

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species?Oldsquaw

How Many?1 female

Location?Saylorville Reservoir, Polk Co.

Habitat?swimming with coots and Bonaparte's Gulls on large lake

Date?29 Apr 1988

Time?5:13-7:05 p.m.

Observers Name and address:Steve Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA 50010

Others who saw bird:Eugene & Eloise Armstrong, Bery Engebretsen

Description of bird:I was looking through some gulls and coots on the lake when I noticed a very odd looking bird swimming with some Bonaparte's Gulls. After a few seconds, I recognized the bird as an Oldsquaw. The most obvious feature of the bird was the white "goggle" around each eye. The bill was rather small and sloped down from the forehead like the bill of a Canvasback or scoter. The bill was dark. The rest of the bird was mottled with dark brown and light brown patches. When the bird rolled on its side to preen, I could see that the underparts were white. There were no other ducks for comparison, but the bird struck me as being about the size of a scaup. On at least two occasions, the bird flew because of approaching boats. In flight, I could see the all dark underwings characteristic of this species. Note: on 3 May, I saw what must have been the same bird at Big Creek State Park, located only a few miles north of Saylorville.

Similar species and how eliminated:No other duck has the white "goggle", stubby bill, and dark underwings that this bird showed.

Viewing conditions and equipment:Viewing conditions were o.k., although the bird was a long ways off. Estimated viewing distance was 500+ yards. I used a Buschnell 20-45x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species:I have seen several Oldsquaw in Iowa, including at least three other birds earlier this spring. I have also seen thousands of Oldsquaw along the east coast.

References consulted:none

How long before field notes were made?none made

How long before this form was completed?written on 29 Apr 1988-updated on 3 May 1988