

KUBIK

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD How many? one

Location? about 3/4 mile south of Tama

Type of habitat? hilly pastured fields with trees, some brushy areas

When? date(s): 9 MAY 1985 time: 0745 to 0750

Who? your name and address: Dr. N. A. KUBIK, Rt. 2, TAMA, IA, 52339

others with you: none

others before or after you: none

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.

While driving to my office in town, I noticed an unfamiliar bird on a power line. I stopped and was able to observe for several minutes.

In my opinion, the bird was the size and shape of a Brown Thrasher, but was gray in color - not brown. Underneath, it was a clear light gray. Above, it was darker gray. The bill was approximately 1 inch long, black in color. The eye was small and dark. Most conspicuous was a patch of white on the bird's wing, perhaps the size of the red patch of a Red-winged B.B.

The bird was ecstatically vociferous. I was quite impressed to hear it imitate the song of a flicker, i.e., "flicka, flicka, flicka", then in the next instant, the song of a house wren. It carried on almost as if it were possessed, and repeating each motif three or six times.

Upon consulting my field guide, I am convinced that I saw a Northern Mockingbird.

Similar species and how eliminated: Brown thrasher is reddish-brown in color.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? —

If yes, explain:

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

clear, sunny morning, perhaps 30 feet distance, 7x35 binoculars

Previous experience with species and similar ones: none

References and persons consulted before writing description: HANK ZALETAL

"A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS" by Roger Tory Peterson
How long before field notes made? 1 day this form completed? 11 MAY 1985

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