

## COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☒Accepted 7-0**Species:** Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegina*)**Date:** 20 December 1995 **Number seen:** one**Sex:** unknown**Plumage:** unknown**Locality:** McLellan Reservoir**Elevation:** 5100' ?**Nearest town:** Littleton**County:** Arapahoe**Time observed:** about 12:30 PM MST**Duration of observation:** about 3 minutes

**Description:** While looking for the Black Scoter present at this site for weeks, I found a single largish grebe. The bird was sleeping, but it was still obvious that it was a Red-necked Grebe. I had just come from Cherry Creek Reservoir which was mostly frozen after a few very cold nights. I assumed that I would find that Chatfield would also be frozen and that the Red-necked that had been there for a couple weeks had moved to McLellan. When I got to Chatfield (about 15 minutes later), I ran into Chris Wood who had been there for some time and had seen the Red-necked Grebe there on Chatfield, which was mostly open. Shortly thereafter, I saw the Chatfield bird, too. So, there are two!

The bird was near a flock of Canada Geese and within 100' or so of a few Common Goldeneyes. It was much smaller than the geese and somewhat larger than the goldeneyes. When it was sleeping, I could see a dark crown and hindneck. The neck was dingy gray on the sides and very white on the front, so that the neck, from front to back, was tri-colored. The back was very dark gray with slightly paler sides and very pale flanks.

When the bird lifted its head briefly, I could see that the bill (mostly yellow with a dark culmen and a dark tip) was not the long rapier-like bill of Western Grebe, but was still longer than any other grebe with which I am familiar. The cheek was much paler than the crown and hindneck, but darker than the white chin and throat. The white from the throat extended up behind the auriculars.

The Chatfield bird was basically identical in appearance to the McLellan bird, but might have been slightly paler-cheeked.

Similar species eliminated: All the small grebe species (Pied-billed, Horned, and Eared) are eliminated by size, facial pattern, and bill size, shape, and color. Western and Clark's Grebes are eliminated by bill size and color and face and neck pattern.

**What is your prior experience with this and similarly-appearing species?** I am exceedingly familiar with Red-necked Grebe as I have seen in excess of 20,000 of them, mostly at Whitefish Point, MI. I have seen large numbers in basic plumage. I have seen 100s of Clark's Grebes and 1000s of all other Colorado species of grebes.

**Light conditions:** sun behind and above me

**Optical equipment used:** 7x42 Zeiss and 30x Kowa

**Distance, and how estimated:** estimated distance of about 80 meters

**Other observers who saw the bird with you:** none

**Other observers who saw the bird independently:** none of which I am aware

**If photographed, type of equipment and film:** (How is this relevant?) N/A

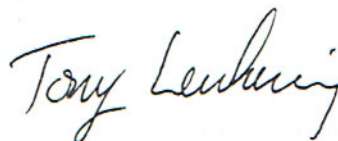
**List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:**

**a) at time of observation:** none

**b) after observation:** none

**Reporting observer:** Tony Leukering

**Signature:**



**Address:** Colorado Bird Observatory, 13401 Piccadilly Road, Brighton, CO 80601

**Date report was written:** 20 December 1995 from notes written immediately after the sighting

P.S. I assume (though, of course that's dangerous in general and even more so when talking about documenting rare birds) that the Chatfield bird has been documented. If not, I have notes on my first sighting of that bird on 6 December 1995 (when failing to see the Ancient Murrelet), and can write it up formally if the Committee requires.