

Species: BLACK SCOTER

Melanitta nigra

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): November 6, 1976

Time Bird Seen: 11:15 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. -MST

Locality: Cloverleaf Reservoir (three miles west of Longmont on Nelson Road)

Nearest Town: Longmont

County: Boulder

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

Bruce Webb, Steve Larson, Pete Moulton, Bruce Bosley and possibly others.

Optical Equipment: 10X50 Bushnell Binoculars; 15X-60X Zoom telescope

If photographed, type of equipment used: _____

Light Conditions: High, thin cirrus clouds; air still; fairly bright conditions.

Distance from bird (how measured): 200 feet, estimated.

Number of Birds Seen: Two Sex: Unknown Plumage: Non-breeding females or immatures

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:

Both birds were observed for the most part resting on the water, occasionally preening themselves. They were in the company of two Surf Scoters (immatures or females) and two White-winged Scoters (immatures or females). After about ten minutes of viewing, all six birds began diving and moving out to the far side of the reservoir away from the observers.

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

Large, chunky and uniformly dark ducks roughly the same size as nearby Common Goldeneyes (B. clangula). Bill, grayish, short stubby. Overall body color dark chocolate brown, shading a little lighter on sides and flanks. Wings not marked with any patch of color as in White-winged Scoters. Tail, short and stubby, sometimes slightly cocked upwards as birds rested on water. Forehead, top of head and back of neck blackish, obviously darker by contrast with other body parts. Face, chin and throat whitish, a very prominent field mark.

Describe the bird's song or call, if heard, including method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight, etc:

The birds were silent.

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Fresh water reservoir on high plains adjacent to mountains.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

The other two North American Scoters (Surf and White-winged) were with the two Black Scoters allowing for easy separation of the three species. Surf Scoters had typically dark grayish-brown head with two white spots (one between eye and bill and the other over the ear area), heavier shaped bill and unmarked wings. White-winged Scoter also showed head pattern with two white patches and clearly displayed white wing patches when preening.

Ruddy Duck: Smaller (there were six nearby for comparison). Females show white faces with dark line from base of bill, back below ear; show considerable light sides and flanks compared to upper parts.

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

Have seen literally thousands of all three scoters on the Atlantic Coast over past twenty-five years. Have seen all three species on the Pacific Coast during past fifteen years. Have seen all three species in Colorado on several occasions during past twelve years. Black Scoters have occurred in several locations during the past two years in Colorado and I have seen at least ten of these birds.

Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation?

Standard Field Guides substantiated identification.

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

PRINT NAME: Jack Reddall SIGNATURE: Jack Reddall DATE: 11-10-1976
Street Address: 4450 South Alton Street Town and State: Englewood, Colorado ZIP: 80110

Return to: JACK REDDALL - 4450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110

accepted JR/12/15/76

Species: Common scoter
(Vernacular Name)Oidemia nigra
(Scientific Name; use binomial)Date(s): 23 Oct., 6 Nov. 1976 Time Bird Seen: 11 am to 15 minLocality: Cloverleaf ReservoirNearest Town: HygieneCounty: Boulder

Other observers who identified this bird:

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

noneOptical Equipment: 8x32 binocularsLight Conditions: clearDistance from Bird (how measured): 200-300 yards (estimate)Number of Birds Seen: 3 or 4 Sex: ♀ Plumage:Overall Appearance and Size: Dark ducks with pale cheeks. No other marks. No speculum. In flock of baldpates, redheads, and rusty ducks. Subject birds size of baldpate & redheads, much larger than rusty.

Detailed Description (describe only what was actually observed in the field):

Bill (shape and color): dark even when flyingLegs (shape and color): not seen, probably darkCrown and Forehead: dark, perhaps blackEye (color): redNape: darkFace: pale buff or grayThroat: darkBreast and Sides: darkBelly and Flanks: darkUndertail Coverts: darkBack: darkWings: darkUnderwings: darkRump: darkUppertail Coverts: darkUpper Side of Tail: darkUnder Side of Tail: darkShape of Tail: not seenVoice: noneBehavior: Diving ducks. On b. Flew several times around flock of other ducks. Flight very close to water, rapid.Habitat: Fresh water reservoir.Prior Experience with this Species: None

How Were Similarly Appearing Species Eliminated? Face with single large pale area covering entire face; no speculum; size of baldpate. All three qualities distinguish from female winter rusty. First quality distinguishes from other scoters. Second " " " " white-winged scoter.

This Report was written From: Notes made during after X observation; Memory Signed: T.E. VanZandt Street Address: 2025 Alpine Drive