

8 July, 1978

Dear Nick:

This will no doubt tax your credulity. Yesterday Beany (Elizabeth Clarkson) Zwart, a columnist for the Trib called to say a woman on 26th St. had seen 3 Steller's Jays. When I expressed some doubt she said she would accept this person's word as readily as Gladys'.

I immediately called the woman and learned the birds had been seen only briefly on the one day. She sounded quite knowledgable and agreed to document the record.

I saw her this morning and am ready to accept her statement. She feeds a lot and is familiar with the common birds. Unfortunately, she had not birded in the west and was not familiar with the Stellers. At the same time, I don't see how this species could be confused with any other. The very large crest was the first thing she noticed, and this sets it apart from the other corvids.

The tornadic winds we have experienced in the past few days have probably driven a number of strays into the area, but no other reports have been received.

*Mud*

Verifying documentation of an extraordinary sight record

1. Species *Stellers Jay*
  2. Number *3*
  3. Location *close to house*
  4. Date *5 July 1978*
  5. Time bird seen ..... *3 P.M.* to *only momentarily*
  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 WAS ACTUALLY SEEN IN THE FIELD) *Larger than Blue Jay, larger crest.*
  7. Description of voice, if heard *odd call, different from Blue Jay*
  8. Description of behavior *Fluttering about, similar to courtship*
  9. Habitat *in adjacent yard.*
  10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7, & 8.  
*Blue Jay*
  11. Distance *10-15 feet*
  12. Optical equipment *none*
  13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you. *bright*
  14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: *none*
  15. Other observers: *none*
  16. Did the others agree with your identification?
  17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:
  18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this description: *Referred to Robbins after observation*
  19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?
- Signature *Miss Paul Collins*  
Address *1017-26th Des Moines Iowa*  
Date. *July 8, 1978*