

split?

CFO-RC-FILE# 1998-39

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS SIGHT RECORD FORM

rec'd 8-1-98 Results: ACCEPTED 6-1

Species: Black Rail  
(Common Name)

Latherallus jamaicensis  
(Scientific Name)

Date(s) of Occurrence: May 9 and 10, 1997 (four birds heard); June 24, 1997 (six birds heard); and July 11, 1997 (one bird seen and heard).

Number of birds seen or heard: as above.

Sex: Unknown, if only males sing, they were all males.

Plumage: adult.

Exact Locality: Fort Lyon Marshes on Road HH, Bent County and Bent's Old Fort Marsh in Otero County.

County: as above.

Nearest town: La Junta and Fort Lyon.

Elevation: unknown.

Length of Observation: Five minutes of hearing them for each sighting. Five minutes hearing and seeing the bird on July 11, 1995.

Time(s) of Observation: At night around 930pm on May 9 and 800am on May 10. During the morning from on June 24 and about 900am-915am on July 11.

Other Observers who independently heard the bird(s): May 9, I was with Mark Hullinger. On May 10, I was with David Quesenberry. On June 24, I was with Jolan Truan of Phoenix, Arizona. On July 11, I saw the bird with Sherry Chapman.

Light conditions [Quality: Direction relative to bird(s) position]: Dark on May 9. Sunshine on May 10, June 24, and July 11, the sun was to my back when I saw the bird on July 11.

Optical equipment used: ears on all dates except for July 11, which I used both my ears and my 10x40 Baucsh & Lomb Custom Binoculars.

Distance from bird (Estimated unless otherwise noted): All bird heard sounded close, perhaps within 20 feet. The bird seen was about 15 feet from me.

Describe the bird's behavior: The heard birds, all called from the marsh floor. The bird seen, came running out of the marsh into a large open area that is surrounded by the marsh. The bird was quite cooperative as it sat still in the open giving great views.

Describe the bird: All of the sightings included the birds giving their typical and distinctive song a "ki ki doo". All the bird gave this song several times while I was listening for them. The description of the bird seen on July 11 is as follows:

Describe the bird's song and call if heard: All of the birds gave a "ki ki doo" song from the marsh floor. This song is distinctive.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird: All the birds were in marshes with cattails in southeastern Colorado.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species:

No other birds make a sound like the Black Rail's "ki ki doo". Also the bird seen had a chestnut color nape, which Sora and other rails do not have. Black Rails are very tiny rails and Soras and Virginia Rails are much bigger.

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

Black Rail: I have seen and heard Black Rails in southeastern Colorado from 1991 to 1997. These birds were first discovered by Dan Bridges in May of 1991. One night, I heard 16 Black Rails in 1993 with Van Truan. Black Rails are very easy to hear during the night and sometimes during the day in marshes in Otero and Bent Counties of southeastern Colorado from May to July.

Sora and Virginia Rails: I have seen and heard many of each in Colorado.

List books if they helped in your identification: no needed.

This report was written from notes taken during \_\_, or after observation X or from memory \_\_.

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ACCEPT 6-



Black Rail  
Bent's Old Fort

10 May 1997

D. Leatherman & J. Wammoser