

Species: Brown Pelican  
(Vernacular name)Pelecanus occidentalis  
(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): 6/23/91, 6/26/91 (2 pelicans) Time Bird Seen: 6/23 10:10am to 6/23 10:20amLocality: CHATFIELD S.R.A., JEFFERSON County

Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Bushnell 10x binoculars, Bushnell 20-45x ScopeIf photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: N/ANumber of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: adultLight conditions: Bright SunlightDistance from bird, and how measured: approx 100 yds (estimate)

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

on 6/23, First seen flying between Chatfield Res and gravel pit S. of Chatfield. Observed it flying low across the water and fishing by diving head (bill) first into the water from a height of several feet. Also saw it sitting on the water (note it for several minutes through Scope).

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

6/23 Man-made gravel pit filled with water6/26 Man-made lake (Chatfield)

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

On 6/23, bird was seen later in day by Dan Bridges, Duane Nelson & Mark Jones, and several other birders. This and a 2<sup>nd</sup> bird were subsequently seen by many birders at least until 6/27.

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the 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.

Overall color of bird was grayish brown. Size was very large (est. wingspread 6 ft), with a huge gray bill. Plumage appeared to be that of an adult bird. Top of head was mostly white which extended down sides of neck. Back of neck was a rich chocolate brown color. Flew in typical pelican fashion with neck folded back on body with ~~high~~ huge bill leading the way.

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

None heard

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

White Pelican: They are white. This bird was brown. Great bulk, overall shape, and huge bill eliminate all other species.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

Have seen thousands of White Pelicans and hundreds of Brown Pelicans, most recently in Florida in 4/91.

This report was written from notes made during ☒ after \_\_\_ observation; from memory \_\_\_

NAME (print): Dick Schottler

Mailing address: 25 S. Indiana Pl., Golden, CO 80401

Signature: Dick Schottler

Return to:

~~Wynne D. King~~  
~~600 Milwaukee Street~~  
~~Denver, Colorado 80206~~



DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTINGS  
FOR  
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

Species: Brown Pelican ; Pelecanus occidentalis  
(Vernacular name) (Scientific name)

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Dates (s): 23 June 1991 Time Bird Seen: 2:55 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Locality : Chatfield Res.  
Denver, Colorado  
Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Nikon 9x30 binocs ; KOWA 20-60X Scope

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: —

Number of birds seen: one Sex: — Plumage: breeding (or nearly so)

Light conditions: Very good, bright sun.

Distance from bird, and how measured: 500 yds, estimated

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

Bird spent the entire time perched about 6' high on a large broken off cottonwood stub sticking out of water. Sat alert; dozed; preened.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Heron rookery in large lake.

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

Duane Nelson

APPENDIX II Continued

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.

Overall huge size, essentially brown bird about 4' long. Long, wide powerful ridged bill, gray in color with a big neck pouch. Large gray legs & gray webbed feet. Body overall gray-brown with worn-looking wing feathers. Belly white. Back of neck chestnut brown, with brown meeting in front at lower edge of neck. Fore-neck & face whitish. Crown & most of head whitish. When wing was spread you could see black leading edge of wing, bordered by white at the rear. Flight feathers blackish.

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

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

White Pelican has orange bill & feet & essentially white plumage, even in immature.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I've seen both Am. Pelicans many times

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

Name (print) : MARK JANOS

Mailing address: 10 Sedun Ct. Pueblo, Colo 81001

Signature: Mark Janos

Return Form To:

CFO Records Committee  
c/o Curator--Zoological Collections  
Denver Museum of Natural History  
City Park  
Denver, CO 80205



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## COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☒

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

Species: BROWN PELICAN | PELECANUS OCCIDENTALIS  
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): 24 & JUNE, 1991Number of birds seen: ONE Sex: UNKNOWN Plumage: ADULTLocality: CHATFIELD RECREATION AREA Elevation: 5200'Nearest town: DENVER County: JEFFERSONTime(s) observed: 6am to 8am

Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

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

JOEY KELLNER, JOE ROLLER, JOE TENBRINK, TONI BREVILLIER

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

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

BRIGHT SUN AT BACKS, IN DIRECT SUNLIGHTOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): 10X BINOCULARS, VARIOUS TELESCOPES w/ 50XDistance, and how measured: 200 YDS (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):

SAT ON TREE STUMP FOR ENTIRE TIME - MOSTLY PREENING, SITTING AND  
HOLDING OUT WINGS.

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:

A LARGE, MAINLY DARK BODIED BIRD WITH DARK <sup>WINGS AND</sup> FEET. LONG NECK WHITE IN  
FRONT AND CHOCOLATE BROWN AT REAR. BLUE PATCH AROUND EYE. VERY LARGE, LONG  
BILL WITH HOOK AT TIP AND HIGH DARK THROAT POUCH. THIS WAS CLEARLY VISIBLE  
WHEN BIRD STRETCHED AND YAWNED. CONSIDERABLY LARGER THAN CANADA GEESE AND D-C CORMORANTS.

Description (continued):

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

NONE GIVEN

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

ON TREE STUMP JUST ABOVE WATER OF CHATFIELD LAKE.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

THE BILL AND THROAT PATCH MADE THIS A PELICAN. SIZE AND WHOLE BODY COLOR (DARK) ELIMINATE WHITE PELICAN (INCLUDING YOUNG) AND OTHER PELICANS.

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

VERY FAMILIAR WITH THIS SPECIES AND WHITE PELICAN.

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

a) at time of observation:

NONE

b) after observation:

This report was written from reports made during \_\_\_\_\_, after observation ☒ from memory \_\_\_\_\_  
Date and time report was written: 24th JUNE 1991 9pm

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