

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Oldsquaw How many? 1 ♀Location? Saylorville Reservoir, Polk CountyType of habitat? large man-made reservoirWhen? date(s): 10 Nov., 1985 time: 3:00 P.M. to 3:50 P.M.Who? your name and address: Steve Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames IA 50010others 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 first noticed the bird as it swam among hundred of scarp and mergansers because of the large amount of white it showed. At first, I thought the bird must be a Horned Grebe, but the largely white head and stubby, duck-like bill eliminated that possibility.

The bird was slightly smaller than a Lesser Scaup and a little larger than some nearby Ruddy Ducks. The sides, breast, throat and entire head were white, except for a ~~light~~ dusky area on the cheek. The back was light brown while the wings were a little darker brown colored. The bird raised one of its wings once, and I was able to see that the entire underwing was dark. The bill was dark and very stubby. The bird was probably a female because it lacked ~~the~~ long streamers on the tail.

Similar species and how eliminated:
All other ducks eliminated by the ~~small~~ small size, largely white head and body, dark wings, and stubby bill.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NoIf yes, explain: —

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
light was good with sky mostly cloudy and sun almost behind me.
Estimated viewing distance of 150-200 yards. I used a BTL 20x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:
I have seen Oldsquaws in Massachusetts.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

NBS Field Guide to Birds of North AmericaHow long before field notes made? — this form completed? 48 hours

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