

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species: Blue-winged Teal

Number: 1 adult male

Location: Pool 19 off Montrose, Lee County, Iowa

Habitat: river

Date: 21 December 1998

Time: 10:42-11:05 a.m.

Observer: Stephen J. Dinsmore 612 ½ West Magnolia St. Fort Collins, CO 80521

Others who saw bird(s): Aaron Brees

Description of bird(s): I was scanning the pool when I noticed a lone teal swimming with several Bufflehead off Linger Longer Rest Area. I immediately recognized the bird as a Blue-winged Teal. The bird was roughly the size of a Bufflehead. The plumage was a light brown color, except for a small white spot at the base of the bill and a darker supercilium. The bill was dark, fairly long, and had a somewhat spatulate shape (but not as exaggerated as on a Northern Shoveler). The eye was dark. The bird gradually swam towards the south and appeared to be heading towards the shore. We decided to walk south along the railroad tracks to flush the bird. We eventually flushed the bird at close range. In flight, the pattern of the speculum was distinctive; pale blue on the secondary coverts, dark green on the secondaries, and a thin white line separating the two patches. The bird appeared to have an injured left wing, but could still fly reasonably well. I aged the bird as an adult male in eclipse plumage on the basis of the wing pattern. I have banded >1,000 Blue-winged Teal, so aging the bird on the basis of the speculum pattern was easy.

Similar species and how eliminated: The combination of bill size, face pattern, and speculum pattern eliminates Green-winged Teal. Cinnamon Teal (very unlikely at this date) was eliminated on the basis of the dark eye, slightly smaller bill, and lack of brighter rufous or buffy color on the body.

Previous experience with species: Very familiar with this species as well as the other two teal species (Green-winged and Cinnamon) and Northern Shoveler.

Viewing conditions and equipment: Viewing conditions were excellent with overcast skies. Estimated viewing distance was 50-100m. I used 10x42 binoculars and a 20-60x spotting scope.

References consulted: none

How long before field notes written? none written

How long before this form completed? written 23 December 1998