

Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

(This is a two-page report. Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.)

Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

CFO-RC FILE X: **2001-92**

RESULTS:

Species:(Common Name): Red-throated Loon	(Scientific Name) Gavia stellata	
Date(s) of occurrence: October 28 – November 9, 2001		
Number of birds seen: One	Sex: Unknown	Plumage: Juvenal
Exact Location: Standley Lake		
County: Jefferson	Nearest town: Westminster/Arvada	Elevation: 5500 feet msl
Length of observation: Varied. Greatest length of observation was approximately one hour	Time(s) of observation: Mornings only	
Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Tony Leukering, Brian Gibbons, Rachel Hopper, Bill Schmoker, and others		
Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s): Many		
Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position): Varied between cloudy to sunny skies. All observations were from the east edge of the lake looking west.		
Optical equipment used: 7 X 42 Zeis Bins, 20-60X Leica Scope		
Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): Variable between roughly 400 to 600 yards (just a guess)		
Was bird(s) photographed? Yes, video	If so, have you submitted photos? Submitted stills from video	
Who took the photographs? Myself		
Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: Open water lake		
Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the Species or in supporting the identification): Actively foraged mostly with long periods underwater and occasional swimming/preening sessions.		

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size and shape and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird(s). Describe other important details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches or copy field notes):

On the morning of 28 October, 2001, a group of birders had gathered on the eastern shore of Standley Lake in search of the female Black Scoter and other noteworthy birds that had been present on the lake during the past week. Brian Gibbons and/or Tony Leukering spotted a juvenile Red-throated Loon in the west-central portion of the lake. This had not surprised me greatly considering that I really had thought I spotted a Red-throated Loon on the lake a week previous. Active foraging and waves only allowed for a very brief look during that earlier observation. For the remainder of the week, I still wondered what I had observed. The views on 28 October were much better. Though the distance was considerable, excellent views were had by all through scopes. It was fortunate that a few Common and Pacific Loons were also present on the lake at the time.

The subject bird was undoubtedly a loon, being larger than a duck, short-necked, possessing a long, dagger-like bill, and rode low in the water. The head was relatively flat-topped for a loon, quite unlike the rounded appearance of Pacific. The bill was gray and relatively shorter and thinner than other loons. The position of the bill was noticeably upturned with the lower mandible being deeper, accentuating the upturned effect. The crown and nape were dark gray. The cheeks and chin were white blending to a soft, light gray on the throat and side-neck. The upper breast appeared white. The back was also dark gray with a very slight scalloping affect. The flanks were light gray/white. The lack of bright white face, side-neck, and throat eliminates the potential for the bird to have been an adult. A few poor quality digital stills of the subject bird captured from video are provided below.



In comparison to nearby Common and Pacific Loons, the Red-throated seemed much smaller in size than Common and even slightly smaller than Pacific. Besides much larger in size, the Common's were more robust, had larger, thicker bills, an angular head shape, dark brown crown and nape with a jagged demarcation between the rear neck and the white throat. The upperpart coloration on the Common Loons was also much darker overall. Bill angle was straight, unlike the upturned bill of Red-throated.

The Pacific Loons, though smallish, were more similar to Common in general appearance than Red-throated. As with Common, the Pacific had dark brown crowns, nape, and upperparts with highly contrasting white face and throat, unlike the overall light-gray pattern of the Red-throated. Bill angle was also straight on the Pacific's, as with the Common's.

Yellow-billed Loon, though not present, was immediately eliminated because of size, body, head and bill shape, and coloration.



Western and a few Clark's Grebes were also present on Standley at the time of the loon observation. These large grebes were eliminated due to overall shape, size, and color.

Describe bird's call or song: **None heard**

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: **See above**

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? **Have observed hundreds of other birds on Lakes Superior and Michigan, the Atlantic Ocean, Alaska, and Europe. Have also observed another individual of this species in Colorado at John Martin Reservoir in 2000.**

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation): **None**

This report is from notes made during or after **XX** observation or later from memory

Date of written report: **12/13/01**

Reporting observer: **Larry Semo**

Signature:



Reporting Observer's Address: **9054 Dover Street**

City: **Westminster**

State: **Colorado**

Zip: **80021**

**Send report to:
Colorado Birds Record Committee
c/o Tony Leukering
Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory**

2001-92

rec'd 10/29/01

Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form (This is a two-page report. Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.) Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

CFO-RC FILE X:

RESULTS:

Species:(Common Name) Red-throated Loon (Scientific Name) *Gavia stellata*

Date(s) of occurrence: Oct 28, 2001

Number of birds seen: one Sex: Plumage:juvenal

Exact location: SE corner of Stanley Lake

County: Nearest town: Westminister Elevation: ? 5400 feet

Length of observation: 20 minutes Time(s) of observation: 09:20 to 09:40

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Peter Gent, Brian Gibbon, Tony Luekering, Don and Diana Mullineaux, Larry Semo

Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s):

Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position:

Overcast, wind light and variable

Optical equipment used: Kowa TSN 4, 20x60 zoom

Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): 300 to 400 yards

Was bird(s) photographed? Yes If so, have you submitted photos? no

Who took the photographs? Larry Semo

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred:
Reservoir

Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the Species or in supporting the identification): The bird was loosely associated with 1000's of W. Grebes, seen diving and resting on the water.

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size and shape and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird(s). Describe other important details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches or copy field notes):The bird was about the size of the surrounding W. Grebes. The head was a brownish color with a white cheek patch and dark eye. The bill was pale, with the culmen being concave giving the bill an upturned appearance. The head was held slightly tipped up. The entire neck was washed in a brownish gray without any pattern. The back and wings were a brownish color again without much pattern. The breast and flanks were white (seen when the bird dove).

Describe bird's call or song: None Heard

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: Common, Pacific and Yellow-billed were eliminated either by bill size and shape or neck pattern. What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? A few Red-throated Loons

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation): Sibley, A Guide to Birds , 2000

This report is from notes made during or after observation or later
X from memory

Date of written report: Oct 28 , 2001

Reporting observer: Signature: Ric Olson

Reporting Observer's Address: 9450 N. Heather Dr. Castle Rock 80104

City: State: Zip:

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD _____ UNUSUAL RECORD X

rec'd 10/28/01

Species: Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*)**Date:** 28 October 2001**Number seen:** one**Sex:** ?**Plumage:** Juvenal**Locality:** Standley Lake**Elevation:** about 5000'**Nearest town:** Westminster**County:** Jefferson**Time observed:** about 0930-1100**Duration of observation:** ~20 minutes, off and on

Description: While looking at the Black Scoter at Standley, Brian Gibbons asked me to look at the third loon species for the day on the lake. Indeed, there was an obvious juvenile Red-throated Loon in his scope. This may have been the bird that Larry Semo saw for a couple of seconds three days previously. The hordes watched the bird off and on for quite a while, getting to watch it forage and preen. The bird dove frequently and just leaned into the water when it went; it did not open its wings or jump into the air first.

It was a small loon, being roughly the size of the Western Grebes present and with a roughly similar build (though being shorter-necked and less elegant than that species). The bird was not strongly-patterned at all - it was quite drab and unremarkable. The upperparts were almost entirely grayish to grayish-brown. It did not have strong, pale fringes to the upperparts as would a juvenile of any of the other loons. The auriculars were whitish, as was the chin, but these were the only really whitish parts of the bird that we could see. There was an obvious very strong wash of pinkish-red on the throat, isolating the white of the chin. The underparts were white. The bill was short and very thin. I couldn't quite make out the shape of the mandible, but the sheer inconsequence of the bill was obvious. The head was generally held at an upward angle.

Similar species eliminated by description: All other loons are readily eliminated by the lack of strong patterning on the neck. The two large grebes are also easily ruled out by the lack of bold black-and-white coloration. Red-necked Grebe is eliminated by size (the bird was too large), head pattern (the lightest part of the head plumage was in the front part of the head, rather than the back part of the head as in RNGR), and bill size and shape (the bill was too short and thin). Female-plumaged Red-breasted Merganser is ruled out by head shape (no crest at all on the bird), bill shape, and body shape. No other species is at all similar.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration): The bird was not heard.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly-appearing species? I have seen from three (Arctic) to 10s of 1000s (Red-throated and Common) of all loon species and have seen 1000s (Double-crested Cormorant) to uncountable bazillions (Red-breasted Merganser) of all other remotely-similar species.

Light conditions: sun was to my left and in front

Optical equipment used: Leica 32x

Distance, and how estimated: minimum distance estimated at 275 meters

Other observers who saw the bird with you: Brian Gibbons, Ric Olson, Peter Gent, Diana and Don Mullineaux, Larry Semo, Eric Zorarowicz, Bill & Jim Schmoker

Other observers who saw the bird independently: many

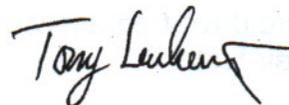
If photographed, type of equipment and film: did not photograph

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: Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, 14500 Lark Bunting
Brighton, CO 80601

Lane,

Date report was written: 28 October 2001 from memory