

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 10/18/94

Red Phalarope

8 Nov 1992

Rathbun Reservoir, Appanoose Co., IA

*Kent, *Cummins, *Fuller

IBL 63:18, 69, Kent 1993, P-0344

Record Number: 92-36

Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATIONS

Thomas H. Kent (8 Nov), 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246

Ray Cummins (8 Nov), 609 S. Main St., Centerville, IA 52544

Jim Fuller (9 Nov), 6 Longview Knoll, Iowa City, IA 52240

PHOTOGRAPHS

T. H. Kent (8 Nov), P-0344

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 63:18

Records Committee: IBL 63:69

Kent, T. H. 1993. Red Phalarope at Rathbun Reservoir. IBL
63:82.

VOTE: 7 A-P

A-P, The photos are diagnostic for this species.

A-P, Good details and great photos provided for Red Phalarope.

January 15, 1992-Terrific northwest winds. Two inches of snow. Wind chill 50 below zero, the worst night I have seen here in 35 years. I am sure the Pine Warbler must have died last night!

January 16, 1992-No warbler.

January 23, 1993-A miracle, the Pine Warbler was here from 9:30-9:50 a.m. It did not return until after 11:00 a.m. This is such a happy day for me. I phone Tim Schantz and the Iowa Rare Bird Alert.

The Pine Warbler was last seen on 10 February 1992. Many birders from around the state came to see it. Black kept birders updated by placing a note on a stake in the front yard.

Pine Warblers are one of the few warblers that winter mainly in the southern United States. They prefer pine woodlands to breed and winter. On their breeding grounds they are mainly insectivorous. In winter, however, they will eat nutmeats, corn meal, and suet at feeding stations. This is the first report of a Pine Warbler wintering in Iowa. There are winter records for Wisconsin, Illinois, and even as far north as Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia.

A census of coniferous trees around Black's house yielded 45 trees in three square city blocks, somewhat resembling the open pine woodlands that Pine Warblers typically winter in.

Cordova Park, Route 1, Otley, IA 50214 and Pleasantville, IA 50225

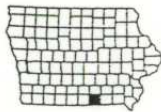
RED PHALAROPE AT RATHBUN RESERVOIR

THOMAS H. KENT

On 8 November 1992 at 7:55 a.m. I was driving the partially flooded road along the south side of Rathbun Reservoir at Island View Recreation Area in Appanoose County when I noticed a very white looking medium-sized shorebird in a flooded ditch. Its shape and constant spinning behavior identified it as a phalarope. The underparts were all white. The bill was black, straight, and slightly tapered but not to a sharp point. The black on the top of the head extended to a thin black line down the back of the neck and broadened at the base of the neck. There was a broad black mark that included the eye. The back and scapulars were uniform gray (no streaks). The wing coverts were darker. In flight the upper surface of the forewing and back were uniform gray with a well-defined white wing stripe, and darker gray along the trailing edge. The upper tail coverts were lighter than the tail. There was a gray wash on the sides of the breast. On the standing bird, the primaries appeared black. The legs were black.

The uniform forewing and back and the thickness of the bill separated this species from Red-necked Phalarope. Also, the late fall date is not unusual for Red Phalarope records in the Midwest. This bird was quite cooperative and was seen by others during the rest of the day and the next day.

211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246



I.O.U. BUSINESS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Saturday, 3 April 1993, Algona, 1-3:45 p.m.
ANN M. BARKER, FOR HILDA SICKELS

Present: Ann Barker (presiding), Pam Allen, Bob Cecil, Rick Hollis, Diane Porter, Mark Proescholdt, Harold White. Others present: Reid Allen, Beth Brown, Dan Dorrance, Ann Johnson, Matt Kenne, Tom Kent, Beth Proescholdt, Lee Schoenewe, Carol Thompson, and Russ Widner.

The minutes of the 7 November 1992 meeting were approved as revised (motion by Allen, seconded by Proescholdt).

Treasurer Allen distributed financial statements for 1992, including a balance sheet, statement of support, revenues and expenses, and membership information, as well as a final copy of the 1993 budget. The report was accepted.

Committee Reports

Records: Kent reported that the final batch of 1992 records is being reviewed and the report should be on time. A subcommittee will review old records which were not reviewed in 1982. An amendment will be made to the committee's working guidelines which will make it easier to request a re-review and more difficult to downgrade a record. Information on costs of archiving records was distributed and discussed. Kent questioned the committee's jurisdiction over field reports and photographs. It was clarified that the committee was given responsibility for archiving all photographs as well as all records (see minutes for 7 December 1991 board meeting). Kent was commended by the board for all of his hard work.

Membership: Names of interested potential members from the feeder survey were given to the committee, and a mailing will be done. Two positions will need to be filled in 1993.

Publications: *Iowa Bird Life* editor Jim Dinsmore will be out of state during fall 1993. He plans to publish issues 2 and 3 of vol. 63 prior to his departure, and issue 4 on his return in December. The journal's annual report was distributed. Expenses for volume 62 were slightly less than projected.

Library-Historical: The committee will need to recommend two members to fill expiring terms this year. Kent reported that the book collection belonging to the late Fred Pierce, former editor of *Iowa Bird Life*, has apparently been sold.

Breeding Bird Atlas: Thompson reported that species accounts are still being written; the committee will meet 2 May. Award certificates will be presented to volunteers at the spring meeting. The committee has asked the board to consider four publication options, as follows:

1. Have the book published by a publisher such as University of Iowa Press. The cost of the book would be around \$50.
2. Give an initial payment such as \$10,000 to the publisher in an effort to keep the cost of the book lower.
3. Let the I.O.U. publish the book, if this is an option.
4. The I.O.U. could print but not distribute the book.

The Department of Natural Resources has committed \$9,000 toward publication. After discussion, it was as moved (Hollis, seconded by White) that a decision on how much to contribute to the publication be tabled until further information about the specific cost of each alternative can be obtained. Motion carried.

Education Booklet Promotion: Hollis reported that Linda Zaletel and the Iowa Conservation Education Council are working on promotion of the booklet. The committee will meet and formulate plans, possibly including a mailing.

Spring Bird Count: Plans are set for the first count to be held 9 May. An announcement will be in the newsletter. The committee has not met.

Field Trip: An annual report was submitted; there are five trips scheduled for 1993. The committee was commended for its excellent organization and hard work.

Nominating: Barker thanked the committee (Jim Dinsmore-chair, Beth Brown, and Beth Proescholdt) for their work in preparing a slate of candidates to run for election to office at the spring meeting. The slate is:

President: Ann Barker
Vice President: Jim Fuller
Board of Directors: O.J. (Bud) Gode,
Matthew Kenne

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Species: Red Phalarope; Number: 1 basic

Location: Rathbun Reservoir, Appanoose Co., IA

Date: 8 November 1992; Time: 7:55 to 8:00, 8:15 to 8:20, and 11:30 a.m.

Name and address: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246.

Others before/with/after: I found the bird and it was seen soon thereafter by Ray Cummins, Tom Johnson, and others. Jim Fuller saw it the next day.

Habitat and circumstances: On the inner edge of a peninsula in a ditch of a recently flooded roadway.

Description of bird: I noticed a very white looking bird with phalarope shape and twisting behavior in a flooded ditch. The underparts were all white. The bill was black, straight, and slightly tapered but not to a sharp point. The black on the top of the head extended to a thin black line down the back of the neck and broadened at the base of the neck. There was a broad black mark that included the eye. The back and scapulars were uniform gray (no streaks). The wing coverts were darker. In flight the upper surface of the forewing and back were uniform gray with a well-defined white wing stripe, and darker gray along the trailing edge. The upper tail coverts were lighter than the tail. There was a gray wash on the sides of the breast. On the standing bird, the primaries appeared black. The legs were black.

Voice: not heard.

Similar species: The uniform forewing and back and the thickness of the bill separate this species from Red-necked Phalarope.

Any one have reservations?: no.

Light: overcast; Distance: as close as 30 feet (est); Optics: 10x binocular, 20x scope, 410 mm lens (photos).

Previous experience: I have seen one in Iowa, and a month ago I saw many on pelagic trips out of Monterey, California.

References before/after viewing: none

Time of notes: after first sighting; Final typing: 2 days.

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

92-36

Species: Red Phalarope (winter) Number: 1

Location: Rathbun Reservoir (Islandview east)

Observer: Ray Cummins 609 s. Main st. Centerville, IA. 52544

Others before/with/after: Tom Kent and many others

Date: 11/08/92 Time Bird Seen: 10:00am to 10:15am

Habitat & circumstances: Located on the mowed grass mudflats being exposed as Lake Rathbun receded.

Description: A medium sized shorebird with a gray back and black mark behind the eye. The habits of this bird identified it as a phalarope. It was either running about picking insects off the water or spin feeding in the deeper areas. The bill was short and thick compared to the very thin bills of other phalaropes. In flight, the wing had a bold white wing stripe.

Description of voice: N/H.

Similarly appearing species: The bill thickness and bold white wing stripe eliminate Red-necked and Wilson's Phalaropes.

Distance (how measured): 5 to 25yds Estimated.

Optical equipment: 20X x 60X Kowa spotting scope.

Light: Good light

Previous experience with species: seen last year at Saylorville.

Anyone have reservations?: No.

Books and references:

Time of field notes: 5 days Final typing: 5 days.

Signature: Raymond L. Cummins Address: 609 S. Main St.
Date: 11-12-92 Centerville, Ia. 52544

DOCUMENTATION OF UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTING

SPECIES: RED PHALAROPE

LOCATION: Shoreline at Island View Recreation Area of Rathbun Reservoir (Appanoose Co.)

DATE & TIME: 9 November, 1992 (7:15-35AM).

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240.

OTHER OBSERVERS: Discovered by Tom Kent. Present when I was there was Tom Johnson.

BACKGROUND: Tom Kent phoned to say that he had found a Red Phalarope at this location. I arrived at first light the following day, and found this bird at the described location immediately.

DESCRIPTION: This was a very light colored shorebird which gave a first impression of a large snowy or piping plover. The bird was small-headed and long-necked. The head was patterned black and white, the other upperparts were light gray and the front and underparts were generally white. The head was rounded on the crown, and the bill was thick and dark, and approximately the same length as the width of the head. The eye was dark, and had a dark smudge around it, thickest on the back. The side and top of the head were white, but the back of the head had a dark area which extended down to the back where it blended into the light gray back. The back and folded wing were light gray, but there appeared to be a small area of black. The throat, side of neck, breast, and belly were all white to off-white. The legs were dark.

BEHAVIOR: Besides picking at the mud and walking the shoreline, the bird would walk into the water and start swimming. Twice, I saw it twirl around while swimming. No vocalization was heard. The bird was extremely tame, and could be very closely approached.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Of the three species of phalarope, only the Red Phalarope has a bill that is relatively short (Length not greater than head width) and thick. In basic plumage, both Red-necked and Wilson's Phalaropes have darker gray to black upperparts, compared to the light gray of this bird.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: I saw one bird at Saylorville Reservoir on 26 September, 1991, which had not yet completely molted into basic plumage.

VIEWING CONDITIONS and OPTICS: Often the bird was so close (8-12 feet) that no optics could be used, but Swift Audubon binoculars (8.5 X 44) were used the rest of the time at distances of 15-40 feet. It was early morning on a cloudy day, and I was looking south to southwest.

FIELD NOTES & REFERENCES: Field notes were made in the car immediately after viewing, and no field guides were consulted until after field notes were completed. That evening I looked at National Geographic Guide. This form was typed three days later on November 12th.

OTHER OBSERVERS: Discovered by Tom Kent. Present when I was there was Tom Johnson.

BACKGROUND: Tom Kent phoned to say that he had found a Red Phalarope at this location. I arrived at first light the following day, and found this bird at the described location immediately.

DESCRIPTION: This was a very light colored shorebird which gave a first impression of a large snowy or piping plover. The bird was small-headed and long-necked. The head was patterned black and white, the other upperparts were light gray and the front and underparts were generally white. The head was rounded on the crown, and the bill was thick and dark, and approximately the same length as the width of the head. The eye was dark, and had a dark smudge around it, thickest on the back. The side and top of the head were white, but the back of the head had a dark area which extended down to the back where it blended into the light gray back. The back and folded wing were light gray, but there appeared to be a small area of black. The throat, side of neck, breast, and belly were all white to off-white. The legs were dark.

BEHAVIOR: Besides picking at the mud and walking the shoreline, the bird would walk into the water and start swimming. Twice, I saw it swim around while swimming. No vocalization was heard. The bird was extremely tame, and could be very closely approached.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Of the three species of phalaropes, only the Red Phalarope has a bill that is relatively short (length not greater than head width) and thick. In basic plumage, both Red-necked and Wilson's Phalaropes have darker gray to black upperparts, compared to the light gray of this bird.

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Red Phalarope P-0344
Rathbun Reservoir, Appanoose Co.
8 Nov 1992 T. H. Kent

92-36

X 000 +000 4000N 946 11.1-023

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