

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD _____ UNUSUAL RECORD X

7-0 A

Red 11/26/00 upel

Species: Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*)**Date:** 3 November 2000**Number seen:** one**Sex:** ?**Plumage:** Juvenal**Locality:** Pueblo Res.**Elevation:** about 5000'**Nearest town:** Pueblo West**County:** Pueblo**Time observed:** about 10:45**Duration of observation:** about two minutes

Description: Doug Faulkner and I looked for this bird on the 3rd after it was found by others (Percival?) in October (it is still present as of this writing) and getting information from Brandon on its whereabouts earlier that morning. We got to the overlook at the Juniper Breaks campground and Doug quickly found it.

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 with some irregular paler areas. 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. The front of the neck was vaguely paler than the rest of the neck, but with no obvious line of contrast between dark and light. What little I could see of the underparts (other than the neck) was whitish. 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 typically held at an upward angle, thus accentuating the upward tilt to the bill.

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

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Optical equipment used: Leica 20-60x

Distance, and how estimated: estimated at 1200 meters

Other observers who saw the bird with you: Doug Faulkner and Brandon Percival

Other observers who saw the bird independently: numerous

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

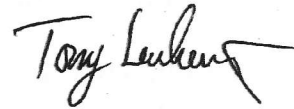
List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: none

b) after observation: none

Reporting observer: Tony Leukering

Signature:



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

Date report was written: 25 November 2000 from memory (I can't believe that I forgot to write this one up in my notebook!)