comparison); smaller than coot. Rather small bill.
head, neck, sides: pure white. Black triangular patch on side of face, darkened toward rear. Top of patch level with water, back nearly vertical. Top of patch level with (or just below) eye. Back dark brownish, with a hint of a paler horizontal stripe at each side. Chest black, with v. narrow pale barring.
7. Description of voice, if heard: —
8. Description of behavior: swimming with large flock of coots + a few bufflehead; then flew to a flock of mixed dabbling + diving ducks, began diving repeatedly.
9. Habitat - general:
specific: pond with marshy borders, surrounded by woods and expanse
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:
no other N. Am. duck, or duck-like bird, has a white head with a black face-patch, and a black chest.
11. Distance (how measured)? 50-100 yds (est)
12. Optical equipment: 8x40 binocs, 25x60 scope
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
sunny day, light at 45° angle to left of bird + observer
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
have obs this species numerous times in MD, VA, MASS, WASH State; have seen all other E. N. Am. ducks.
15. Other observers: R Hollis
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:
None
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 5 hr. (this is a copy of notes)

Michael Newton
Signature

Address: 408 Wales St

Date: 7 May 78

City, State: Iowa City IA 52240