

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Great-tailed Grackle How many? 1 ♂Location? Forney's Lake, Fremont CoType of habitat? on mudflat area in middle of marshWhen? date(s): 13 July, 1985 time: 7:00 PM to 8:15 PMWho? your name and address: Steve Pismore, 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames IA 50010others with you: Beth + Mark Proescholdt, Liscomb

others before or after you: _____

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.

I first noticed the bird because of its larger size as it fed on a mudflat at Forney's Lake with other blackbirds.

The birds total length was almost twice the length of other Common Grackles nearby. The bird also had a flatter crown ~~than~~ than the other grackles.

Color - bird was all black in color including body, bill, and legs. The light was not right for me to be able to see the glossy colors on its body.

During the viewing period, the bird made several short flights to other mudflats. The birds' wingbeats were noticeably slower than the other blackbirds, more reminiscent of a crow than a blackbird.

Similar species and how eliminated:

Eliminated from Common Grackle by larger size (twice the size of other nearby grackles), longer tail and flatter crown.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain: _____

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment; lighting was good - clear sky and sun to the side. Estimated viewing distance of 75 yards. Optical equipment used was a B+K 20X spotting scope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

I saw Great-tailed Grackles at Riverton WMA in summer 1983

References and persons consulted before writing description:

NOS ~~Field~~ Field Guide to Birds of North America

How long before field notes made? _____ this form completed? 18 days

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