

Species: Great-tailed Grackle, Quiscalus mexicanus

Date: 23 May 1992, approx. 9 a.m.

Location: Off I-29 at south Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie Co., Iowa.

Same bird(s) previously reported by Jim Fuller.

Other Observers: Tom Kent

Description: Large glossy black bird at edge of cattail marsh.

Huge keel-shaped tail. Flattened crown. Yellow eyes.

Associated with four females, much smaller with proportionately smaller tail, rich brownish foreparts and supercilium, also with yellow eyes. Male gave series of loud 'clack' notes.

Conditions: Overcast, cool. Observed 5 minutes from 30+ meters with Zeiss 10x40 binoculars.

Similar Species: Boat-tailed Grackle (Quiscalus major) with more rounded crown, characteristic call notes, much less likely to occur in Iowa. Common Grackle (Quiscalus quiscula) much smaller, different call notes, female lacks rich brown foreparts and superciliary stripe.

Previous Experience: Lifelong experience with all three grackles on the Texas coast and the southwest.

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