

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Surf Scoter (1 female), 9 Apr 1984, Coralville Res. (Dupont Bridge), Johnson Co. Iowa.

Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Other observers: none

Time: 12:25-12:35 PM

Habitat: Old backwater area at upper end of reservoir.

A scoter with large chunky body, black; larger than other ducks in area. No trace of white in wing. Very straight forehead, with some knobiness at base of bill. A circular white dot at base of bill; behind the eye there was a slightly larger, more oval white dot--more vertical than horizontal. The bird flew over the road in front of me with a male scaup. It was larger and heavier bodied than the scaup and appeared all black--no white seen in the wing.

Song: not heard.

Behavior: swimming; later flying.

Conditions: 75 to 50 yards; overcast day; 20x scope and 8x binocs.

Similar species: Head shape with very straight forehead and lack of white in wing eliminates White-winged Scoter. Large heavy black duck eliminates other species.

Previous experience: Seen once before in Iowa; many seen on West Coast.

References/time used: Looked at field guides after returning home.

Time of notes/typed: Notes dictated while bird present. Typed two hours later.