

4024 Arkansas Drive  
Ames, IA 50010  
2 July 1987

Mr. Ray Hamilton  
Route 4, Box 26B  
Maquoketa, IA 52060

Dear Mr. Hamilton,

Neil Bernstein sent me a copy of your letter on the Black-headed Grosbeak, hence this reply. I am very much interested in your record and want to make sure that we get some permanent record of the bird and any details you have on it. We have only a handful of records of that species for Iowa so any good sighting of the species is certainly worth noting. If you have already sent in details to either Tom Kent in Iowa City or Bob Myers in Perry, then ignore the rest of my request. If not, I would greatly appreciate it if you could provide me with a few details on the bird. Some of these are in your letter but it would help if you could put them all together in one place.

1. The dates and location where you saw the bird
2. Viewing conditions (distance, lighting, time seen, etc). You said it was 10 feet away so I assume you got a good look at it.
3. A description of what you saw. I would most prefer a description of the bird with the key identification features that you saw noted. (i.e., small sparrow sized bird, legs and feet dark, bill short and conical, back brown, breast white with spots over the upper half, no wing bars but a distinct red rump patch, etc--I don't think this describes any known bird but I think you can see what I am looking for). Features that would separate your bird from other similar species are most useful.
4. Any previous experience you have had with that species, others who saw it and if they agreed, etc.

I hope that this isn't too much of a hassle but I certainly would like to get the above on record before time fades the memory too much. I am currently in Massachusetts but will be back in Iowa by the end of the month if you need to reach me. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

James J. Dinsmore  
Field Reports Editor--Summer  
Iowa Bird Life