

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 11/22/00

Rufous Hummingbird

Record Number: 96-65

21 Aug 1996

Classification: A-P

Spirit L., Dickinson Co., IA

\*Ed Thelen (photo), \*Schoenewe, \*Fuller

IBL 67:23, 82, P-0520

DOCUMENTATIONS

Lee A. Schoenewe (22 Aug), 518 W. 4th St., Spencer 51301  
[4/6/97]

Jim Fuller (23 Aug), 6 Longview Knoll NE, Iowa City 52240

PHOTOGRAPH

Ed Thelen (21 Aug), P-0520 [4/6/97][IBL 68:102]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 67:23

Records Committee: IBL 67:82

Winebrinner, R. 1998. Rufous Hummingbird in Dickinson County.  
IBL 68:102. [P-0520]

VOTE: 7 A-P

A-P, Nice to have an adult male for a change.

A-P, Awesome!

Stiles, F. G. 1972. Age and sex determination in Rufous and Allen hummingbirds. *Condor* 74:25-32.  
Stone, L. 1995. In from the cold for lost hummingbird. *Des Moines Register*, 29 Nov 1995.

211 Richards Street, Iowa City, IA 52246

## RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD IN DICKINSON COUNTY

RUTH WINEBRINNER

On a beautiful summer morning, 21 August 1996, my husband Ed and I were enjoying breakfast on the deck of our home on the north shore of Spirit Lake in Dickinson County. My husband commented that he had seen a funny looking hummingbird that appeared brown. In a few minutes I saw the bird at our feeder and immediately got out my binoculars and field guide. After watching the bird for several minutes, I was sure that I was looking at a male Rufous Hummingbird. The most obvious difference from the Ruby-throated Hummingbirds that regularly visit our feeders was that much of its body including its back, tail, and belly were copper orange in color. The throat was a bright iridescent reddish orange with a band of white separating the throat from the copper orange of the belly.

I watched the bird for about an hour that afternoon as it fed at the hummingbird feeder and then flew to a nearby tree where it perched and preened. I called the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and the next morning Ed Thelen came by and photographed the bird. On the 23rd, the bird spent much of its time perched on a barbed wire fence 15 feet from the feeder and challenged any hummingbird that came close to the feeder. My husband raises flowers, and the Rufous Hummingbird took over a bed of red salvia near the feeder. He also visited the grape jelly we had at our feeder station. I last saw the Rufous Hummingbird about 10 a.m. on the 23rd but during the 2 1/2 days he was there, I did little else but watch him. He brought much joy to me and the others who got to see him during this once-in-a-lifetime happening.

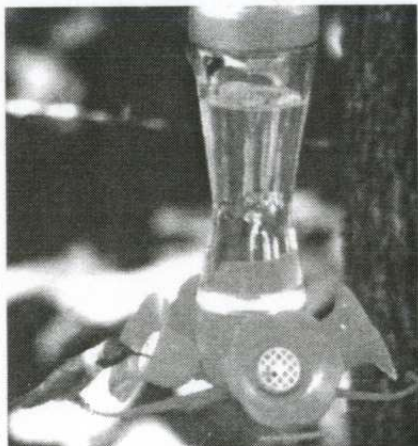


Fig. 1. Rufous Hummingbird at Spirit Lake, 22 Aug. 1996. Ed Thelen.

24535 104th Street, Spirit Lake, IA 51360



## ANOTHER BLACK-HEADED GULL IN DICKINSON COUNTY

MARK PROESCHOLDT

In 1997, for the third summer out of four years, an adult Black-headed Gull appeared in Dickinson County. The first sighting in Dickinson County was August 1994 when two adults and one juvenile were seen. In June and July of 1996, an adult was seen, and in July 1997 an adult was seen.



On the morning of 16 July 1997, Ed Thelen literally tracked me down in my car when he caught up to me with his vehicle and told me that he had just seen an adult Black-headed Gull at the Jemerson Slough area in Dickinson County. This gull had been seen by others for some days prior to 16 July and had been reported to the Birdline.

I located the gull around 10:20 a.m. It was at a small wet area across the road from Jemerson Slough where there was land available for gulls to roost. The gull had a noticeable dark brown head similar to the shape of a Bonaparte's Gull's hood that ended higher up on the back of the neck than does the hood of a Franklin's Gull. It had a dull red bill, red inside its mouth, and was smaller than Ring-billed Gulls that were with it. It had a light gray back. From a distance of 130 yards, I could see no white eye crescents with my scope while the eye crescents of nearby Franklin's Gulls were very vivid.

I saw it fly over a nearby pond, and the wings looked long. I could see dark smudges at the ends of the underwings and also white slashes or small wedges (like a Bonaparte's Gulls) at the tips of the upper wings. It also had a bright white leading edge on the upper wings.

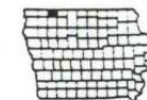
This is the fifth record of a Black-headed Gull in Iowa. The other two sightings were November 1989 at Saylorville Reservoir in Polk County and November 1994 at Big Creek State Park in Polk County.

P. O. Box 65, Liscomb, IA 50148

## SUMMER SABINE'S GULL RECORD

LEE A. SCHOENEWE

On 8 July 1997, the Northern Iowa Prairie Lakes Audubon chapter met at Mini Wakan State Park at the north end of Spirit Lake in Dickinson County. After a picnic supper and meeting, the group discussed doing a little birding. On 4 July, I had found, for the second year in a row, a Black-headed Gull hanging out with about 100 Franklin's Gulls at the swan pen wetland enclosure at the Hogsback WPA area (see note by Proescholdt in this issue). Some people had never seen the gull, and it is always a good spot, so off we went.



We set up the scope and found the Black-headed Gull. As people took turns with the view in the scope, I scanned the other gulls in the area. I then noticed a small gull flying over the water and alighting on the surface to feed. The behavior along with the distinctive black, white, and gray wedge-shaped pattern of the wings and back in flight identified it as a Sabine's Gull.



Rufous Hummingbird P-0520  
Spirit L., Dickinson Co., IA  
21 Aug 1996 Ed Thelen 96-65

On a beautiful summer morning, Aug 21, 1996, I carried breakfast out to the deck for my husband Ed and I. We are on the north shore of Spirit Lake, Ia.

He said to me, "You ~~are~~ sure have a funny looking hummingbird - it's brown."

Brown? Immature ruby-throats aren't brown, are they?

About then a hummer flew by. It was brown!! Out came the bird books and binoculars.

After watching the bird for a while, I was sure it was a male Rufous hummingbird, I called DNR Wildlife and reported what I saw.

For ~~an~~ hour or so that afternoon, I watched the hummer come to the feeder about 25 ft. from the deck to feed and then perch high up in a tree. I watched him preen his feathers and fly to the feeder. He seemed to be resting and not very active.

Thurs. morning he was still here. Ed Theiland - DNR came at noon and took <sup>Thele N</sup> some slide pictures of him sitting on the perch of the feeder.

We watched him challenge a male Ruby-throated-hewon.

Friday morning he perched on the barbed-wire fence about 15 ft from his feeder, and challenged any hummer that came close to his feeder.

My husband has a hobby of raising flowers, and Rufous took over the bed of red salvia by the feeder. He also visited the grape jelly several times that morning.

We never saw Rufous again after 10 AM that Friday morning. He was here almost  $2\frac{1}{2}$  days.

We invited him and his family to visit us again in 1997 - We will be watching for him.

What joy that tiny bird brought to us and all who saw him. It was like they glowed inside when Rufous came and perched on his feeder.

For  $2\frac{1}{2}$  days, I didn't get much done, but watch Rufous. It is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  days I will never forget, nor will Ed forget. It was a once in a lifetime happening.

Ed & Ruth Wisnubinner  
Spirit Lake, Ia  
1-712-336-5645

What species? Rufous Hummingbird (♂) How many? 1Location? NORTH SHORE BIG SPIRIT LAKE, Dickinson CountyType of habitat? Residence of Ruth + Ed Winebrinner - FeederLots of  
flowersWhen? date(s): AUG 21 - 1996 time: 7:45 to 7:46Lakeside  
Mature  
TREESWho? your name and address: Ed Thelen

others with you: \_\_\_\_\_

others before or after you: + Nancy Lee Schoneewe, LaVonne Foote

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.

(See Photo) saw (♂) Rufous Hummingbird at the residence of Ruth & Ed (blackie) Winebrinner. It first showed up this morning (Aug 21st) and was seen several times by Ruth & her husband. I saw it at approximately 7:45 pm for a total of 2 min. It was at a feeder approx. 15 ft. away. It was the same size as nearby Ruby-throated and was a coppery tan color from its head to its tail. I could see the back of the head, neck and tail clearly which was a coppery tan color including its back. Using binoculars (8x40) I could see its white upper breast when it turned its head and its throat which looked dark & reddish. I was similar species and how eliminated: unable to see its forehead. The next day @ 12:45 pm I was able to observe it again and obtain a photo of the bird.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

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

GOOD 10-12 feetPrevious experience with species and similar ones: NONEReferences and persons consulted before writing description: NONEHow long before field notes made? 1 hr. this form completed? 2 weeksMAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52246

Thomas

52246

96-65

## DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species How many? RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD 1 ♀  
 Location? ED + RUTH WEINBRENNER, MCCLYLAND BEACH, SPIRIT LAKE, IA  
 Type of habitat? BACKYARD w/ FEEDERS AND FLOWERS ADJACENT TO  
 WOODED STATE PARK -  
 When? date(s): 8/22/76 Time: 6:50 PM - 7:15 PM MINIWATKON  
 Who? your name and address LEE A. SCHUENEWIE  
 518 W. 4<sup>th</sup> ST. SPENCER, IA. 51301

Others with you WEINBRENNERS

Others before and after you ED THOLEN

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also describe voice and behavior. HUMMINGBIRD VISITING SUGAR WATER FEEDER AND SITTING ON WIRE FENCE. HEAD, BACK, TAIL AND BELLY WERE RUFOUS COLORED. GORGET WAS RED AND RUSTY DEPENDING ON THE LIGHTING. WINGS WERE DARK WHEN AT REST. SAME SIZE AS RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS WITH WHICH IT WAS INTERACTING

Similar species and how eliminated: RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD  
 COLOR OF BACK, TAIL AND BELLY

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

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: DAYLIGHT 30'-40' 8X40 BINOCULARS

Previous experience with this species and similar ones:

References and persons consulted before writing description:

PETERSON FIELD GUIDE

How long before field notes made? IMMEDIATELY  
 this form completed? 2 HOURS

Mail original form to field editor for this season.



DOCUMENTATION OF UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTING

96-65

SPECIES: Rufous Hummingbird (Adult male)

LOCATION: Yard and feeders of Ed & Ruth Winebrinner, McLellan's Beach, Big Spirit Lake (Dickinson County)

DATE & TIME: 23 August, 1996 (8:02-46 AM)

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

OTHERS: Seen previously by the Winebrinners, Ed Thelen, Lee Schoenewe, LaVonne Foote

BACKGROUND: Ed Thelen of Spirit Lake reported a bird of this species to the Iowa Birdline, the evening of 21 August. I arrived on 23 August just before 8 AM. I waited less than five minutes on the Winebrinner's deck until this bird appeared in their yard. It was present much of the time for the next 45 minutes at one of their feeders, at flowers in the yard, sitting on a fence, or in small trees.

DESCRIPTION: This hummingbird appeared to be the same size as the numerous Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. It was a copper-orange color overall, except for the folded wing, which was gray-green, and the upper breast which was white.

The bill was relatively long, black, and seemed to droop very slightly. The gorget was the color of polished copper, and was cut off sharply on the breast by an area of white, which was half moon shaped. The eye was dark, but there was a white speck behind it, and the area in front of and above the eye was a reddish-orange. Otherwise, the bird was entirely orange, although the belly below the white area, was somewhat mottled orangish-white, and the tips of the tail feathers were dark. When perched, the legs and feet were black.

BEHAVIOR: This bird interacted with the Ruby-throats, chasing one or another of them on several occasions. It also emitted a high-pitched piercing noise several times.

SIMILAR SPECIES: No other North American hummingbird has an orange back and crown. The male Allen's is similar, but it has a green back and crown.

OPTICS & VIEWING CONDITIONS: It was early morning on a cool, clear day. I was looking mostly north at distances of 10-30 feet using Swift Audubon (8.5 X 44) binoculars.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: I have seen this species numerous times in the west, and a male only once in Iowa, at Rippey on May, 9, 1993.

REFERENCES & FIELD NOTES: Field notes were made immediately, without viewing any references, and this form was typed on 30 August.