

Great-tailed Grackle

22 Dec 1984

Mills Co., IA

*Loren Padelford, *Ross Silcock

IBL 55:12, 30, 58

Record Number: 84-40
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATIONS

Loren J. Padelford

Ross Silcock

REFERENCES

Christmas Bird Count: IBL 55:12

Field Reports: IBL 55:30

Records Committee: IBL 55:58

VOTE: 6-III, 1-abstain

III, a hard bird to describe.

III, Boat-tailed is a possibility isn't it?

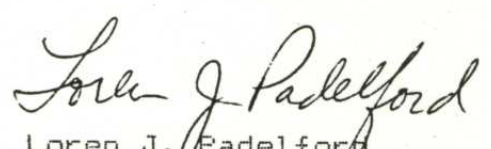
Supporting Documentation for the Great-tailed Grackle
Seen on the Omaha Christmas Bird Count, Dec. 22, 1984

Observers...Loren J. Padelford, Ross Silcock
Location...2.8 miles south of the intersection of Iowa 370
and U. S. 275, Mills Co., Iowa.
Time...8:00 AM Weather...Clear sky, 20 degrees F.
Duration of Observation...Approx. 30 seconds.
Bird/Sun Orientation...Sun behind observer looking toward
bird.
Habitat...Deciduous trees near farmstead.
Equipment used...Pentax 8X30 binoculars.

Description

The bird was observed with a flock of common grackles from a distance of about 100 yards. The bird was the same general shape as the common grackles it was with but with a much longer tail in relation to its body length (approx. 1 to 1.25 times body length). It was approx. 1.5 times larger than the common grackles in overall size. The bird was all black and was observed perched momentarily and flying with the common grackles. I saw the bird first and called out to the other members of the party. The bird flew south behind the farm house and into another grove of trees. I lost sight of it at that point but it was then visible to Ross Silcock.

The only other species similar in appearance is the boat-tailed grackle. I was not close enough to observe eye color but the length of the tail in relation to body length rules out that species. The great-tailed grackle has been expanding its range into southern Iowa and Nebraska in recent years with documented nesting success in both states.



Loren J. Padelford
1405 Little John Rd.
Bellevue, NE 68005
January 1, 1985

What species? GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE How many? 1Location? ON US 275 ca 5 MI N OF GLENWOODType of habitat? FARMLAND WITH WOODED GULLIESWhen? date(s)? DEC 22, 1984 time: ca 8⁰⁰ AM to 8¹⁵ AMWho? your name and address: ROSS SILCOCK, BOX 300, TABOR, IA 51653others with you: LOREN PADEL FORD, JERRY TOLLothers before or after you: ~~AND~~ JEB

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 SAW ABOUT 4000 C. GRACKLES LEAVING A ROOST, PROBABLY IN ONE OF THE WOODED GULLIES, AND LOREN FIRST SAW A BIRD HE THOUGHT MIGHT BE A GT GRACKLE FLYING WITH THE C. GRACKLES. THE FLOCK WENT BEHIND A FARMHOUSE, AND WHEN IT EMERGED I SAW THE BIRD TOO. I IDENTIFIED IT AS A GT GRACKLE AS FOLLOWS:

- ① LARGE SIZE, OBVIOUS EVEN WITH C. GRACKLES
- ② TAIL LONGER THAN BODY
- ③ TAIL MARKEDLY FLARED, BOTH VERTICALLY & HORIZONTALLY
- ④ MORE BOUNCY ~~AND~~ OR LABORED FLIGHT THAN C. GRACKLES (PRESUMABLY DUE TO ITS SIZE AND LARGER TAIL).

Similar species and how eliminated:

COMMON GRACKLE - SEE ABOVE

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification? NO

If yes, explain:

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

ABOUT 2-300 YDS AWAY, LIGHT GOOD, PARTLY CLOUDY, SUN RISING BEHIND US. 10X50 BINOCULARS.

Previous experience with this species and similar ones: SEEN MANY TIMES.

BECOMING ESTABLISHED IN SW IOWA

References and persons consulted before writing description: NONEHow long before field notes made? AT SIGHTING This form completed? JAN 5, FROM FIELD NOTES.