

Black Rail  
12 Jul 1994  
State Line M., Kossuth Co., IA  
\*Eugene/Eloise Armstrong  
IBL 64:108; 65:81

Record Number: 94-23  
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Eugene/Eloise Armstrong, Booneville [3 Nov 1994]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 64:108

Records Committee: IBL 65:81

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D, At last! All field marks described and call too!

A-D, Date seems a bit odd, but who knows with this species. Eugene was tricked once by a thought-to-be Black Rail. I don't think he was this time.

A-D, Glossy black color, rusty nape, and barring on underbelly were all observed. Call was nice. Close comparison with young Virginia Rails helpful.

A-D, A bird well seen and heard is unusual.

A-D, This was an excellent description of an adult Black Rail. I believe these birds are more common than we think, but are difficult to see well.

DOCUMENTATION FORM  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

94-23

What species? Black Rail How many? 1

Location? State Line Marsh

Type of Habitat? Short grass - water clump of rushes

When? date(s): July 12, 1994 time: 10:00AM to 10:30 AM

Who? your name and address: Eugene & Eloise Armstrong

Others with you: none Booneville, Ia

Others before or after you: none that we know of

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, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Small Black nearly glossy rail type bird foraging in marsh. Hard to study because of sneaking rapidly from one clump of rushes to next. Close concentration was required, so you picked a field mark and as the bird made his move you carefully checked to see if it was present. Finally all field marks were ~~seen~~ seen.

Small all black bird with short bill. Wore a beautiful rust color wing had small white patches ~~on~~ <sup>side</sup> <sup>under belly</sup> <sup>barred</sup> <sup>dark</sup> <sup>along</sup>

Ground field note - Rail called 3 times from marsh

Similar species; how eliminated:

Kik Kee de  
Kik Kee de  
Kik Kee de no doubt

2 young Virginia Rails were close by - they were dark but had fuzzy plumage, light black underneath the Black rail was nearly glossy & fuzzy

Both visible at once

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? no  
If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.  
excellent at 20-30 yds

20-40 1/4 Iowa cloudy &  
Bushnell 7-35 light rain

Previous experience with species and similar ones:  
Had seen only into short ~~to~~ grassy wet area once several years ago short visibility good

References and persons consulted before writing description:

How long before field notes made? \_\_\_\_\_ this form completed? long enough

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).