

Band-tailed Pigeon
5 Sep 1970
west of Fort Dodge, Webster Co., IA
John Crawford
Crawford 1971

Record Number: 81-CE
Classification: NA

REFERENCES

Crawford, J.A. 1971. First Iowa Band-tailed Pigeon. IBL 41:30.
Field Reports: IBL 41:27

LETTER

Jim Dinsmore to Tom Kent, 31 Oct 1988

VOTE (1981): 5-III, 1-IV, 1-VI

III, Key field marks seen. A migratory species with a few accidental records east of range.
IV, few details.

III, Crawford a prof. biologist - familiar with b-t Pigs in the west.

VI, Description is poor - but the one field mark offered - 'large GRAY terminal tail band' does NOT support band-tailed pigeon.

III, Great variation in domestic Rock Doves casts some doubt on this record. Not all R. D. have white rumps and neck mark could have been an aberration. However, observer reliable and fact that bird was known to have arrived and departed from the area is suggestive of something other than R. Dove.

REVOTE (at meeting, 1 May 1981): 3-III, 1-IV, 1-V, 2-VI

REVOTE (by mail 1994 with Dinsmore letter): 5 A-D, 2 NA

A-D, Description is minimal, but field marks mentioned tend to eliminate other species. The fact that no one in the area kept Band-tails does not completely eliminate the possibility of this being an escaped bird. Reliability of observer a factor also. I could be persuaded to go A-E on this too.

A-D, A thin but convincing historical record. This species is a known vagrant to the Midwest, with at least four Minnesota records. One NA voter asserts that the gray tail band does not support Band-tailed Pigeon. Every field guide I have consulted shows this as a strong field mark, as is the white band on the nape. The additional information provided by Dinsmore adds substantial credibility to the observer, although it would have been nice to get this information first-hand.

A-D, The identification characteristics appear to be solid. This species does have a pattern of vagrancy. The bird's approachability seems a bit odd from my experience, but maybe it was the company it was keeping. The fact that it left in September (migrated?) is supportive.

NA, No new detail. Description is too incomplete for such a rare bird. We have two field marks, but no overall description of shape, size, or other coloration. If Rock Doves were not so variable, the two characteristic field marks might be enough. The references to vagrancy pattern and ability of the observer are irrelevant -- we need details on this bird! The habitat and behavior are also troublesome.

NA, Description is not enough to say for sure that this was a Band-tailed Pigeon. Lack of white rump does not rule out Rock Dove, they are also extremely variable in any part of the plumage.

A-D, No change from my original opinion -- reinforced by Dinsmore notes.

Date: 31 October 1988

To: Tom Kent, Secretary
Records Committee
Iowa Ornithologists' Union

From: Jim Dinsmore

RE: Notes on Band-tailed Pigeon

Today I had the opportunity to talk with John Crawford, the author of a short note telling of seeing a Band-tailed Pigeon in Webster County in the summer of 1970. Crawford grew up on a farm in Webster County and now is employed as a professor of wildlife biology at Oregon State University. I asked him about the pigeon which he remembered immediately. His comments follow. He saw the bird a number of times at distances of as close as maybe 35 feet. He saw the bird well and said he had absolutely no doubt about the identification. It was a Band-tailed Pigeon, a bird that he is familiar with from his work in the Pacific Northwest. He further said that it was not a Wood Pigeon, a European bird that is probably the most similar to it nor was it one of the various color forms of the Rock Dove. He is familiar with both of those species and considered them when he made his identification. He also said the bird was not banded and that he could not locate anyone in the area who kept band-tails in captivity. He thought that this species is hard to keep in captivity which would tend to reduce the chance that this was an escaped bird. He pointed out that the time when the bird disappeared from the area coincided with the appropriate time for the species to migrate south. The original article gives a brief description of the bird with some of the key identification characteristics. I think that the above adds further information about the sighting and the person who saw it which should be considered with this record.

Band-tailed Pigeon

81-CE

Crawford, J. A. 1971. First Iowa Band-tailed Pigeon. Iowa Bird Life 41:30

First Iowa Band-tailed Pigeon -- On September 5, 1970, a Band-tailed Pigeon, *Columba fasciata* Say, was observed seven miles West of Fort Dodge, Webster County, Iowa, on the farm of Joseph R. Crawford. This single Band-tailed Pigeon was fairly tame and could be approached within about fifteen feet. This bird first caught my attention by the fact that it lacked the typical white rump of a Rock Dove. Upon closer examination, I was able to see that this bird had a large, gray terminal tail band. I was also able to see a white band on the nape. A Guide to Field Identification Birds of North America by Robbins, Brunn and Zim was used to establish positive identification of this bird. According to Mr. Crawford, the bird came to his farm sometime during the summer and left in late September. The bird lived with a flock of about fifteen Rock Doves which are permanent residents of the farm. JOHN A. CRAWFORD, Dept. of Biology, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Nebraska.