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RED-NECKED GREBE  
UNUSUAL RECORD

PODICEPS GRISEGENA

DATE : 10 APRIL 1982

NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: 1 WINTER PLUMAGE OR  
TRANSITION PLUMAGE.

LOCALITY : BIG JOHNSON RESERVOIR, EL PASO COUNTY  
LAT/LONG 19 (PUEBLO)

NEAREST TOWN : COLORADO SPRINGS

TIME OBSERVED 11<sup>45</sup> AM - 12<sup>00</sup> NOON

LIGHT CONDITIONS : SUN BEHIND OBSERVER.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT : 32X50 BUSHNELL TELESCOPE.

DISTANCE : 100 METERS. ESTIMATE.

BEHAVIOR : SWIMMING AND DIVING FOR SHORT PERIODS

DESCRIPTION:

RELATIVE SIZE AND SHAPE: A SWIMMING BIRD  
WITH A LONG NECK AND LARGER THAN  
HORNED AND EARED GREBES. IT APPROACHED  
THE WESTERN GREBE IN SIZE BUT ITS  
NECK WAS SHORTER AND APPEARED, TO THE  
OBSERVER, TO BE STOUTER. IT WAS VERY  
GREBE-LIKE IN APPEARANCE WITH THE  
LONG NECK AND FAIRLY LARGE HEAD  
THAT WAS SOMEWHAT TRIANGULAR SHAPED.

OVERALL COLOR PATTERN: THE COLORATION WAS VERY  
INCONSPICUOUS BEING GRAY OR GRAY BROWN  
EXCEPT FOR THE THROAT, CHEEK AND NECK.  
THE THROAT AND CHEEK WERE WHITE. THE WHITE  
OF THE CHEEK CONTRASTING WITH THE DARKER CROWN.  
THE NECK WAS ESSENTIALLY GRAY BUT WAS REMOTELY  
RUSTY MOTTLED. IT WAS THE NECK COLOR THAT SUGGESTED  
TRANSITION FROM WINTER TO SUMMER PLUMAGE.

THIS REPORT WAS WRITTEN MAY 25, 1982  
REPORTING OBSERVER: RICHARD BURKE 2727 MORN, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO

Richard Burke

AS MENTIONED THE HEAD WAS TRIANGULAR SHAPED AND SOMEWHAT 'PEAKED' AT THE TOP REAR. THE FOREHEAD WAS SLOPING (LOW) ELIMINATING THE COMMON LOON. THE BILL APPEARED TO BE A DULL HORN COLOR EXCEPT THE BASAL  $\frac{1}{3}$  OF BOTH MANDIBLES WAS BRIGHT YELLOW. THE BILL WAS VERY STOUT AND LONGER THAN EITHER THE EARED OR HORNED GREBE. THE CULMEN DID NOT APPEAR TO BE AS STRAIGHT AS THAT OF THE WESTERN GREBE. THIS ASPECT OF THE BILL GREATLY INFLUENCED THE OVERALL APPEARANCE OF THE HEAD.

HABITAT: A LARGE RESERVOIR WITHOUT WITH VERY LITTLE MUD OR SANDY AREAS. BEYOND THAT THE AREA IMMEDIATELY SURROUNDING THE RESERVOIR WAS BRAZED SHORT GRASS PRAIRIE.

LOON SPECIES WERE ELIMINATED BY THE RELATIVE NECK LENGTH. THE GREBE HAD A LONGER NECK PROPORTIONALLY TO ITS BODY. THE COLOR PATTERN WAS 'UNLIKE THAT OF A WESTERN GREBE. THIS BIRD WAS TOO LARGE TO BE A HORNED OR EARED GREBE. LOONS WERE ALSO ELIMINATED BY HEAD SHAPE, THOUGH THE COLOR PATTERN MADE THE OBSERVER THINK 'LOON' (WINTER PLUMAGE) AT FIRST SIGHT.

NO EXPERIENCE WITH THIS SPECIES. REPORT WRITTEN WAS WRITTEN FROM NOTES MADE DURING AND IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING OBSERVATION.