

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

A

Species: Black Scoter ; Melanitta nigra
(Vernacular name) (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.

Dates (s): 7 Nov 90 Time Bird Seen: 6:45 to 7:15 a.m.

Locality: Puebls Res.

Puebls, Colo.
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: female Plumage: ad. (or, stwinter?)

Light conditions: Very early, low sun; but bird close to shore, in shade

Distance from bird, and how measured: 75 yds - 250 yds estimated.

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

Bird flew in to near shore, through fog; flying low & fast over the water. Swam near steep, gravelly shore. Drove 3 times in 3 min., staying underwater for about 1/2 min. at a time.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Plains Reservoir

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

Discovered by Van Truman, Bob Dickson. Seen by Dan Bridges also

APPENDIX 1I 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.

About 16" long, an overall compact, plain dark duck. Charcoal black with brownish edges to wing coverts and secondaries. Hump-backed; round-headed; spike-tailed with a steep forehead. Medium-long, curved bill juts straight out from steep forehead. There is a distinct, clean-bordered ashy white cheek and neck patch up to about the level of the dark eye. Bill was all dark.

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

Not heard.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Largish size, overall dark color and spiky tail indicate scoters. Only Black scoter has whitish cheek-neck patch.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I've seen all scoters on West Coast and in Colorado

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

Name (print) : MARK JANOS

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Signature: Mark Janos

Return Form To:

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