

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What Species? Black Scoter (female) How Many? 2

Location? Rathbun Dam Appanoose Co., Iowa

Type of Habitat? Open water

When? date(s): 12/15/90 time: 7:30am to 7:35am/approx.

Who? your name and address: Ray Cummins Centerville, Iowa

Others with you: Paul & Deb Egeland

Others before or after you none that I know of bird flew up lake

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, undertail, legs, & feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Immediately recognized as Black Scoters. The whitish cheek patch extended up from the throat to just below the eye. The crown and nape were darker purer black than the back and sides. The bill was black and rather flat and small for a scoter. The body had no white markings. The birds dove several time during the observation. The tail was black and extended beyond the wings looking like a flat platform on the water. The bird seemed smaller than other scoters I have seen, but still would be considered a least a medium sized duck. After about 4 minutes the bird flushed and flew down lake. During flight the bird was all black above and below. Description written from feild notes taken at time of sighting.

Similar species: how eliminated: Whitewinged scoter by all black wings. Surf scoter by white solid cheek patch. Ruddy Duck by size and black belly.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification? no
If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment. 10x binoculars & Kowa TSN-2 from 50yds. The sky was overcast but the sun was behind us and the contrast was good.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: First sighting, but am familiar with the other two scoters from Iowa and other areas.

Reference and persons consulted before writing description: NSG was referred to during sighting.

How long before field notes made? immediately This form completed? 25 days