

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Sandhill Crane How many? 1Location? Sweet Marsh - Bremer CoType of habitat? marshWhen? date(s): May 6, 1983 time: 11:00AM to 11:10AMWho? your name and address: Robert K. Myers 1236 Sylvia Ave Waterloo, Iowaothers with you: —others before or after you: —

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 was scanning the north pool at Sweet Marsh for shorebirds when I heard the crane calling (I really can't describe the call in words). I knew it was a sandhill even before it came up over the trees along Plum Creek and into my view and over the marsh. Bird was very large, at least as big as great blue heron. There was a imm. bald eagle present at same time and cranes wingspread was as great as eagle's. Bird flew with neck outstretched and called as it circled over the marsh. It mostly soared with occasional wing beats. Bird was basically all gray with a red patch on top its head. Neck and legs were long. Primaries seemed a little darker than body of bird. Bill was about as long as bird's head. Bird disappeared to north west - never landing.

Note - There was alot of activity moving in the sky that day with many broadwings and sharpies and a few cooper's hawks also going north.

Similar species and how eliminated: Great blue herons don't fly with neck extended, do not give the call I heard and have entirely different plumage.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

Sky was clear with few white clouds at that time. Closed bird got was about 30yd. above me. I used 20X scope + 7X35 binocs.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: I have seen and heard many thousands of sandhills on several trips to Neb. in late March.

References and persons consulted before writing description: NO NEED

How long before field notes made? Didn't make any this form completed? one day

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