

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Great-tailed Grackle How many? 2 (maybe 3) ♀ + 1 or 2 ♂'sLocation? Forney Lake - Fremont CountyType of habitat? Grassy islands in lake and bushes at lake's edge.When? date(s): July 22, 1985 time: 8:05 AM to at least 9:00 AM (off ton)Who? your name and address: Robert K. Myers P.R. 2, Box 153 Perry, Iowa 50220others with you: —others before or after you: Ross Silcock + Steve Dinsmore - several days earlier

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 largest observation was of a male that was apparently feeding on a ~~the~~ grassy island (short grass) along with other <sup>common</sup> grackles, little blue herons, yellow-crowned night herons and great blue herons. The size caught my eye first being almost 2X as large as common grackles. Tail was huge being as long as the rest of the body and quite wide toward the end. Bird appeared <sup>all</sup> black at distance but did have light eyes. The bird could be re-found anytime by just looking for that large tail "flag" coming up from grass. In flight, the tail makes the bird seem rather out of balance.

When I reached the extreme west end of Forney's, I noted two very large grackles perched in a small tree. The ♂ was as described above and the ♀ was ~~some~~ smaller (did not have <sup>the</sup> long <sup>tail</sup>) and was brownish in color. Both had light (yellowish) eyes. The ♂ may have been same bird ~~as~~ that I had just seen but the distance apart makes that questionable. When I left area where 1st ♂ was, he was still feeding. I was really more concerned with all of the herons and didn't pay all that much attention to the Great-tails.

Similar species and how eliminated: Much larger + longer tailed than common grackle. Range would probably rule out Boat-tailed grackle.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:  
Partly cloudy - periods of sun + shade - Dist. = 150 yd. by eye -Viewed thru 25X scope and 10X binoc.Previous experience with species and similar ones: I saw the ♀ + young Great-tail several years ago at Riverton.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

How long before field notes made? on spot this form completed? same day

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