

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Yellow Rail How many? 2Location? Dookittle Prairie, Story County

Type of habitat? _____

When? date(s): 28 April, 1985 time: 10:30 AM to 12:00 PMWho? your name and address: Steve Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames IA 50010others with you: Jim Dinsmore, George + Gordon Brown, Paul Martsching; all of Ames

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.

Both birds were flushed at distances of 25-50', making viewing fairly easy.

Both birds showed a dark back and dark wings with white wing patches on the secondaries.

When they flew, their legs dangled behind, typical of rails. Their flights were rather weak - they never flew more than 100 feet, making it rather easy to flush them again.

I saw one of the birds on the ground after it had landed. The back was almost black and the underparts were a buffy yellow color. The bill was chicken-like and dark. Leg color was not seen.

The birds appeared about the same size as ~~the~~ the Sora we flushed that day.

The birds were flushed at different ends of the prairie in a short time period, making it certain that the 2 birds were different birds.

Similar species and how eliminated:

other rails by white wing patches and yellowish color.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain: _____

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

Light good - mid-day with clear sky. Estimated viewing distance of 25-75 feet. I used Nikon 8x23 binoculars.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

References and persons consulted before writing description:

I have seen 1 other Yellow Rail in hand in Ames in 1983 - 13 April, 1983

How long before field notes made? _____ this form completed? 2 days

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