

DOCUMENTATION --
RAPE BIRD SIGHTING

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8-81-58

MOUNTAIN WEST REGION
AMERICAN BIRDS

Species: Brant
(Vernacular name)

Branta herriels
(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): October 24, 25, 31 1981 Time Bird Seen: 11:45 PM to 3:00 PM (24)
10:40 AM to 11:45 AM (25)
1:30 PM to 2:30 PM (31)

Locality: Cherry Creek Reservoir
Denver, Denver County, Colorado
Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Bausch & Lomb Discoverer Zoom 15x-60x Scope

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: Sexes alike Plumage: Has only 1 plumage

Light conditions: Excellent on all 3 days

Distance from bird, and how measured: From 200 feet to 1500. Estimated.

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

The bird was swimming and feeding during the entire time of observation on all 3 occasions. Frequently it tipped in the manner of surface-feeding ducks.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

The bird was in the water from 200 to 1500 feet from the shoreline at all times.

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

Winston W. Brockner 5965 S. Herzman Dr. Evergreen, CO 80439
Herman & Jean Kretschmer 1956 S. Vaughn Way, Aurora, CO. 80012
John R. & Joyce Cooper 1041 Field St. Lakewood, CO. 80215

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.

Somewhat larger than a Mallard, it is a small to medium sized goose resembling a miniature Canada goose but without a white cheek and having a black breast. The head, neck, and breast are black with a small white mark on each side of the neck; The bill is small and black; The back is dark brown; The sides are grayish white; The undertail coverts are very white and very conspicuous when the bird tips. To feed on aquatic plants; The Tail is black.

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

No calls or sounds were heard on any of the three occasions.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

The only similar bird is the Black or Pacific Brant which is black on the belly as well as on the breast. The brant which I saw is very light on the belly.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I have had no prior experience, but consulted with other birders in D.F.O, who have had experience with both brants.

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

NAME (print): Floyd I. Pendell

Mailing address: 3794 S. Poplar St., Denver, CO. 80237

Signature: Floyd I. Pendell

Return to:

Hugh E. Kingery
869 Milwaukee Street
Denver, Colorado 80206

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Supplement to the report of the Brant at Cherry Creek Reservoir
October 24-31, 1981.

Frank Justice observed mid-week, I think Oct. 28. He said that it did not fly when the coots with it did fly. Jack Reddall said that some time during the week he had observed it for 2 hours, and that it did fly.

We observed it with our beginners' bird class on October 31, feeding quite close to shore with a flock of coots. It was close enough that all could observe it, and most identified it independently using the bird book and a few hints. . .

We observed a bird about twice the size of the coots, actively feeding by picking at the water rapidly. It did ~~not~~ tip down, bottoms up, to feed the way puddle ducks and geese do.

We saw a goose-like bird, neck longer than a duck but shorter than the typical large Canada Geese we usually see around here. Black neck with a light-colored hash mark on the neck. Brown back, and lighter belly which was not dark or black.

This report is made after the observation from memory.

Hugh E. Kingery & Urling C. Kingery
869 Milwaukee Street, Denver 80206.