

Accepted

## COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD

UNUSUAL RECORD

IXI

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

Species: Reddish Egret Egretta rufescens  
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): September 1, 3, 5, 11, 22 & 25, 1994Number of birds seen: one Sex: unknown Plumage: dark phase immatureLocality: Lake Holbrook Elevation: 4162Nearest town: Rocky Ford County: OteroTime(s) observed: September 1, 1994 9:15-9:45 AM and then 3:30-4:00 PMDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): over 1 hour total. at many times during the 25 day stay of the bird.Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):  
none at first.Bob Dickson during the afternoon of Sept. 1, 1994.55 Villa Dr. (719)  
Pueblo Co. 81001 542-5847Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers): Sylvia Wheelock, Van Triuan, Mark Janos, Bill & Inez Prather, Peter Gent, Joe Himmel, Vic Zerbi, Alan & Dee Hay, Dan Bridges, David Silverman, Karleen Schofield, Norm Erthal, Ira Sanders, Joey Kellner, Joe Rolter, Marlene Eggerling, Myron & Suzi Plooster, Diana & Don Mullineaux, Bob Spencer, Gary Conover, David Smith, Susan Blackshaw, Dave Johnson, Parle Sandstrom, Cliff Smith, Joe & Norma Kimby, Bob & Nancy Bierling, Ferd & Jo Dirckx, Gail Evans, Howard Frisch, Gary & Kathy Hughes, Margo & Traci Shimer and probably many more.Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):  
excellent.Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): 10X40 BEL Binoculars, 15X60 BEL Spotting Scope, and Questar Spotting Scope.Distance, and how measured: 30-150 yards.If photographed, type of equipment and film: not photographed.Who else photographed the bird? no one that I know of.Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying): I first found the bird along the shore to the south of where I was standing. The bird was heron like standing along the shore. The bird ate fish as it walked about along the shore. The bird at times danced about like a nervous heron. A few times the bird held it's wings out this is called canopy feeding.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 observed in the field: I identified the bird by it's heron shape. Small size directly compared to Great Blue Herons. Also by it's behavior of dancing around and canopy feeding. The bird's size was 16 inches smaller than Great Blue Heron. The egret was about 30 inches. The bird's overall shape was typical heron shaped. Long neck, long legs, long bill used for eating fish picked out from the water. The bird's plumage was a dark phase immature bird. The color pattern is as follows: The bird had an all dark bill. The head was grayish. The face was also grayish. The long neck was all grayish. The wings were all grayish.

Description (continued): The sides of the neck was also grayish. The back was all grayish. The tail was also grayish. The eyes were bright yellow. The chin was grayish. The front of the long neck was also grayish. The belly and undertail coverts were also grayish. The legs were dark. The feet were not seen. The bird had some rusty orange color on the head, neck, wings, back and tail. The bill shape was long, thick and pointed. The wing's shape was typical heron shaped. The tail was also heron shape.

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

No sounds heard.

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

The bird was observed on the shore of a man-made lake in SE Colorado.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

Little Blue Heron: By this species smaller size than Reddish Egret and immature Little Blue Herons are white. Adults would be overall blue not grayish.

Great Blue Heron: By this species much larger size. In all plumages by its yellow bill.

Sandhill Crane: A 'stained' bird of ~~this~~ this species still has a red cap and thinner bill than herons or egrets.

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

Reddish Egret: This is my first one.

Little Blue Heron: I have seen 3 adults and 1 immature in CO and 2 adults and 1 imm. in CA.

Great Blue Heron: I have seen many in CO and CA.

Sandhill Crane: I have seen many in CO and NM.

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

a) at time of observation: National Geographic Society Bird's of North America.

b) after observation:

This report was written from reports made during X, after observation X from memory \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time report was written: October 3, 1994 6:00 PM.

Reporting observer: Brandon K. Percival Signature: Brandon K. Percival

Address: 835 Harmony Drive. Pueblo West, CO 81007-2604

719-547-3722

Return to:

Bill Prather

C.F.O. Official Records Committee

13810 WCR 1

Longmont, Colorado 80504

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

84  
5-94-10  
Accepted

REDDISH EGRET

*Egretta rufescens*

Location: Lake Holbrook; Rocky Ford area; Otero County, Colorado

Date: September 2, 3, 5 and 11, 1994

This bird was discovered by Brandon Percival

Setting:

This bird spent most of its time feeding at the shallow edge of this plains reservoir. I found it either in the northeast bay of the reservoir, along the eastern edge along the dike, or standing on the point projecting south from the north shore. I saw it at various times of the day, both morning and afternoon. I observed it from as close as 75 yards and as far as 1/4 mile with my Kowa 20-60X scope. Light conditions varied but viewing conditions were excellent at times. I saw the bird feeding and at rest and sometimes in flight. It usually fed in a purposeful kind of way, but on 9/11 I saw it canopy feed. It made quick seemingly random movements back and forth, sometimes seeming to stagger, and flinging its wings out to the sides.

Description:

The bird was a dark phase immature. It was a medium-sized heron, like a "big" Little Blue in size. It was smaller than the nearby Great Egret on one day and was much smaller in body size and height than nearby Great Blue Herons. The body was overall dark grey. The head and neck were a dull, washed out pinkish-brown. The bill was long, stout and all dark grey. The facial skin was grey. The iris was pale yellow, almost white. The upper leg, above the "knee" joint was grey, and about the same length as the lower leg, which was black. In flight the bird was a very uniform grey without the darker flight feathers. The legs were quite long and trailed past the tail in flight.

Similar Species:

The Great Blue Heron is much larger, has a white and black pattern on the head and neck, yellow on the bill and dark flight feathers show in flight. The Tricolored Heron has yellow legs and bill, and a white foreneck and undersides. The non-breeding Little Blue Heron is most similar to this bird. The Little Blue Heron has a purplish, not pinkish wash on the head and neck, a distinctly darker tipped bill, greenish-grey legs, blue facial skin, proportionately shorter legs (especially the upper leg), and lacks the "dancing" feeding behavior.

Experience with Species:

I have seen all mentioned herons. I saw Reddish Egret at Blue Lake in Colorado in 1991, and in California in 1993 and south Texas in March 1994.

This report is prepared from notes made during observation.

*Mark Janos*

Mark Janos  
10 Sedum Ct.  
Pueblo, CO 81001

## COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☒

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

Species: REDISH EGRET | EGRETTA RUFLSCENS  
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): SEPTEMBER 3rd, 1994Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: UNKNOWN Plumage: IMMATURELocality: LAKE HOLBROOK Elevation: 4000' (GUESS)Nearest town: ROCKY FORD County: OTEROTime(s) observed: 4 → 4:30 pmDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 25 minutes

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

MARK JANDOS, VIC ZERBI

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

SEVERAL OTHERS

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

SUNNYOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): BINOCULARS 10X, TELESCOPEDistance, and how measured: 80m NEAREST APPROXIMATE, 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):

FEEDING IN THE SHALLOW WATER AT THE EDGE OF LAKE HOLBROOK.

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:

LARGISH WADING BIRD, BUT CLEARLY MUCH SMALLER THAN GREAT BLUE HERON,  
LIKE A SMALLISH GREAT EGRET IN SIZE. THE BIRD WAS BASICALLY GRAY  
WITH SOME CINNAMON IN THE HEAD, NECK AND ON THE BACK.

Description (continued):

THE BILL WAS LONGISH AND DARK AND THE LOWER LEGS WERE ALSO DARK.  
THE BIRD LOOKED VERY SIMILAR TO THE ILLUSTRATION IN THE NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC FIELD GUIDE. IT WAS ALONE, BUT FED QUITE ACTIVELY BY  
DASHING FOR SEVERAL STRIDES BEFORE STRIKING FOR A FISH. WHILE WE  
WATCHED IT, IT DID NOT PERFORM A FULL CANOPY FEEDING POSTURE.  
THIS BIRD HAD NO SHAGGY PLUMES ON ITS ~~NE~~ HEAD OR LOWER NECK.

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

NONE HEARD

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

EDGE AND SHALLOW WATER OF LAKE HOLBROOK.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

GREAT BLUE HERON BY SIZE AND IMMATURE PLUMAGE.

ALL OTHER EGRETS AND LITTLE BLUE HERON HAVE WHITE IMMATURES.

TRICOLORED HERON IMMATURE HAS CHESTNUT NECK AND ON THE BACK.

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

VERY FAMILIAR WITH ALL HERONS AND EGRETS IN N. AMERICA

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 X from memory \_\_\_\_\_  
Date and time report was written: SEPTEMBER 10<sup>th</sup>, 1994

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

Address: 55 S 35th ST, BOULDER, CO 80303.

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