

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD

Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: BRONZED COWBIRD
(Vernacular Name)MOLOTHRUS AENEUS
(Scientific Name)Date(s): 18 MAY 1990Number of birds seen: ONE Sex: MALE Plumage: BREEDINGLocality: ALAMEDA AND GREEN MOUNTAIN DRIVE Elevation: 5500'Nearest town: LAKWOOD County: JEFFERSONTime(s) observed: 9 amDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): SHORT, ABOUT 5 SECONDS

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

DAWNE NELSON, BILL BROCKNER, ALAN HAY

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)

DICK SCHOTTER

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

BRIGHT SUNLIGHTOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): BINOCULARS 10xDistance, and how measured: 10 YARDS, ESTIMATED

If photographed, type of equipment and film:

Who else photographed the bird?

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

BIRD FLEW IN AND LANDED ON A FENCE, THEN DROPPED OFF IT.

Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern. Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observe in the field:

THE MOST STRIKING FEATURE OF THIS BIRD WAS ITS BRIGHT RED EYE. THE BIRD WAS CONSIDERABLY SMALLER THAN THE COMMON GRACKLES AROUND, AND WAS ABOUT THE SIZE OF A BREWER'S BLACKBIRD (ALSO IN AREA). THE BIRD WAS LONGER AND CONSIDERABLY CHUNKIER THAN BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS.

Description (continued):

THE UPPER PART OF THE BIRD (HEAD, UPPER BACK AND BREAST) WERE DARK BROWN WHEREAS THE REST OF THE UPPER PART OF THE BIRD WAS MUCH MORE GLOSSY LIKE BREWER'S BLACKBIRD. THE BILL WAS LARGER THAN BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

ON FENCE OF SUBURBAN HOUSE.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD - LARGER, RED EYE, DARK, NOT BROWN, HEAD, LARGER BILL

SHINY COWBIRD - NOT ALL GLOSSY, LARGER THAN SHINY COWBIRD.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD - EYE COLOR, TWO TONE BODY COLOR

COMMON GRACKLE - SIZE, EYE COLOR, BODY & TAIL SHINE.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

HAVE SEEN BRONZED COWBIRD ABOUT 10 TIMES IN SOUTHERN US AND MEXICO

HAVE SEEN SHINY COWBIRD ABOUT 100 TIMES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

HAVE SEEN OTHER SPECIES COUNTLESS TIMES

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC FIELD GUIDE

b) after observation:

This report was written from reports made during _____, after observation _____ from memory Date and time report was written: May 18th 1990 at 1 pm

Reporting observer: PETER R. GENT Signature: Peter R. Gent

Address: 55 SOUTH 35th ST, BOULDER, CO 80203

All reports will be maintained permanently at the address below:

Return to:

CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS
DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
CITY PARK
DENVER, CO 80205

DOCUMENTATION OF LATILONG BIRD SIGHTING
FOR
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

54-90-76

Species: Bronzed Cowbird | Molothrus aeneus
(Vernacular name) | (Scientific name)

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students--those studying occurrences 50 years from now--must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Date (s): 5 June 1990 Time Bird Seen: ~12:30 to 12:31 p.m.

Locality: Green Mt. Drive and Alameda Parkway
Denver, Colorado
Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Nikon 9x30 binoculars

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used:

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? ♂ Plumage: immature

Light conditions: bright sun

Distance from bird, and how measured: Approx. 50 feet; estimated.

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

Bird flew to fence in backyard with feeder. Perched on fence, seemed to rest (after feeding at backyard feeders) then flew off with direct flight.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Urban. Backyard feeders.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough.) Describe what you actually saw in the field.

Seen head on, perched, from above and in flight. Overall, a rather large cowbird, about 10" (about size of ♀ Brewer's Blackbird). Overall dull colored. Is a dull brownish-gray; has a 2-toned look with a clear demarcation on upper breast between the upper (head, chin, throat) plain dirty gray, and lower (belly & underside of) dull grayish tan. Head and chest puffy but I did not see an inflated ruff. Head large & long with flattened crown. Bill black, large, powerful, long and with down-curved culmen and down-curved cutting edge. Iris brilliant orange-red. Underside even and clean, not streaked.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

Not noted.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Brown Cowbird has smaller bill, black eye, black body (♂) and ~~and streaked or~~ or streaked undersides (♀).

Red eye; dull plumage eliminate all other blackbirds.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I've seen all N.A. black birds.

This report was written from notes made during X after observation; from memory .

Name (print): MARK JANOS

Mailing address: 10 SEDUM CT PUEBLO, CO 81001

Signature: Mark Janos

Return Form To: CFO Records Committee
c/o Curator - Dept. of Zoological Collections
Denver Museum of Natural History
City Park
Denver, CO 80205