

Common Ground-Dove

Record Number: 91-36

24 Oct 1991

Classification: A-P

Cedar Rapids, Linn Co., IA

*Fuller, *Kent, *Pinkston, *Petersen

*White, *Bendorf, *Johnson, *P. Allen,*; IBL 62:16, 71, Fuller 1992

DOCUMENTATIONS

Jim Fuller, 24 Oct, 6 Longview Knoll, Iowa City, IA 52240

Thomas H. Kent, 24 Oct, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246

Randall Pinkston, 25 Oct, 526 Reno St., Iowa City, IA 52245

Peter C. Petersen, 25 Oct, 235 McClellan Blvd., Davenport, IA

52803

Gerald White, 25 Oct, 1505 E. 5th St., Muscatine, IA 52761

Carl J. Bendorf, 26 Oct, 845 Ctpress Ct., Iowa City, IA 52245

Ann Johnson, 26 Oct, 532 120th Ave., Norwalk, IA 50211

Pam Allen, 26 Oct, 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines, IA

50265

Babs and Loren Padelford, 27 Oct, 1405 Little John Rd.,

Bellevue, NE 68005

Mark Proescholdt, 27 Oct, Box 65, Liscomb, IA 50148

PHOTOGRAPHS

Thomas H. Kent, 24 Oct, P-0312

J. O. Durbin, 25 Oct, P-0295

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 62:16

Records Committee: IBL 62:71

Photograph: IBL 62:93

Fuller, J. 1992. Common Ground Dove at Cedar Rapids. IBL 62:93-94.

VOTE: 4 A-P, 2 A-D, 1 A-E

A-D, This bird, while possibly an escapee has a history of vagrancies. With its northern most range possibly less than 500 miles away, this dove in my opinion is an acceptable species.

A-P, Established pattern of vagrancy to Midwest. Based upon number of sightings in Illinois and other states surrounding Iowa, this species was probably overdue.

A-E, I am voting AE pending further study of the vagrancy pattern. NG indicates it wanders on both coast in fall and winter. Am. Birds list no sightings for the upper midwest between 1985 and 1988 that I could find.

A-D, Many excellent descriptions were provided for a Common Ground Dove.

REVOTE: 6 A-P, 1 A-D

A-P, Despite concern by A-E voter, I am staying with A-P. At least one expert on Iowa vagrancy considers this "high on the list of priority" for arrival in Iowa. Also, one documentor listed numerous records for upper Midwest. While I was not in a position to independently verify these, I am assuming they were correct.

A-P, I still see no current vagrancy pattern for the C. Ground-Dove in the Midwest. However, the vagrancy pattern established in the 70s does support this sighting as being a wild vagrant, especially during the Oct/Nov time frame. In addition,

the behavior of this bird nervous, unapproachable, and fast flight disappearing into brush support a wild bird.

A-P, A-D voters need to explain why not A-P. Vagrancy data, which I summarized in my documentation, sent to A-E voter. Pattern much like that for Groove-billed Ani with somewhat fewer records.

A-P, There are several records of this species in most states to the west and east of Iowa and several records for Missouri also. This certainly creates a vagrancy pattern. Most records are from the 70's and early 80's but this is still a vagrancy pattern for this species. This well established pattern of vagrancy along with excellent documentations and photographs is enough evidence to accept this record.

A-D, Peterson's "A Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies" mentions that Common Ground Doves are accidental north to Illinois, S. Ontario, New York, and Massachusetts. The pattern of vagrancy is noted there and in National Geographic guide. I feel this is an acceptable bird.

REVOTE at meeting of 11 Apr 1992 after discussing photos: 6 A-P,
1 A-D

IOWA BIRD LIFE

Fall 1992

Volume 62, Number 4

CONTENTS

COMMON GROUND-DOVE AT CEDAR RAPIDS	93
<i>Jim Fuller</i>	
ICELAND GULLS IN IOWA	95
<i>Thomas H. Kent</i>	
LATE FALL AND WINTER BIRDING ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER IN EAST-CENTRAL IOWA	99
<i>Peter C. Petersen</i>	
FIELD REPORTS--SUMMER 1992	104
<i>James J. Dinsmore</i>	
NESTING SANDHILL CRANES AT OTTER CREEK MARSH, TAMA COUNTY	112
<i>Don Poggensee</i>	
PACIFIC LOON AT PLEASANT CREEK	113
<i>Jim Fuller</i>	
SABINE'S GULLS AT THE QUAD CITIES	114
<i>Randall Pinkston</i>	
INTERACTIONS BETWEEN A SNOW GOOSE AND A CANADA GOOSE	116
<i>Matt C. Kenne</i>	
SWAINSON'S HAWK FALLOUT IN CHEROKEE COUNTY	117
<i>Dick Bierman</i>	
I.O.U. BUSINESS	118
<i>Business Meeting, 16 May 1992</i>	
BOOK REVIEW	119
<i>Birds of Missouri</i>	

FRONT COVER: Young Sandhill Crane at Otter Creek Marsh, Tama County, 7 June 1992. Photograph by Don Poggensee, Ida Grove.

INSIDE BACK COVER: Editorial Staff, Subscription/Membership Information, Instructions to Authors, Officers, Board of Directors, Standing Committees.

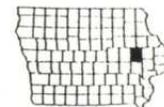
BACK COVER: Meeting Dates, Report Deadlines, Birdline, Materials Available.

Copyright 1992 Iowa Ornithologists' Union

COMMON GROUND-DOVE AT CEDAR RAPIDS

JIM FULLER

Weir Nelson, of Cedar Rapids, called the Iowa Birdline on 19 October 1991 to report a Varied Thrush, and also mentioned that he had received a call about a Common Ground-Dove somewhere near Mohawk Park. He called again on the 23rd with detailed information about a second sighting. The next morning, I became reacquainted with the bird's discoverer, Sam Dunkle, an Oregonian visiting his mother in Cedar Rapids. While a University of Iowa student, Sam was instrumental in the founding of the Iowa City Bird Club in 1975. Together, we searched for the bird in a weedy area near the Cedar River just east of Mohawk Park. During the onset of a thunderstorm, we flushed a small dove-like bird, which could not be immediately relocated.



Respecting the lightning and rain, further search was postponed until the afternoon, when along with Tom Kent, we flushed the bird from the same location. During the course of the next hour, we had good looks from as close as 40 feet, with both binoculars and telescope, identifying it as a Common Ground-Dove.

The bird was only about half the size of nearby Mourning Doves, with a very short tail, short neck, and short legs. The entire head and breast exhibited a scaly appearance. The side of the head had a pink cast, while the crown and nape showed a blue cast. The eye was dark, with a narrow white eye ring. The bill was short (less than half the head width), thin, and pointed. It was two-toned, with a black distal portion and a reddish pink basal half. The bird was generally gray-brown with variously shaped black areas on the folded wing. A rufous wash was seen once at the bend of the wing. The tail was very short, with black on the end and around the sides. The black on the end had an unusual scalloped pattern. The breast was pink and scaly, and the belly was pinkish. The legs were short and a grayish-pink color (Figure 1).

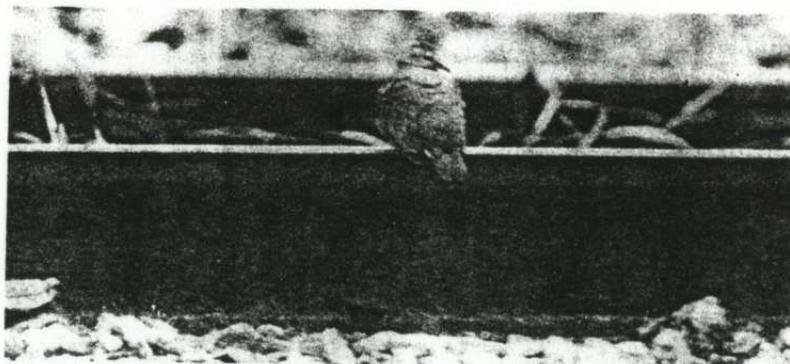


Figure 1. Common Ground-Dove at Cedar Rapids, 25 October 1991. Photograph by James O. Durbin.

During flight, a considerable amount of rufous was seen in the wing. It flew fast and low, and dropped back to the ground quickly. The dove sat on the ground or low in small trees. It acted nervous, and would not allow a close approach. It disappeared several times, and was rediscovered some distance away.

9/23/96

During the identification process, other small doves of comparable size were ruled out. The Ruddy Ground-Dove does not have scaling anywhere on its body. The Inca Dove is scaled, but has a longer tail, an entirely black bill, a light belly with black stripes, and lacks the black areas on the wing.

Although not always easy to find, the dove did remain in the same area for about two weeks, allowing a large number of birders to view this first state record. The last sighting was on 2 November during an early season blizzard.

A Common Ground-Dove was recorded at Waconda Country Club in Des Moines on 10 June 1922 (C. H. Pangburn, *The Ground Dove in central Iowa*, *Auk* 39:566, 1922). The author, who claimed to be familiar with this species, speculated that it might be an escaped cage bird. Because of this and lack of description, the bird was not accepted to the state list.

In recent years, a pattern of vagrancy for this species has become apparent (Figure 2). The monthly distribution of sightings is as follows: March (1), May (2), June (1), July (1), August (3), September (4), October (14), November (10), and December (7).



Figure 2. Breeding range (dark area) and recent vagrant records of Common Ground-Dove by state. The numbers indicate the number of records for each state.

The Cedar Rapids bird, officially Iowa's first, fits the vagrancy pattern of this species well for both date and location. It is interesting that another bird of this species showed up at Whitefish Point in northern Michigan on 21 October 1991 (*American Birds* 46:93), just two days after the Iowa bird was first sighted.

6 Longview Knoll NE, Iowa City, IA 52240

ICELAND GULLS IN IOWA

THOMAS H. KENT

A first winter/first summer Iceland Gull at Red Rock Reservoir from 13 to 16 March 1991 provided Iowa's first accepted record of this species. Previous reports of this species had occurred over the years, but the sightings were brief or not recorded in sufficient detail to be sure of the identification, or may have been in Illinois. Here I report on the spring 1991 record and four more records from the winter of 1991-1992.



On 13 March 1991, Tim Schantz found a white-winged gull below the dam at Red Rock Reservoir in Marion County. The bird was intermediate in size between Ring-billed and Herring gulls, but closer to the latter. On the standing bird, he noted gleaming white primaries that protruded about one inch beyond the tail. In flight, the flight feathers were all white from above and below. The rest of the bird was a mottled or indistinctly flecked off white or very light gray-brown. A mottled tail band was noted. The bill was mostly dark with a light base, the eye dark, and the legs pink. Nine other observers documented this bird over the next three days, and I took photos (Figure 1a and 1b).

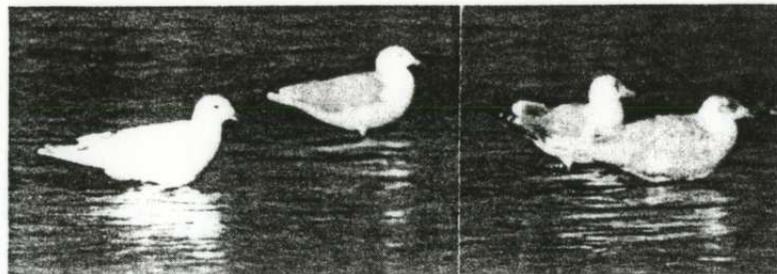
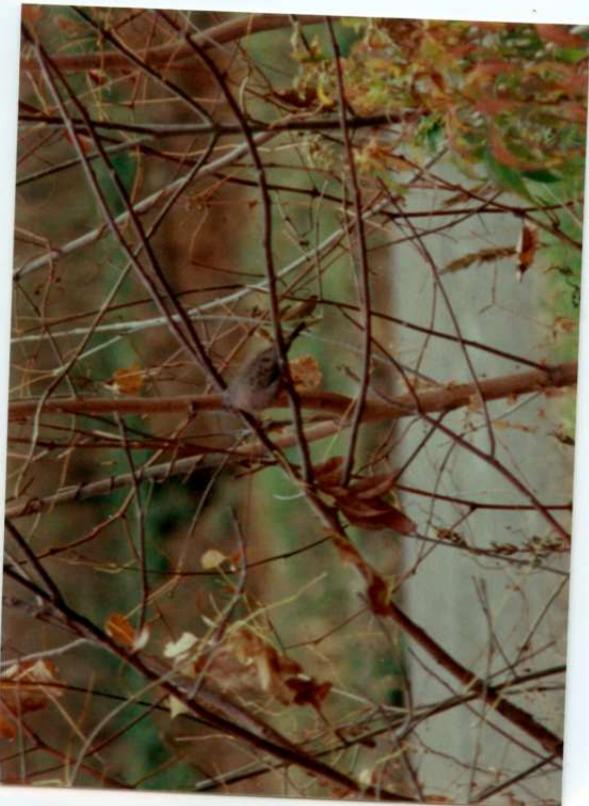


Figure 1a, 1b. Iceland Gull at Red Rock Reservoir, 14 March 1991. Note the more rounded head shape in 1a.

The following details are added from a composite of the other observers. The bill was shorter and thinner than that of Herring Gulls with a smoothly curved distal culmen and minimal gonyl prominence. There was more light color in the lower mandible than the upper, and the demarcation with the black distal part of the bill was indistinct. Some described the head as rounded, others thought it was not. There was a smudge around the eye and some streaking on top of the head. The upper back and upper breast, neck, and parts of the head lacked mottling and appeared white. One observer noted some pale brown on the outer side of the shaft of the distal four or five primaries. The mottled tail band was just slightly darker than the rest of the bird and occupied the distal half of the tail except for a paler, thin terminal band.

Several of the documentors were uncertain of the identification because of the white-headed appearance (suggesting Herring Gull), tail band (more typical of Thayer's Gull), and head shape (better for Herring or Thayer's). The possibilities of leucistic Herring Gull or a hybrid were suggested. The documentations and

91-36



91-36

Common Ground-Dove P-0312
Cedar Rapids, Linn Co., IA
24 Oct 1991 T. H. Kent

91-36

Common Ground-Dove P-0295
Cedar Rapids, Linn Co., IA
25 Oct 1991 J. O. Durbin

91-36

Common Ground-Dove P-0312
Cedar Rapids, Linn Co., IA
24 Oct 1991 T. H. Kent

DOCUMENTATION of EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

SPECIES: COMMON GROUND DOVE (Male)

LOCATION: Cedar Rapids (Linn County) Just south of J Avenue near Mohawk Park. Weedy and brushy area with RR tracks.

DATE: 24 October, 1991. (1:40-2:50PM, but did not observe bird during that entire time)

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

OTHER OBSERVERS: Discovered by Sam Dunkle. With me was Tom Kent. Later there were MOB.

BACKGROUND: Wier Nelson called the Iowa Birdline on 19 October to report a varied thrush, and casually mentioned he had had a call about a common ground dove somewhere near Mohawk Park. He again called on 23 October with detailed information about the sighting. The next morning I met Sam Dunkle there, and just at the time I had to leave a small dove like bird fly from the ground into a line of small trees nearby. With rain, lightning, and thunder, I waited until afternoon to return with Tom Kent. We immediately flushed the bird from virtually the same location, and followed it, getting very good looks as it sat low in small trees or on the RR tracks.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: The general size was only about half that of mourning doves which was compared as they were nearby on the RR tracks. It could be described as a short tailed, short necked, and short legged dovelike bird which was generally gray in color.

SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION: The entire head and breast had a scaled appearance. The side of the head, breast, and belly had a pinkish cast, while the crown and nape had a bluish cast. The eye was dark with a narrow white eye ring. The bill was short (length was less than half the head width), thin, and pointed. The end half was black, while the basal half was a reddish-pink color. The back and folded wings were a uniform grayish-brown, with the back showing a scaly appearance in the right light. The folded wing had a number of black spots on it, some of which were long vertically, and some of which were round to ovoid. A rufous wash was seen once at the bend of the wing. The tail was very short, with black on the end and around the sides. The end was very slightly bowed, close to square. The end also had an unusual scalloped pattern to the black. The breast was pinkish and scaly, while the belly was pinkish. The

23-19 91-36
undertail area was a light gray. The legs were short and a grayish-pink color (much lighter than the base of bill).

FLIGHT and BEHAVIOR: During flight, a considerable amount of rufous was shown. It flew fast and low to the ground, and ducked back down quickly. It sat low in small trees. The bird appeared to be very nervous, and would not allow a close approach.

SIMILAR SPECIES: The ruddy ground dove, which is of comparable size does not have scaling anywhere on its body. The Inca dove does have scaling, but it has a longer tail, an entirely black bill, has a light belly with black stripes, and lacks the black spots on the folded wing.

VIEWING CONDITIONS and OPTICS: The day was mild and overcast. Most of the viewing was with a KOWA TSN-4 telescope (20-60 X Zoom) at distances of approximately 50-100 feet. Swift Audubon 8.5 X 44 binoculars were also used, especially when the bird flew. Viewing directions varied from south to northeast.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: I have seen this bird on numerous occasions in the south and southwest, quite often under bird feeders.

FIELD NOTES and REFERENCES: Field notes were written in the evening of the day of observation, and this form was typed on 24 October. National Geographic guide was looked at after field notes were made.

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Common Ground Dove, 24 October 1991, Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa.

Observer: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246

Other observers: Jim Fuller and Sam Dunkle with me. Bird found by Sam on 19 October and seen again on 23 Oct.

Time: 1:40 to 3:10 p.m.

Habitat: gravel area and railroad track with weedy overgrowth and scattered small trees in Cedar River valley on outskirts of Cedar Rapids.

Description: Within a few minutes after arrival, we flushed the bird from the gravel area with overgrown weeds. It flew into a bush and then along an embankment and out of sight. I saw it fly from the bush and noted a very small dove-like bird with square tail with triangular black tips to the sides of the tail and rufous outer wings. We walked below the embankment and finally flushed the bird back to the graveled area. We went back up there, but could not locate the bird there or across the road in a weedy valley. Later we decided to walk the railroad tracts where there were many Morning Doves. We did not find the bird at first, but suddenly it was standing on a rail. It was about one-third larger overall compared to a House Sparrow nearby and about one-third the body size of the Mourning Doves. It was a small, chunky, rather short-legged bird with small rounded head and fine bill. The tail was quite short compared to a Mourning Dove, but as long or longer than that of a House Sparrow. I could see the square, black-tipped tail and black dots on the wing coverts. Jim went back to get a scope and while he was gone the bird flew directly toward Sam and I, giving us a good view of the rufous underwing and outer part of the upper wing. The bird lit in a shrub closer to where Jim returned with his Kowa scope. With binoculars I noted the light gray-blue crown and back of neck, slightly more olive back and scapulars, gray wing with black dots and ovals, buffy-pink side of face and underparts, and dark eye. I moved up for photos and the bird flew back to the gravel area. When we went back to the gravel area, we flushed it into a shrub again. In Jim's scope, I saw the very thin light eye ring, reddish-pink bill with black tip (distal third), and very fine barring on the breast and back of neck. I did not look at the leg color. The bird walked on the rail like a dove and flew like a dove. The bill was quite thin and pointed. I did not see the base of the tail well. On the sitting bird the tail had a black tip and the two sides of the tail were rounded giving a slight forked appearance.

Song: not heard.

Conditions: I got as close as 20 yards with my camera and viewed the bird through Jim's scope at about 30 to 40 yards; sky was overcast with a few sprinkles; used 10x binocular, 20x scope, and 420mm camera lens.

Similar species: The size eliminates Mourning Dove. The short, square tail without white eliminates Inca Dove. The color and barring eliminates Ruddy Ground Dove. The general shape and behavior, although difficult to put in words, was that of a dove. I checked the vagrancy pattern of this species from its normal range in the southern United States. Most of the records in Mississippi and Oklahoma are from September to December. Records in states away from the Gulf Coast between the Rocky and Appalachian mountains are distribute by month as follows: Jan (1), May (2), Aug (2), Sep (3), Oct (7), Nov (10), and Dec (4). Distribution by state for these records is as follows: Colorado (1), Illinois (10), Indiana (3), Kansas (2), Michigan (2), Missouri (2), Nebraska (2), Ontario (1), Tennessee (2), Wisconsin (2), and Wyoming (1).

Agreement: yes.

Previous experience: I have seen many in Texas.

References/time used: I looked at the National Geographic Guide on the way to Cedar Rapids but not again before typing.

Time of notes: 5-10 minutes after final viewing; typed: 21 hours later.

---Randall Pinkston
325 Reno Street
Iowa City, IA 52242-3019
PH (319) 331-0582

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE SPECIES

Common Ground-Dove

Columbina passerina

Date: 25 October 1991 Time: 9-11 a.m.

Location: Cedar Rapids, Linn Co., Iowa

Description: A small dove 1/2 to 2/3 the body bulk of nearby Mourning Doves (Zenaida macroura). Short, squared tail. No evidence of cage wear.

Probably an adult male. Blue-gray crown and nape softly demarcated from tan forehead and face. Faint scaling evident on forehead only with bird facing me at high magnification. Bill pale pinkish or orangish at base with distinct dark tip. Eye appeared dark. Tan on face continuous with bright pinkish-gray underparts from throat to belly. Very faint scaling effect was evident on the chest only by careful study with bird facing me under high magnification. No spotting was noted within this scaling. Lower belly tan. Gray-brown dorsum from upper back to upper tail coverts, including folded inner half of wing at rest, darker than venter. Distinct black spots on wing coverts. Outer half of wing in flight flashed bright rufous. Tail with black corners visible in direct flight away from me. Legs not studied well.

Behavior: Timid. Ground-dwelling, concealed by knee-high vegetation. Frequently flushed, making short, low flights before dropping back into vegetation. Wingbeats rapid and powerful (audible pumping). Solitary except when associated with Mourning Doves along railroad tracks.

Voice: None heard.

Conditions: Overcast. Cool. Closest study obtained on two occasions totalling approximately 3-4 minutes, when bird perched in small tree along railroad tracks (10 meters) and on tracks themselves (50 meters). Zeiss 10x40 binoculars and Kowa telescope.

Similar Species: Mourning Dove much larger, with long, pointed tail, white-tipped rectrices. Also has black "ear-spot". Inca Dove (Columbina inca) also has long tail with white margin, pronounced scaling on back, lacks contrast of blue-gray crown and pinkish-gray underparts, lacks bicolored bill. Not expected in Iowa. Ruddy Ground-Dove (Columbina talpacoti) lacks scaling on head and chest, lacks bicolored bill. Male and often female have extensive rufous upperparts. Not expected away from U.S./Mexico border.

Common Ground-Dove has known northward vagrancy pattern in fall and winter.

Previous Experience: Twenty years experience with Common Ground and Inca Doves along the coastal and Rio Grande valley regions of Texas. Several sightings of Ruddy Ground-Doves in northeastern Mexico during the winters 1979, '81, '84. Lifelong familiarity with Mourning Dove.

--Randall Pinkston
526 Reno Street
Iowa City, IA 52245-3039
Ph.(319)351-0592

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

91-36

What species? Common Ground Dove How many? 1

Location? Just west of Cedar Rapids Water Treatment Plant N. of R. R. Road

Type of Habitat? weedy, brushy field, embankment + track edge

When? date(s): Oct. 25, 1991 time: 9:35 AM to 9:43 AM CST

Who? your name and address: Peter C. Petersen, 235 McEllellan Blvd, Davenport, IA 52803

Others with you: Jim Seeb, Randy Pinkston

Others before or after you: Jim Fuller, Tom Kent before, Garry White, mob after

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.

Small dove, about 2/3 size of nearby Mourning Doves.
Body grey brown more to the grey. Tail grey brown in center, black on the sides, gradually rounded + rather short for a dove.
primaries rusty in flight from above. Head more grey than body. Chest faintly scaly. Feet light, not seen well.
Bill orange-pink, basal 2/3, tip black, Not heard.
Bird flushed, flushed again + observed sitting on a rail with scope near Mourning Doves.

Similar species; how eliminated:

Ruddy Ground Dove - bill was not all dark, + this bird had faint scaling which is lacking in Ruddy.
Mourning Dove - bird much too small, tail dark at sides, no white, not pointed but very gradually rounded, primaries rusty, faint scaling.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.
Overcast, bird flushed from about 6m. later viewed with 10X40 Zeiss binocs + Kona scope at about 30X from about 50-60m.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen many in Southern U.S., Mexico, Costa Rica, Trinidad, Columbia, etc.

References and persons consulted before writing description: Checked Geo. guide before observation.

How long before field notes made? 15 min this form completed? 8 hrs.

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

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

91-36

What species? Common Ground-Dove How many? oneLocation? J street Cedar Rapids, IAType of habitat? weed patch on disturbed soil near Rail Road TracksWhen? date(s): 10-25-91 time: 3³⁰p to 4⁰⁰pWho? your name and address: Gerald White 1505 E 5th Muscatine IA 52761others with you: Armstrongs, D. Tetrault, Sam Dunkelothers before or after you: T. Kent, P. Petersen, J. Fuller

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.

The bird was a little larger than sparrows, shaped like a dove: nearly uniform gray-brown while perched except a few black marks on the wing coverts & a wash of buff on the breast, the short tail was black (did not note color of bill or legs) On the wing there were flashes of red or rufous when the bird landed on a perch^{from above}. The tail was very short & stubby. The bird preferred to be on the ground & when flushed it only perched in small trees within 4 ft. of the ground. It was in an area that had approx 30 Mourning Dove nearby.

Similar species and how eliminated: Inca Dove - has a longer tailDid any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
overcast: several views with binoculars 10x40 & Scope 20X
30' to 150' est.Previous experience with species and similar ones: have seen Ground-Dove in FL & TXReferences and persons consulted before writing description: N.G. GuideHow long before field notes made? 30 min. this form completed? 10-26-91

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

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Carl J. Bendorf
845 Cypress Court
Iowa City, IA 52245

Common Ground Dove
October 26, 1991 **11:00 to 11:05 a.m.**
Cedar Rapids, Linn County

I spent about 45 minutes walking around the area with my 4 year old daughter in tow. The sky was overcast and the wind was calm. I was just about to give up and was almost back to the car when a bird flushed up from the heavy weed cover at the edge of a bare area. It looked like a small dove with a square short and dark tail and it had a bright flash of rufous in the wings. I had been seeing and checking a number of Mourning Doves and this bird was a lot smaller but it flew similarly.

I crept to the edge of a small rise and the bird flushed again, this time landing in a small tree about 30 feet away. It perched there for about 20 seconds before flying again, after which I didn't chase it anymore.

It had about the same structure and shape as a Mourning Dove but the tail was short and the bird was smaller. It was generally light brown. I saw the scaled feathers on the breast and throat. The bill was surprisingly thin and narrow and obviously flesh or pink about 2/3 proximally with a darker tip. The folded wings had four or five black vertical stripes or bars on them.

My observation was brief but very distinct.

I have seen Common Ground Doves in Texas and other south and west areas. I took some notes as soon as I got home (about 30 minutes) and wrote this up three days later.

21-1P
91-36
DOCUMENTATION FORM
Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

Species: Common Ground-Dove

Location: Cedar Rapids, Linn County, IA

Habitat: Weedy, brushy area near Cedar River

Date: 26 October 1991

Time: c. 12:30 to 12:45

Name and Address: Ann Johnson, 532 120th Avenue, Norwalk, Iowa 50211

Other observers: Carol Thompson, Ross Silcock, Roy Godwin

Description of bird: The bird looked very much like a small Mourning Dove with a typical small head and thin bill. It was primarily gray in color with a pale rosy wash to the breast. There was some scaling on the breast, but it was not very distinct. More noticeable were the black spots and streaks on the wing coverts. The rufous outer wing was visible once in flight and once when the bird was preening. The tail was short, rounded and appeared black. No white was noted in the corners of the tail, but viewing time was very brief. The bird would sit in the lower branches of small trees and tangles. Flight was very rapid, and even when I was able to locate it through binoculars while it was in flight, it was difficult to follow and pick up field marks.

Similar species and how eliminated: Most doves could be eliminated by the short tail and small size. Although the Inca Dove also shows rufous wings, it has a longer tail and is much scalier. The only other dove which would be similar in structure is the Ruddy Ground-Dove. The male Ruddy would appear rusty all over, but the female looks quite similar to the Common Ground-Dove. The light scaling on the bird in question, however, would eliminate Ruddy Ground-Dove in any plumage.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about identification? No

Viewing conditions (lighting, distance, optics): Overcast skies. Viewed as close as an estimated fifty feet through 7x26 binoculars.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Common Ground-Doves have been observed on numerous occasions in the southwest.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None.

How long before field notes made? Shortly after observation **How long before this form completed?** One day

DOCUMENTATION

91-36

SPECIES: **Common Ground-Dove** (*Columbina passerina*)

HOW MANY: 1

LOCATION: Adirondack Drive, N.E. & "J" Avenue; Cedar Rapids, IA

HABITAT: Weedy, foxtail grass, with some gravel along right of way along railroad tracks.

DATE: 26 October, 1991

TIME & LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

FIRST OBSERVATION MADE BY: Sam Dunkle, Oregon, on a previous day

DOCUMENTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant Street, West Des Moines, IA 50265

OTHERS WHO SAW BIRD: Sam Dunkle, Reid Allen, Francis Moore, Chuck Fuller, Jane Fuller, and another unnamed individual

DESCRIPTION OF BIRD: This was a very small dove; much smaller than the Mourning Doves which were also present. The drab brown-olive coloring on back and wings was highlighted by barring on its wings, which appeared to be vertical when observing the sitting bird. The back of the head was light greyish-brown-blue; a paler color forehead; dark eye; bill was red with a black tip and there appeared to be an orange-red spot above the bill. There was rufous-cinnamon coloring from the wrist to the wingtips which was only visible briefly if in good light and flight. The feet were reddish and the tail was stubby, short, rounded and dark. The upper breast appeared to be slightly "scaly" in appearance.

SIMILAR SPECIES AND HOW ELIMINATED: Ruddy Ground-Dove eliminated because it has a clear breast with no scaling as appeared on our bird. Inca Dove eliminated because of scaly appearance on back and much longer, thinner pointed tail. Also it is a larger dove.

VIEWING CONDITIONS: Foggy, cold and cloudy.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH SPECIES: None.

EQUIPMENT: Kowa TSN-4 spotting scope; Bushnell 8x36 Custom Binoculars.

REFERENCES CONSULTED: FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA, National Geographic Society, Second Edition, 1987.
WESTERN BIRDS, Peterson Field Guide #2, Roger Tory Peterson, 1990.
Birding, Vol. XXII: No. 3, June 1990 ("Identification of Ruddy and Common Ground-Doves," by Jon L. Dunn and Kimball L. Garrett).

HOW LONG BEFORE FIELD NOTES MADE: Immediately upon leaving sighting.

HOW LONG BEFORE THIS FORM COMPLETED: December 1, 1991.

Babs & Loren Padelford
1405 Little John Rd.
Bellevue, NE 68005

Documentation for Common Ground Dove

Date: 10/27/91

Location: Cedar Rapids, Linn Co., Iowa - It was seen in a weedy area between railroad tracks & the Cedar River at the intersections of J Ave and Adirondack St.

Time: between 8:15 and 8:30 a.m.

Light conditions: cloudy, overcast

Description of bird: a small dove flew in from the east and landed on a limb of a low shrub about 2 1/2 feet off the ground. He sat for approx. 2 min. with his back to us, then turned around & sat facing us for about 10 minutes. It was a little larger than a Swamp Sparrow which landed next to it on the limb, but plumper than the sparrow. The top of the head was a dirty looking tan with gray vermiculations. The nape of the neck was paler, with white & gray vermiculations. The face was a buffy-tan. The eye was dark. The breast was a peach-tan color with blurry gray scaling. The wings were a tan-brown with black spots. The tips of the primaries were black, & the tip of the tail was black. The tail was short. Once while the bird was preening, it lifted one wing & the ruddy coloration on the underside of the primaries was observed. Undertail coverts were a pale beige. Underside of the tail was black with white edges. The small bill was about 2/3 red proximally, with the distal 1/3 being black. The feet were pink.

Behavior: While it was sitting on the limb, a Swamp Sparrow hopped rather close to it on the limb, and also a Lincoln's Sparrow was fluttering around it. I expected it to flush, but it didn't. After it sat on the limb for approx. 10 minutes, it flew up & landed a couple feet away on the ground. It sat there a few minutes, flew up again & landed near the same spot. After a minute or two, it flew up & over the bank towards the railroad tracks & was not seen again by us.

Distance from bird: approx. 50 feet.

Optical Equipment: 25 X 60 Bushnell Spacemaster II

Other observers: Sam Dunkel, Cal & Bernie Knight.

This documentation is being written on 10/28/91 from notes written at the time of observation with the bird in view.

What species? Common Ground Dove How many? 1Location? Cedar Rapids along Cedar River and J Ave.Type of habitat? Brushy, weedy areas with some open areasWhen? date(s): Oct. 27, 1991 time: 2:28 p.m. to 2:29 p.m.Who? your name and address: Mark Proescholdt, Box 65, Liscomb, Iowa 50148others with you: Beth Proescholdtothers before or after you: Jim Fuller, Tom Kent, Armstrongs, Allens, 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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

We first saw this bird flying over the RR tracks and then it headed toward an open area near us. As it flew, I could see reddish coloring that flashed in its wings and it showed a short tail with black tail markings. It landed in an open area and we saw it through binocs and our scope. It was pinkish in color on its breast, and the breast was scaly or had a wrinkled look to it. It was smaller than the mourning doves in the area. It had a light brownish-gray color on its back and that was generally the over-all color of the bird. It had a short bill. It flew off toward the river flashing the red in its wings.

Similar species and how eliminated:

An Inca Dove is the only bird close to this. An Inca Dove has a longer tail that's edged in white which definitely was not seen.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain: :

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

Cloudy and overcast. Approximately 35 yards away when it landed (estimated)

8X30 Binocs, 22X Scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

Have seen a few Common Ground Doves and Inca Doves in the South.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

National Geographic's Birds of North America

How long before field notes made? 9:00 p.m. this form completed? Nov. 2, 1991
that evening