

Field notes Spring 1981 - 1

NEWLON

cormorant dc 8 Sandy Beach 4-26  
✓ 1 Con Falls 5-16

✓ w-f goose 38 3-7; 80 3-25 Cone Marsh

black duck 2 3-7 Cone Marsh  
1 4-3 Swan Lake  
✓ 1 5-10 Sandy Bch.

✓ osprey 2 4-11 Cone Marsh

red-tailed hawk 6 (+4 buteo sp) 5-10 Conalville Res → Amawa.  
(cracker late for such large numbers)

✓ cattle egret 1 Cone Marsh 4-11

### shorebirds

semipal. plover 25 5-16 Con Falls  
✓ pec. sandpiper 500 4-26 " "  
✓ lesser yellowlegs 350 4-26 " "  
✓ dowitcher sb 7 5-10, 12 5-16 " "

(broad pale feather edges to back + some wing-coverts;  
tertials = broad orange-buff edges + crossbands, round  
spots at sides of breast, orange-buff underparts,  
much white on lower belly + under-tail coverts.)

woodcock 1 5-14 Amawa woods.

### flycatchers

✓ willow 3 HWP 5-22  
✓ o-s 1 HWP 5-25

### swallows

✓ tree 1 3-15 Cone M  
✓ n-w 1 4-15 IC

(cliff, bank, barns, ch. swift,  
nighthawk first obs 4/25-6)

### titmice

2 singing HWP 5-23

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### blackbirds

- ✓ Brewen's f Cone M. 3-23

### shrikes

loggerhead 2 e. aprul SW of Swan Lake  
1 e. of IC 5-24

### warbblers

- ✓ y-b chat 1 singing HHP 5-8 to 5-24
- yellow: abundant Cone Marsh, HHP, CoR in May.
- ✓ Pa. waterthrush 15-10 Amara woods.
- ✓ Connecticut 2 5-22, 1 5-23 HHP
- ✓ Mourning 5 5-20 1 5-22 HHP  
(a possible Kentucky heard briefly 5-23 HHP; unusual location)

### vireos

- ✓ W-e 1 singing HHP 5-12 → 5-26. (absent from one of their usual locations here)
- Bell's 3 singing HHP 5-12 → 5-26.

vireos generally seemed fewer this spring, as did thrushes + flycatchers.

### sparrows etc

- ✓ LeContes 4 4-11 Cone Marsh.
- Harris's 2 5-3 Williams Prairie.

townsies not present at 2 usual locations in HHP to 5/26.

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

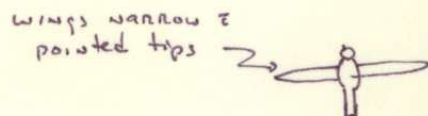
1. Species Western grebe 2. Number 1
3. Location Sandy Beach, Coralville Reservoir, Johnson Co IA
4. Date: 5-10-81 5. Time Bird Seen: 3 PM to 3:20 PM
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):  
size of large duck, long slender neck, near length of body, carried upright.  
long slender pointed bill.  
Underparts pure white. Upperparts from crown to tail black. Black comes down on side of face past level of eye.
7. Description of voice, if heard: —
8. Description of behavior: swam, dived. stayed well out in center of reservoir.
9. Habitat - general: large reservoir, surrounded by forest + cropland.  
specific:
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:  
long neck + pointed bill indicate a grebe; large size + color patterns eliminate other grebes.
11. Distance (how measured)? 200 - 350 yds est
12. Optical equipment:  
8x40 binocs.  
25x60 scope.
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):  
sun at 90° angle.
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:  
have seen all N. Am. grebes in IA, MA, WA, UTch, TX; including many westerns in WA, UTch.
15. Other observers: Carol Newlin, Cal. + Benie Knight.
16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:  
T. Kent made original sighting
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:  
—
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?  
Notes made after returning home.
- Signature: Michael Newlin Address: 408 Water St
- Date: 5-23-81 City, State: Iowa City IA 52240

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species PEREGRINE 2. Number 1  
3. Location Sandy Beach, n. shore of Coralville Reservoir, Johnson Co, IA.  
4. Date: 4-26-81 5. Time Bird Seen: 12:15 to 12:20 PM

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 actually was seen in the field):

Size: larger than rock dove, sl. smaller than crow.  
build: large round head, long square tail. long pointed wings  
coloration: dark brown above, paler below. strongly 'capped' appearance to head.  
CSN observed 'side burns' (dark bars on side of face continuous w cap.) No dark axillary patch obs (though conditions not ideal).  
Tail dark, uniform, unbanded.



7. Description of voice, if heard: —

8. Description of behavior: flushed shorebirds off mudflat, then flew off to N; wings beats deep + flappy; found a thermal + soared up until lost to sight in glare. In soaring wings held straight out from body, tail not fanned.

9. Habitat - general: arm of reservoir with mudflats, willow thickets.  
specific: reservoir set amid cropland, pasture, forest, some 'suburban' housing.

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain: unbanded tail + large size eliminate merlin, heavy contrast between under + upper parts, 'moustache', lack of dark axillaries eliminate prairie falcon. (Size + build definitely rule out other types of hawks.)

11. Distance (how measured)? 100 - 1000 yds (est)  
12. Optical equipment: 8x40 binocs.

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): initially sun at a 90° angle to line between bird + observer; as bird rose it disappeared into the glare of the sky.

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: have seen all N. Am. falcons except Aplomado, most other N. Am. hawks. Have seen numerous peregrines (including 4 in IA) and several prairie falcons, two yrs.

15. Other observers: Carl S Newlin

16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: —

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description: —

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?  
Notes made immediately thereafter. Transcribed 5-23-81

Signature: Michael C. Newlin Address: 208 Wales St  
Michael C. Newlin

Date: 5-23-81 City, State: Zwaga City IA 52240

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Bewick's Wren 2. Number 2

3. Location Iowa City, Johnson Co., IA

4. Date: 24 April 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: 9:15 AM to 9:20 AM

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 actually was seen in the field):

Small bird, body about size of house wren but more slender. Tail only slightly shorter than body length. Folded wing tips barely came past base of tail. Bill long, slender, pointed, slightly recurved. Bill + legs dark grey. Tail often cocked above back. Feet rather large.

Upperparts rich brown (♂), grey-brown (♀). Underparts pale grey, with some darker indistinct mottlings. Dark line through eye, pale stripe above eye [these more marked in ♂ than ♀] upperside of tail dark. Underside of tail: central feathers dark, outer feathers white with dark crossbars.

On 5.13 discovered nest - a saucer of twigs 6" wide 1 1/2" high, on a beam under the eaves of the toolshed. ♀ on nest, ♂ bringing insects. Could hear no young.

On 5.25 nest deserted - no eggs or young inside. A single egg found outside nest; egg pitted as if pecked or clawed.

7. Description of voice, if heard: on 1<sup>st</sup> sighting (5-24) both birds continually gave a buzzy 'bggee', like a gnatcatcher but much lower in pitch. Also a 'tek' note.

8. Description of behavior: 9.24: moved rapidly through trees, continually emitting 'zee' notes; 5.13 ♂ carrying insects to incubating female; 5.21 both birds scolding at man <sup>(over)</sup> in toolshed.

9. Habitat - general:

specific: toolshed with piles of lumber, plumbing material, junk, near edge of a forested ravine; on other side is a grassy clearing and an apartment complex.

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:

Slender decurved bill, habit of cocking tail, compact body suggest wren. Long tail and song eliminate cowbird, marsh wren, only other species with ~~white~~ white eye stripe.

11. Distance (how measured)?

20-50' east

12. Optical equipment:

8x40 binocs.

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

Sun ~~to~~ at various angles; behind obs. some of the time.

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: have seen Bewick's wren in WNA, WA; have seen all N. Am wrens.

15. Other observers: C. S. Newlin, N. Palmi, T. Steudt.

16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

James Huntington made original obs.

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? notes made on spot

Signature: Michael C Newlin Address: 408 Wates St

Date: 5-23-81 City, State: Iowa City, IA 52240