

Red Phalarope
29 Nov 1994
Spirit L., Dickinson Co., IA
*L. Schoenewe

Record Number: 94-35
Classification: A-P

Schoenewe 1996; P-0421, IBL 65:15, 81

DOCUMENTATION

Lee A. Schoenewe, 518 W. 4th St., Spencer 51301 [6/26/95*]

PHOTOGRAPH

Lee A. Schoenewe, P-0421

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 65:15

Records Committee: IBL 65:81

Schoenewe, L. A. 1996. Red Phalarope at Spirit Lake. IBL 66:111-112.

VOTE: 2 A-P, 5 A-D

A-D, Photo is supportive, but bill is blurred and size hard to determine. The behavior is that of a phalarope. The black nape, and stout bill eliminate other phalaropes.

A-D, Bill description and solid gray back OK for identification. I think you had to be there for photo to be of much help.

A-D, Cannot see enough detail in copy of photo to tell if was a Phalarope, let alone a Red Phalarope.

A-P, Photo shows diagnostic silhouette; along with good description is convincing documentation of ID.

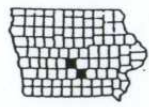
REVOTE (at spring 1995 IOU meeting with photo): 4 A-P

94-35

TWO LAUGHING GULLS IN CENTRAL IOWA

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE

On 3 September 1995, Jim Sinclair and I saw an adult Laughing Gull in basic plumage with a group of about 300 Ring-billed Gulls east of Swan, Marion County. The gulls were feeding on a shallow pond on part of the Runnells Wildlife Area. We studied the bird from 11:00 a.m.-12:24 p.m. at distances as close as 50 m. The bird was about 20% smaller than the average Ring-billed Gull and noticeably slimmer and longer-winged. Other features noted include the slate-gray mantle and black primaries, lack of any white separating the black primaries from the gray upperwing, the mostly white head with a grayish smudge on the nape behind the eyes, black legs, and the black bill with a pronounced gonydeal angle. The size and shape of the bill were similar to those of nearby Ring-billed Gulls. The very tip of the bill appeared pale. Based on these features, we aged the bird as an adult in basic (third-basic) plumage. I took several photos of the bird as it rested on the mud and water. This bird remained here through 6 September.



On 19 October 1995 I observed an adult Laughing Gull in basic plumage above the dam of Saylorville Reservoir in Polk County. I was scanning a large flock of Ring-billed Gulls feeding in the middle of the lake when I noticed a slightly smaller gull with a dark gray mantle and upperwings, dark underwings, a black bill, and a nearly white head. I studied the bird in detail from 9:40-10:32 a.m. and from 1:45-2:20 p.m. The plumage of this bird was similar to that of the bird described above. Additionally, I noted that the undersides of the primaries were black, not pale like nearby Franklin's Gulls. I aged the bird as an adult in basic (third-basic) plumage based on the wing and tail patterns. I returned the next day (20 October) and found the bird feeding with Ring-billed Gulls in the same area.

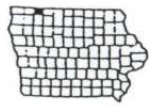
Laughing Gulls are rare visitors to Iowa, but records appear to be on the increase. These represent the 16th and 17th records of Laughing Gulls in Iowa, all of them since 1989. By month, the records are from April (2), May (1), July (5-two remaining into August), August (3), September (4), and October (2). It now appears that a few Laughing Gulls reach Iowa every year. A few adults are seen in spring, probably migrants that overshoot their normal breeding grounds. Post-breeding dispersal in late summer and fall (July-October) produces the majority of the records, usually juveniles.

4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014

RED PHALAROPE AT SPIRIT LAKE

LEE A. SCHOENEWE

On 29 November 1994, I decided to take the afternoon off work and head for Spirit Lake in Dickinson County. I had received a phone call from Stephen Dinsmore who indicated several Oldsquaw had been seen on Spirit Lake. He also said that Gordon Brown of Ames had reported a Red Phalarope off Marble Beach over the weekend. I figured there was a good chance to add an Oldsquaw to my life list, and the Red Phalarope was, well, a hope and a prayer.



Spirit Lake still had a lot of open water, but cold to the north would change that overnight. I stopped first at Marble Beach but found nothing unusual. I worked around the north shore of the lake without success and pulled into Shore Acres drive to check Trickle Slough and Angler's Bay.

There were no ducks bobbing on the rough water of the bay, but as I turned north I noticed a sandpiper-shaped bird swimming in loose circles in the quiet water along the point. Training the scope on the bird, I saw the dark, stout bill; the receding dark crown extending to the nape of the neck; and the solid, light gray back to distinguish it as a Red Phalarope. It was the first for northwestern Iowa and for me.

I ran back to the truck for my camera and although the phalarope cooperated, the best of the resulting photos was barely adequate as support for my documentation of the bird. The dismal photographic effort also served to reinforce my need to try field sketches.

Cold weather froze the water of Angler's Bay that night, and the Red Phalarope could not be relocated the next day. As for me, missing the Oldsquaw just provided a good opportunity for a search on another day.

518 West 4th St., Spencer, IA 51301

SABINE'S GULLS AT SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE

On 14 September 1995, I saw a juvenile Sabine's Gull above the dam of Saylorville Reservoir in Polk County. I watched the bird from 9:40-10:30 a.m. as it rested on the water with a small flock of Ring-billed Gulls and later flew around the south end of the lake. The upperparts, shoulders, back of the neck, and crown were brown. The forehead was white. The bill was black and straight, and much smaller than the bill of a Ring-billed Gull. The eye was dark. In flight, the wing pattern was striking: outer primaries black, secondary coverts brown (same color as mantle), and the remainder of upperwing white. The underwing was pale. The tail was forked with a narrow black terminal band. The legs were dull flesh-colored. I saw two juvenile Sabine's Gulls here on 19 September, and at least one juvenile remained through at least 8 October. This is about the 13th record of a Sabine's Gull in Iowa. The vast majority are juveniles and are seen in September and October. At least five juveniles were seen in Iowa in fall 1995 (IBL 66:22).



4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014

RUFF AT CORALVILLE RESERVOIR

THOMAS H. KENT

On 21 August 1995, I was at the north end of Half Moon Lake on Greencastle Avenue near the old DuPont Bridge at the Coralville Reservoir in Johnson County when a flock of shorebirds landed on a spit 30 yards in front of me. One was larger. It had bright orange legs and a black smudge across the upper breast. At that point I knew I was looking at a reeve (female Ruff). It was 25 percent larger than Pectoral Sandpipers, and slightly larger and bulkier-bodied than



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DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species How many? RED PHALAROPE - 1
 Location? ANGLERS BAY, BIG SPIRIT LAKE, DICKINSON CO.

Type of habitat?

When? date(s): 11/29/94 Time: . 3:10 - 3:40 PM

Who? your name and address

LEE A. SCHOENEWE 518 W. 4th ST. SPENCER, IA. 51301

Others with you NONE

Others before and after you

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also describe voice and behavior. SMALL BIRD W/ SANDPIPER SHAPE SWIMMING IN OPEN WATER. STOUT, DARK BILL. WHITE FOREHEAD W/ BLACK FROM CROWN DOWN BACK OF NECK TO NAPE. SOLID, LIGHT GRAY BACK EXTENDING TO SIDES OF BREAST. ALL WHITE UNDERNEATH. THE BIRD WAS SWIMMING IN LOOSE CIRCLES AND FEEDING ON WATER'S SURFACE.

Similar species and how eliminated: RED-NECKED PHALAROPE - STOUT BILL AND SOLID GRAY BACK; WILSON'S PHALAROPE - STOUT BILL AND BLACK ON BACK OF HEAD AND NECK

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: CLOUDY DAYLIGHT; 50-100 YDS; 8X40 BINOCULARS
 20X-60X SCOPE

Previous experience with this species and similar ones:

WILSON'S AND RED-NECKED PRIOR

References and persons consulted before writing description:

AS-MASTER GUIDE TO BIRDING; PETERSON - EASTERN BIRDS

How long before field notes made? IMMEDIATELY

this form completed? 3 HOURS

Mail original form to field editor for this season.