

Groove-billed Ani

19 Oct 1987

Jacob Krumm Wildlife Area, Jasper Co., IA

\*Darwin Koenig, \*\*\*\*\*

photos; IBL 58(1) cover, 20, AB 42:17, Koenig 88

Record Number: 87-24

Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATIONS

Darwin Koenig, 19 Oct

Jim Fuller, 22 Oct

Jim Dinsmore, 22 Oct

Francis L. Moore, 23 Oct

Thomas J. Staudt, 23 Oct

Thomas H. Kent, 24 Oct

Ray Cummins, 25 Oct

Robert Cecil, 25 Oct

Peter C. Petersen, 25 Oct

Nicholas "Nick" A. Kubik, 25 Oct

Carl J. Bendorf, 27 Oct

Hank Zaletel, 11 Nov

PHOTOGRAPHS

Bob Myers, 22 Oct, P-0231 (IBL 58:26)

T. H. Kent, 24 Oct, P-0241 (IBL 58(1) cover, AB 42:17)

Brian Blevins, 25 Oct, P-0232

DRAWING

Brain Blevins, 29 Oct 1987 (IBL 58:26)

REFERENCES

Field Reports: 58:20

Koenig, D. 1988. Groove-billed Ani in Jasper County. IBL 58:26

Photographs: IBL 58(1) cover (P-0241), 26 (P-0231), Am. Birds  
42:17 (P-0241)

Records Committee: IBL 58:74

VOTE: 6-I-P, 1-I-P or II

I-P, a very nice bird.

I-P, Excellent group of documentations that convincingly  
describe Groove-billed Ani.

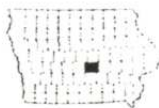
I-P, Many excellent documentations were submitted for this well  
observed bird.

I-P, Well-documented vagrant at expected time of year.

I-P or II (no photos circulated) (I'd like to vote against it  
just to see what you'd do, but won't. I might not survive the  
experiment.)

## GROOVE-BILLED ANI IN JASPER COUNTY

DARWIN KOENIG



At 5:30 p.m. on 19 Oct 1987, I flushed a Groove-billed Ani from a patch of prairie vegetation in the Jacob Krumm Wildlife Area in Jasper Co. The bird was foraging on the ground among the prairie grasses when it flushed and flew to a low tree branch about 20 feet from where I was standing. The ani was observed for about 20 minutes at distances of 10 to 300 feet.

It was approximately the size of a Common Grackle with all black plumage, long floppy tail, and a thick puffin-like bill. The ridge of the upper mandible was slightly lower than the crown of the head and did not curve sharply downward to meet the forehead (unlike the Smooth-billed Ani which has a high-ridged upper mandible, higher than the crown and curving sharply downward to meet the forehead). I did not notice any grooves on the bill during my first observation, but did on later observations. The ani was subsequently seen by numerous observers and photographed. It was still present at the area on 25 November.

This is the third known record of an ani in Iowa. Musgrove (1948) reported on a specimen of a Groove-billed Ani in a private collection in Osceola Co. A Smooth-billed Ani was reported on 22 Oct 1966 from Cedar Rapids (Brown 1971). Both of these records were lacking in details and were later listed as Ani species (Dinsmore et al. 1984).

### LITERATURE CITED

- Brown, W. H. 1971. An annotated list of the birds of Iowa. *Iowa State J. Sci.* 45:387-469.  
Dinsmore, J. J. et al. 1984. *Iowa Birds*. Ames: Iowa State University Press.  
Musgrove, J. W. 1948. The Groove-billed Ani and Mountain Bluebird specimens in Iowa collection. *Iowa Bird Life*. 18:70.

Box 389, Montezuma, IA 50171



Groove-billed Ani, Jacob Krumm Wildlife Area, 22 October 1987. Photo by Bob Myers.



Drawing by Brian Blevins.

## ANOTHER RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD IN CLAYTON CO.

LARRY STONE



When a strange looking hummingbird visited our feeder in St. Olaf on 10-11 July 1986, I at first tried to dismiss the bird as an atypical Ruby-throated, but we later documented it as the first Rufous Hummingbird for Iowa (Stone 1986).

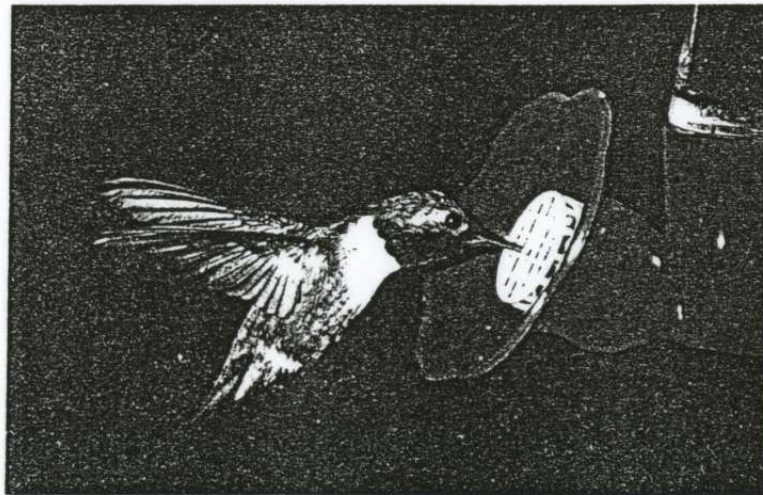
When another Rufous Hummingbird (perhaps the same one as last year?) came to St. Olaf this year, we were able to identify it immediately. This distinctive adult male bird had rusty-bronze plumage on its back, tail, and head. The contrast with the emerald-green Ruby-throateds that also use the feeder was obvious. The gorget was bright, and more orange than on Ruby-throateds and this bird also seemed plumper.

The Rufous was first seen about noon on 29 July, and was last observed about 8 a.m. on 3 August. It apparently visited the feeder periodically for nearly five days, although we were gone part of the time and were unable to keep detailed records. Usually the bird came to a sugar-water feeder a few inches outside a kitchen window, within easy viewing distance of people seated at a table inside. Frequently the Rufous perched in a honeysuckle bush near the feeder, or in an arborvitae tree several yards away. It was relatively tame allowing people to approach to within 15 feet. Assuming the bird was the same one that we saw in 1986, we'll be watching in anticipation of its return in 1988!

### LITERATURE CITED

- Stone, L. 1986. Rufous Hummingbird in Clayton County. *Iowa Bird Life* 56:121-122.

Box 68, St. Olaf, IA 52072



Rufous Hummingbird, St. Olaf, 30 July 1987. Photo by Larry Stone.

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# IOWA BIRD LIFE

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Winter 1987 Volume 58 Number 1



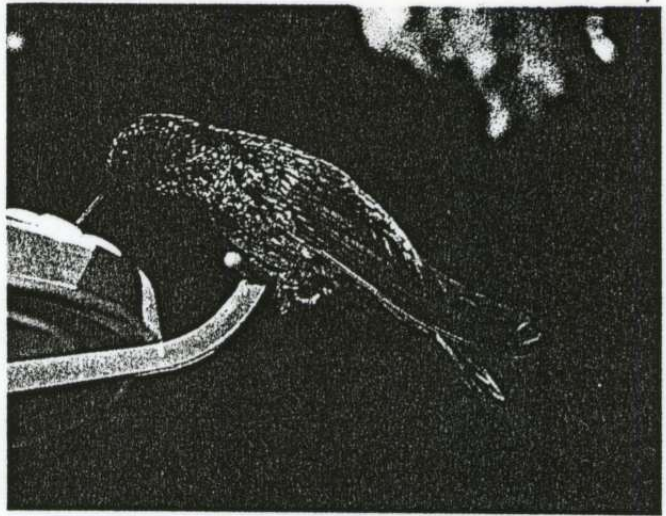
IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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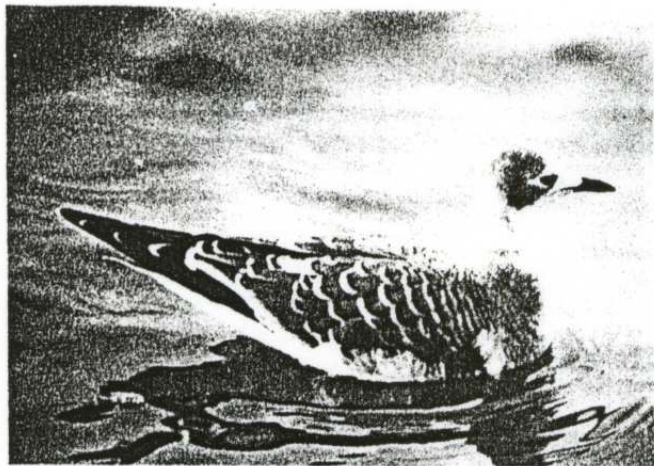




Le Conte's Sparrow near Roanoke, Virginia, October 24, 1987. Photo/Brian Patteson.



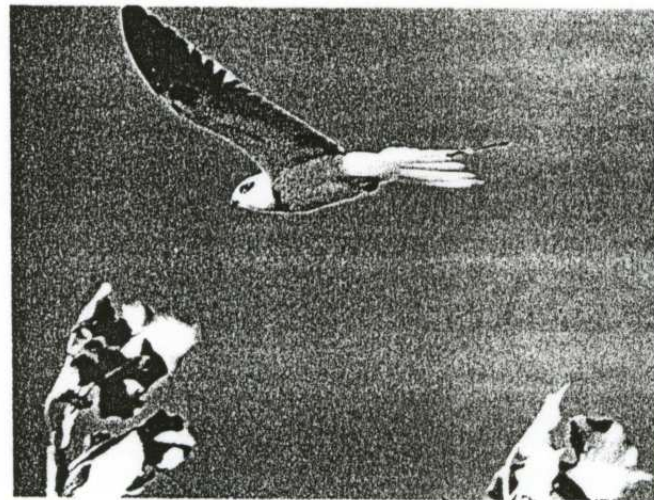
Green Violet-ear at Asheville, North Carolina, October 21, 1987. This tropical species has strayed to Texas and Arkansas, and possibly to California, but no one expected it in North Carolina. Photo/Jerry Young.



Juvenile Sabine's Gull at Wisconsin Point, Superior, Wisconsin, October 28, 1987. Judging by reports from the continent as a whole, the numbers of these pelagic birds appearing in the interior this season were remarkable. Photo/Robbye Johnson.



Groove-billed Ani in Jasper County, Iowa, October 24, 1987. Photo/T. H. Kent.



Black-shouldered Kite in McKenzie County, North Dakota, September 30, 1987. This was a first record for North Dakota, and the kites had evidently nested at this location. Photo/David O. Lambeth.



Prairie Warbler at the Tornillo Rest Stop, Hudspeth County, Texas, November 19, 1987. First record for the El Paso region. Photo/Barry Zimmer.

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## A Groove-billed Ani in Iowa

At 5:30 p.m., October 19, 1987, I flushed a Groove-billed Ani (Crotophaga sulcirostris) from a patch of prairie vegetation in the <sup>Jacob</sup>Krumm Wildlife Area, Jasper County, Iowa. The bird was foraging on the ground among the prairie grasses when it flushed, flying to a low tree branch about 20 feet away from where I was standing. The ani was observed for about 20 minutes at distances of 10 feet to 100 yards.

It was approximately the size of a Common Grackle (Quiscalus quiscula), with all black plumage, long, floppy tail, and thick, puffin-like bill. The ridge of the upper mandible was slightly lower than the crown of the head and did not curve sharply downward to meet the forehead (unlike the Smooth-billed Ani, C. ani, which has a high-ridged upper mandible, higher than the crown and curving sharply downward to meet the forehead). I did not notice any grooves on the bill at the time of my first observation, but did on later observations. The ani was subsequently seen by numerous observers and photographed. It was still present at the area on November 25.

This is the third known record of a ani in Iowa. Musgrove (1948) reported on a specimen of a Groove-billed Ani in a private collection in Osceola County. A Smooth-billed Ani was reported on October 22, 1966 from Cedar Rapids (Brown 1971). Both of these records were lacking in details and were changed to Ani sp. (Dinsmore et al. 1984).

## LITERATURE CITED

- Brown, W.H. 1971. An annotated list of the birds of Iowa.  
Iowa State J. Sci. 45:387-469.
- Dinsmore, J.J., T.H. Kent, D. Koenig, P.C. Petersen, and  
D.M. Roosa. 1984. Iowa birds. Iowa State University  
Press.
- Musgrove, J.W. 1948. The Groove-billed Ani and Mountain  
Bluebird, specimens in Iowa collection. Iowa Bird  
Life 18:70.

Darwin Koenig

Box 389

Montezuma, Iowa 50171

What species? GROOVE BILLED ANI How many? 1Location? KRUMM PRESERVE, JASPER COUNTYType of habitat? BRUSH AND OPEN AREASWhen? date(s): 10/22/87 time: 10:05 to 10:10Who? your name and address: JIM FULLER, 6 LOUQUIEW KNOLL, RR#6, IOWA CITYothers with you: E + A ARMSTRONG, B. PROESCHOLDTothers before or after you: MOB

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

SAW THIS BIRD OFF + ON FOR 5 MINUTES, BUT VERY WELL AT 10-15 YARDS FOR 1-2 MINUTES. THE FOLLOWING WERE THE KEY FEATURES OBSERVED:

SIZE - LARGER THAN COMMON GRACKLE + MUCH SMALLER THAN COMMON CROW.

SHAPE - GENERALLY GRACKLE SHAPE WITH VERY LONG TAIL (WHICH WAS AT LEAST LENGTH OF BODY). VERY MASSIVE BILL AND ROUND HEAD.

COLOR - ENTIRELY BLACK - NO IRRIDESCENCE SEEN. BLACK EYE.

BILL - VERY LARGE BLACK. UPPER MANDIBLE CURVED DOWN UPPER MARGIN + MUCH BULKIER THAN LOWER MANDIBLE. SEVERAL CURVED GROOVES NOTED ON UPPER PORTION OF UPPER MANDIBLE. BILL DID NOT EXTEND HIGHER THAN CROWN OF HEAD.

NO BEHAVIOR ABNORMALITIES, EXCEPT THE BIRD WAS LOW IN BRUSH + WEEDS, AND DID NOT COME UP, BUT STAYED WELL HIDDEN MOST OF TIME. NO VOCALIZATIONS HEARD.

Similar species and how eliminated:

SMOOTH BILLED ANI - BILL DID NOT EXTEND ABOVE HEAD CROWN

GRACKLE - COMMON OR GREATER BOAT TAILED - BILL SIZE + SHAPE

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

PARTLY TO FULLY CLOUDY - 9X36 BINOCULARS @ 30-50 FEET  
GOOD VIEWING CONDITIONS.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: NONE

References and persons consulted before writing description: NATH GEOGRAPHIC GUIDE

How long before field notes made? IMMEDIATE this form completed? 10 HOURS

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240



87-24

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species? Groove-billed Ani

How Many? one

Location? Krumm Wildlife Area, about 4 miles SW of Grinnell in Jasper County

Habitat? overgrown brushy-weedy area

Date? 22 October 1987

Time? first seen at 4.45 p.m., seen again about 5:15

Observers Name and address: Jim Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Drive, Ames

Others who saw bird: Jim and Pauline Mairs, Bob Myers, Darwin Koenig, Steve Dinsmore, Carol Thompson

Description of bird: Fairly large, all black bird with very long tail. Appeared to be somewhat larger than a grackle. The plumage was all black but some irridescence on head and back was evident when I got a good look at the bird. The tail was very long, approaching being equal to the rest of the body in length. The bill was very high and somewhat parrot-shaped with the end curved down and almost hooked. It appeared to be humped upward on the top (but on viewing plate of Smooth-billed, not as high as in that species). In my second view, when the sun was right, grooves were evident running along the length of the bill.

Similar species and how eliminated: Smooth-billed Ani-similar in appearance but doesn't have the grooves on the bill.

Viewing conditions and equipment: First saw birds at distance of about 40 yards and against the sun; was easily identifiable as an ani but couldn't see much more than profile. Later saw it at about 30 feet and with sun behind me; was seen well and could see details of the bill, etc.

Previous experience with species: Have seen Smooth-billed Ani in Trinidad and Tobago but not this species before.

References consulted: Robbins-after I had written down the above description.

How long before field notes were made? Bird noted carefully in the field

How long before this form was completed? Next morning



What species? Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) How many? 1Location? 1/2 mi. N. of I-80 then 2.75 mi. W. on Gravel road in Joseph KrummType of habitat? Brushy, weedy area near small pond in a Co. conservation area.When? date(s): October 23, 1987 time: 8:01 a.m. to 10:43 a.m.Who? your name and address: Francis L. Moore, 336 Fairfield St., Waterloo, IA 50703others with you: Tom Staudt, Iowa City; Cal + Bernie Knight, Iowa City; Opal Uher, Waterlooothers before or after you: m. ob.

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

This bird was approx. (maybe a little larger) than a Common Grackle. Overall coloration was black with a purple and/or green iridescence. The bill was black and seemed extremely large in proportion to the head. The bill did not extend above the crown as a Smooth-billed Ani would have. The tail was black, long and rounded on the end. The wings were black. The eye was dark. The legs were black. When the bird perched on a limb or branch the wings usually drooped down to the perch and the tail drooped almost straight down making the bird look as if it might be ill. The grooves in the upper mandible were noticeable from very close range, running the length of the upper mandible from the forehead at the base of the bill to the tip. The flight profile looked somewhat like an accipiter in flight with a long tail, short rounded wings and a flap, flap, flap, flap, soar; flap, flap, flap, soar type of flight pattern. The head, breast, belly upper and lower tail coverts were also black. Prints of my slides will be submitted at a later date.

Similar species and how eliminated: ~~This~~ This bird did not have the high ridged upper mandible as a Smooth-billed Ani would have; it also had small grooves running from the tip of the upper mandible to the upper base of the bill, Smooth-billed does not have this.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

Sunny most of time, seen from various distances, closest at approx. 15 feet through camera lens, seen using 10x40 binoculars, 20x60 telescope, 600mm telephoto lens.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: No previous experience with any Ani species.References and persons consulted before writing description: NoneHow long before field notes made? 15 min. this form completed? 9 hrs.

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

What species? GROOVE-BILLED ANI How many? 1Location? Jacob Krumboltz Park near GinnellType of habitat? part w/pond large grassy areas, small overgrown wooded areasWhen? date(s): 10-23-67 time: 9:20 to 9:30Who? your name and address: Thomas J. Staudt 1503 Sheridan Ave. Iowa Cityothers with you: Francis Moore, Col & Bernie Knightothers before or after you: Jim Fuller mob.

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

large (larger than common Grackle) all black bird with a long wedged shaped tail. bill was large, black, thick. appearing flat from head on. Grooves noted on upper mandible. no hump on upper mandible. Head very flat topped.

SEEN perched:

humped back appearance, body held low - right to perched branch. tail wagged as if to maintain balance.

outer tail feathers rounded, very long, spread open.

wings held open, away from and hanging below body.

SEEN in flight:

very flat profile, tail longer than body

5-6 flaps then long glide, very buoyant

heard hissing at icterids chasing it in flight

tape was used with no response noted.

Similar species and how eliminated:

smooth billed has ridge on upper mandible, no grooves

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

1st sighting sunny clear, 15 yrd ~~est.~~ 8X

2nd sighting 20ft to 50yds.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: none, one sighting of smooth-billed in FloridaReferences and persons consulted before writing description: noneHow long before field notes made? flight after sighting this form completed? same day



DOCUMENTATION FORM  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

87-24

What species? Green-billed Ani How many? 1

Location? Jacob Krumm P.

Type of Habitat? Edge of creek bottom

When? date(s): 24 Oct 1987 time: 10<sup>00</sup> to 10<sup>15</sup> a.m.

Who? your name and address: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St, Iowa City, IA 52240

Others with you: Brother John Cecil, Charles Fells, Dale and Helen Fye, Tom Stone, Jim Sinclair, Betty Brown, &

Others before or after you: Darwin Koenig, & many others

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.

We search the area for 2 1/2 hours and were standing on the dam when the bird suddenly appeared. It was in a small shrub, in the dense grass, in the open mowed edge, and in a small tree. 60-20 ft. All black except for greenish tinge to neck and back. About body size of Redwing, but tail as long as rest of body. Large, thick bill. Culmen decurved and produced smooth contour with head, except for small dip. No large prominence on bill. Bill appeared triangular when seen head on - wider at top. Fine grrows seen on upper mandible in mid portion. Not very pronounced. Tail appeared straight + curved ~~up~~ and down as a whole.

Similar species; how eliminated:

Body seemed slimmer than a grackle and tail flat (not V). Bill size eliminated blackbirds. Bill contour and grrows exclude Smooth-billed Ani.

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

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.

Sun benign on to side. Bird filled more than 1/2 of frame with the 420 mm lens.

10x binocs + scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones: have seen Smooth-billed Ani in FL

References and persons consulted before writing description: none on this day

How long before field notes made? 10 min this form completed? 2 hours

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

87-24

DOCUMENTATION FORM  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What Species? Groove-billed Ani How Many? 1

Location? Jacob Krumm WMA Jasper Co.

Type of Habitat? Heavy deciduous undergrowth with scatered 15' to 20' trees.

When? date(s): October 25th, 1987 time: 7:00AM to 8:00AM

Who? your name and address: Ray Cummins 609 s. Main St. Centerville, Ia. 52544

Others with you: None

Others before or after you: Many

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.

A large grackle sized completely black bird with a long flat tail that had rounded end corners. At close range the vertically thick bill had three decurve grooves the top being longer than the other two.

The bird feed on the ground mostly in the short mowed grass along side the weedy area. It also sunned itself in the lower branches of the small trees.

A Hee-ho sound was uttered repeatedly during it's only long flight.

Similar species; how eliminated: Grooved-bill which was hard to see but definitely present eliminated a Smooth-billed Ani.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment. 20X spotting scope from an estimated 20yds & 10X binoculars.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: None

Reference and persons consulted before writing description: None

How long before field notes made? 0 this form completed? 35 days



What species? Groove-billed Ani How many? just one.

Location? Jacob Crummb Wildlife area in Jasper (I think) Co., Iowa

Type of habitat? Brushy area behind dam, also grassy areas, mowed areas.

When? date(s): Oct. 25 time: 10:00 AM to 10:30

Who? your name and address: Robert Cecil 327 S. 6th, Keokuk, Ioaw 52632

others with you: Tom Kent, Tom Stone, Chuck Fuller, John Cecil, about a dozen others.

others before or after you: about everyone.

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

We spend at least two hours beating the brush below the dam, and were finally standing on the dam talking, sort of given up. The bird flew into sight, landing in a small tree in excellent view. In flight the bird was about the length of a Grackle, but other than they were both black, the similarities ended there. Noticable was the dangling, jointed tail in flight. Sitting, the bill was conspicuous, large, culmen well curved. When viewing through a scope, the grooves of the bill were evident. The bill clearly did not rise above the crown of the head. The bird's eye was dark. Also noticable was the plumage, which, although obviously all black, showed little "arrowheads" on the neck and breast. I couldn't tell if this was irridesense (sp?) or if the feather edgings were just lighter, but they were certainly noticable.

The tail was quite long, perhaps longer than a Grackle. No "V" in the tail was noted-- it was generally flat. As noted above, the "jointed" effect was evident.

In overall length and bulk, the bird was similar to a Common Grackle.

We watched the bird for some time as it moved from the little tree to the ground in the grass and then to some heavier weeds. On one occassion, the bird was observed eating an insect.

Similar species and how eliminated: Common Grackle does not have the massive bill of the bird observed. Smooth-billed Ani has ungrooved bill, bill that rises above crown of head. Also, Smooth-billed not expected as stray to Midwest.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No.

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:  
Minimum distance, about 50'. Used 10x40 Zeiss binocs., several scopes of 20x or more.  
Lighting conditions--overcast but good.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen Groove-billed twice in South Texas. Have not seen Smooth-billed.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

No. How long before field notes made? 6 hours this form completed? 1 1/2 months

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

Species - Groove-billed Ani - one

Location - Jacob Krumm Wildlife Area - 4 mi S.W. of Fortwell, Iowa


Date - Oct. 25, 1987 Time - 4:28 - 4:40 PM CST.

Reporter - Peter C. Petersen 235 McClellan Blvd, Davenport, IA. 52803

Others present - Lewis, Brian + Corey Blevins, Ann Baker, Ruth Green,

Carl Katz + others.

Previously by Darwin Koenig, Ray Cummings, Tim + Steve Dinsmore, Bob Myers + others.

Description - Entirely black bird, larger than Common Grackle but smaller than Great-tailed Grackle with very long tail. Flight consists of three flaps + glide, seems somewhat labored. While perched tail cocked + preened. Bill very large + puffin like. Two grooves easily seen on upper mandible, bill line merging evenly with top of head.  Eyes seemed large. Call given in flight, rather liquid + two syllables, accent on first.

Similar species - Smooth-billed Ani has knob on bill, lacks grooves.

Viewed at 120 + 140 meters with 40x + 50x scopes, in flight at 12-15 meters while flying nearly over observers, ~~the~~ 10x binocs, and perched at 30 meters with 25-30x scope.

Light - overcast, but sun still up.

Books consulted - Geographic guide + Master guide prior to sighting.

Documentation written about 2 1/2 hours after observation.



What species? Groove-billed Ani How many? one

Location? Krumm Wildlife Area at Grinnell, Iowa

Type of habitat? pond surrounded by tall prairie grass; brushy area behind dam.

When? date(s): 25 October 1987 time: 4:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. (approx.)

Who? your name and address: Nicholas "Nick" A. Kubik R.2 Tama, Iowa 52339

others with you: Pete Petersen, Ann Barker, Phyllis Harris, and others.

others before or after you: I think Ray Cummins saw it in the morning.

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

I observed an all black bird with a conspicuous long tail and huge bill. The bird was larger in size than an adjacent Red-winged Blackbird, but not twice as large. The tail seemed to be equally as long as the rest of the body. The bill was grayish-black in color and appeared to be about the same length as the head. The bill was also equally large with the head in the vertical dimension; in fact, it reminded me of a puffin's bill. The eye was dark.

The bird flew across the pond in this manner: three wing beats followed by a short glide, then repeating. The bird retreated into heavy brush cover.

Similar species and how eliminated:

The Smooth-billed Ani has a culmen or midline ridge of the upper mandible that extends higher than the crown of the head. This bird did not exhibit that feature.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

I observed this bird with a 25x telescope from as far away as 100 yds. and as close as 20 yds. The late afternoon sun was low in a cloudy sky.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: none

References and persons consulted before writing description:

National Geographic Society's Field Guide to the Birds of North America.  
How long before field notes made? 6 hrs. this form completed? 26 October 1987

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

87-24

BIRD DOCUMENTATION FORM

CARL J. BENDORF  
825 7TH AVENUE  
IOWA CITY IA 52240

SPECIES: **Groove-billed Ani**

NUMBER: 1

LOCATION: Jacob Krumm WA (near Grinnell)  
DATE: 27 October 1987

COUNTY: Jasper  
TIME: 8:40 AM TO: 8:45 AM

HABITAT: At edge of mowed park area and heavy brushy area along creek below dam of small pond.

DESCRIPTION: I arrived and was putting on my rubber boots when I noticed an all black bird feeding in the mowed grass area just at the edge of a brushy area. This is same spot where this species had been seen several times in preceding days. I put my binoculars (10X40 Zeiss) on the bird and slowly walked toward it. It flew up into a small bare tree about 6 feet off the ground and began to preen its wings. I approached within about 10 yards before the bird flew off in to the heavy brush. I did not pursue it further. The sky was clear and the morning sun was full strength and directly at my back. Below is based directly on my notes taken within 2 minutes after the bird flew off.

Basically all black bird. Overall length about that of a Blue Jay but body alone was slightly smaller and slimmer than a Red-winged Blackbird. The tail was as long as the body alone. The bill was very thick and black. It appeared to be fairly straight at the base of the upper bill without any curving down or humped affect at the forehead. Did not see any grooves or marks on bill, but it was kind of glossy. The eye was black as were the legs and feet.

The feathers of the top and back of the head were kind of bushy or shaggy and were tinged with a faint greenish iridescence. The black wings and tail were tinged with a purplish iridescence which was most noticeable at the outer edges of the feathers, and not in the center of the feathers.

The tail was loose and floppy. When the bird was perched in the tree, the tail was frequently flipping back and forth. Attached is a rough sketch of the head shape made just after bird flew off.

SIMILAR SPECIES--COMMENTS: Smooth-billed Ani would have a pronounced down curve to the upper mandible before it meets the forehead. If an iridescence is seen on Smooth-billed, it should be brownish or bronze, not green.

AGREEMENT/DISAGREEMENT OF OTHERS: Seen by numerous observers during preceding week. No one else present when I was there.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILAR SPECIES: First for this species. Have seen Smooth-billed in Florida in 1983.

REFERENCES, PERSONS CONSULTED BEFORE WRITING DESCRIPTION: None.

FIELD NOTES MADE? Within 2 minutes. THIS FORM DONE? 2 hours.



GREENISH  
TINGE



GROVE HILL AVI  
27 OCT 1987  
JASPER CO.  
CARL J. HENBOCK

GROOVED BILLED ANI

NOVEMBER 11, 1987

87-24

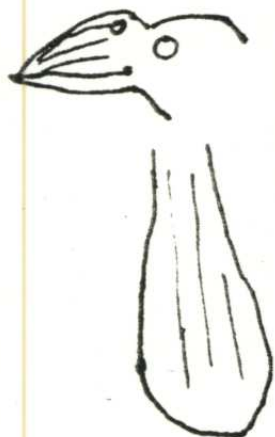
KRUMM NATURE PRESERVE, JASPER COUNTY

9:10 AM

CLEAR SKY, SUNNY 25° WIND 0-5 MPH

TOTALLY 10-12" IN SIZE OVERSIZE IN PROPORTION TO BODY  
BLACK BIRD LARGER THAN A BLUE JAY WITH 3-5" TAIL WITH ROUNDED  
OUTER TAIL FEATHERS. SCALY BACK, BLACK EYE, LARGE OVERSIZE BILL

WITH STRIATIONS. SHORT, STOCKY NECK



LARGE OVERSIZE  
MANDIBLE IN RELATION  
SHIP TO LOWER  
MANDIBLE

- TAIL

BIRD SEEN ON GROUND AT EDGE OF RESTORED PRAIRIE AND MOWED  
NEAR RENTER'S HOUSE  
GRASS. THE BIRD WAS WALKING ALONG THE EDGE FORAGING FOR FOOD.  
AFTER ~~MOVING~~ WALKING 20 YARDS ALONG THE EDGE, THE BIRD FOUND A GRASS-  
HOPPER AND PROCEEDED TO EAT IT ON THE SPOT. IT THEN CONTINUED  
FORAGING ALONG THE EDGE. THE RENTER STATED THAT FOR THE LAST  
3 DAYS THE BIRD APPEARED IN THE SAME AREA AND FORAGED FROM  
ABOUT 9-11 AM

REPORT WRITTEN DAY OF SIGHTING

HANK ZALETEL  
715 WEST  
CULO, IOWA 50056