

Black Rail
8 May 1991
Cone Marsh, Louisa Co., IA
*Brian Blevins
IBL 62:71

Record Number: 91-08
Classification: NA

DOCUMENTATION: Brian Blevins

REFERENCES

Field Reports: none
Records Committee: IBL 62:71

VOTE: 2-A-D, 5-NA

NA, a species as unusual as a Black rail needs to be seen to eliminate all doubts.

NA, This record is convincing as it fits the time and location one would expect Black Rail to occur in Iowa. As a documentation, it is, perhaps, about what one would expect of a species that is nocturnal and secretive. There remains some doubt, however, and I am reluctantly voting NA. I would urge the observer to try again next year and record the call in the field.

NA, It is my understanding that the other two birders present did not hear the callbacks. This and the fact that only two calls were noted is not enough verification for me to accept this record.

A-D, As you can imagine, this is a difficult record to evaluate. However, if it was in appropriate habitat, at an appropriate time of year, responded to a Black Rail tape, and sounded like a Black Rail, then it probably was a Black Rail. Although it was not specifically mentioned in the documentation, I presume that the response you heard sounded like the bird on the tape.

NA, I would like to see the committee set up criteria for acceptance of Black Rail reports. We have not been very consistent in the past. The description of the song sounds reasonable. Why did not the other observers document the bird? I am willing to change my vote after discussion.

NA, It is extremely difficult for someone to interpret a written description of a call note or song of a bird, even one so diagnostic as a Black Rail. This could be some type of insect call that was misinterpreted by the documenter. A recording of the bird responding to the tape is needed here.

A-D, Acceptable with its distinctive call.

