

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

Glasson

1. Species Yellow Rail Coturnicops noveboracensis 2. Number 1
 3. Location Marshy area about 1/2 mi NE Swan Lake. Not Swan Lake Road, S. of Pine Stand
 4. Date: 28 April 1980 5. Time Bird Seen: 06:30 not sure of exact time to 08:00
 6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):

ok The Rail was seen in flight heading away from us, which only gave us a view of its back and wings. The shape and flight was that of rail, we had already flushed a Sora that day. The bird's secondaries were white, with white also trailing into the primaries so that much of the wings trailing edge was white. The back of the bird was a dark color, but had very visible pale yellow stripes running vertically.

The size seemed similar to a Sora. Definitely not larger, but would have a hard time saying how much smaller I thought it was.

7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard
 8. Description of behavior: it was flushed from our right and flew left, Dropping into the grass straight ahead of us.
 9. Habitat - general: marsh
 specific: noted no ~~any~~ plant species
 10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain: First flushed ~~in~~ from drier grassy area (I didn't see) ^{and time flushed from} water edge to dry grass area
The Sora is the only other bird that is similar. It has no white on its wings. I've never noticed back striping to be so ~~so~~ evident
 11. Distance (how measured)? flushed approximately 5 feet from Tom's right, 10 feet from my right
 12. Optical equipment: 8x35 Bushnell binoculars
flew ~~to~~ 20 to 25 feet ahead of us (visual estimates)
 13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): good light, sunny at time. Sun was in East. On our and the birds left.
 14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: On 9/27/74 I reported a Yellow Rail at Cone Marsh. I was a beginning birder. It was probably an immature Sora - I saw no wing patches. (It didn't flush) Have become familiar with the Sora since then
 15. Other observers: Tom Staudt

16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes
 17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: none

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description: Birds of N. America. Influenced me to describe the white continuing into the primaries. This book shows it limited to the secondaries

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? This exact description written only today. Taken from notes written 3 days after sighting
 Signature: Marilyn Smith Glasson Address: 658 Hawkeye Ct.

Date: 18 May 1980 City, State: Iowa City, IA