

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species?King Rail

How Many?1

Location?Big Wall Lake, Wright Co.

Habitat?large cattail marsh

Date?14 Sep 1986

Time?5:15 P.M.

Observers Name and address:Steve Dinsmore, Ames

Others who saw bird:none

Description of bird:The chunky body, short legs and neck, and short tail, which it constantly flicked, identified the bird as a rail. As I watched the bird walking along the edge of the marsh, I noted the following marks; the bird was quite large(almost as big as a coot), back was brown, throat and breast were a light rusty color, flanks and undertail coverts were barred black-and-white, and the bill was at least as long as the head and very slightly decurved

Similar species and how eliminated:The large size and large bill eliminate Virginia Rail. The rusty(not grayish) underparts eliminate the very similar Clapper Rail(!!).

Viewing conditions and equipment:Viewing conditions were o.k.--the bird was seen during a light drizzle on an overcast day. Estimated viewing distance was 20 ft at the closest. I used Nikon 8 x 23 binoculars.

Previous experience with species:I have seen several King Rails in Iowa.

References consulted:NGS Field Guide to the Birds of North America

How long before field notes were made?none made

How long before this form was completed?3 hours