

BRANT

(Vernacular Name)

Accepted 7-0

Branta bernicla ("nigricans" GROUP)

(Scientific Name)

8-96-1

need!!

DATE OF OBSERVATION	TIME OF OBSERVATION	NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN	SEX	PLUMAGE
October 28, 1996	1000 TO 1200 (MST)	One	Unknown	Adult
	TO			
	TO			

LOCALITY: Barr Lake State ParkELEVATION: _____ COUNTY: Adams

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THE BIRD (Names, Addresses, Telephone Number):

I mentioned about seeing this bird to two Colorado Bird Observatory staff members who were mist-netting in the area. They reported seeing the goose shortly after noon.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: 9.5x 44 Celestion Binoculars; 15x-60x B/L Zoom Telescopes.WEATHER CONDITIONS: Mostly clear; 55°; Wind: SW 10 MPH.BIRD/SUN ORIENTATION: Sun directly upon bird coming from behind observer.DISTANCE FROM BIRD AND HOW MEASURED: 750' to 1000'; Estimated

BEHAVIOR AND DEMEANOR: Bird first observed standing next to several Canada Geese (Branta canadensis) on a small, sandy knoll which was part of a long, narrow bar extending outward into the lake from the east side of the reservoir. Slowly the group descended into the lake and disappeared from view behind the sand bar. It was relocated some time later again foraging in the same weed area about 50-60 Canada Geese. It moved (walked) along slowly, neck extended, head down, searching for food. It did not see it fly anytime during the period of observation. Clearly smaller than nearby Canada Geese.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION (EMPHASIS ON KEY FIELD MARKS): Relative size and shape; plumage and color pattern of head, upperparts and underparts; shape and color of bill, wings, tail, feet and legs; eye color.

NOTE: Much overlap between the two races, Branta bernicla "bernicla" and Branta bernicla "nigricans" can and does occur making identification in some individuals difficult in the field. The following is what I note. Head, neck and nape black with a small, white crescent collar that appeared to be joined in front under the throat (distance and shimmering light was a deterrent in confirming this field mark for certain). Upper parts dark brownish-black. Dark rump with white sides. The upper tail coverts were also white. Chin, throat and chest were black. The breast appeared brownish gradually shading and blending into the black of the chest. Sides were brownish or grayish appearing. The belly and flanks glistened white. Undertail coverts were also white. Upper tail black. Based upon the foregoing, I felt this Brant was most probably a "nigricans" subspecies.

HABITAT: Fresh-water impoundment which had been moderately drained down exposing large sandy tracts and vast areas of smartweed

VOCALIZATION (call/song; how delivered-perched, in flight; frequency; duration):

None heard.

ELIMINATION OF SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

BRANT (*Branta bernicla* - "bernicla" Group): Very similar to the "nigricans" Group. White collar is incomplete in front as well as behind on neck. Black of chest is sharply defined against the lighter color of the breast and sides in typical individuals (as previously noted, overlapping of plumages can cause confusion when separating some individuals). The breast is grayish-white in the "bernicla" Group.

PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

"nigricans" Group: Seen wintering flocks numerous times in California and Washington during frequent visits beginning in 1960. Have seen this race twice in Colorado: One adult at Cherry Creek Reservoir, Arapahoe County on October 26, 1981; one adult at Lower Latham Reservoir, Weld County, March 6, 1988.

"bernicla" Group: Have seen on Long Island, New York (some winters in vast numbers) primarily along the south shore from the Jamaica Bay Refuge, the Great South, Moriches, Shinnecock and Mecox Bays during the years I lived on Long Island (1948-1960) and during frequent visits thereafter. Also seen on eastern tip of Cape Cod, MA in January of 1995 and 1996. Have never seen this race in Colorado.

BOOKS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND ADVICE CONSULTED THAT INFLUENCED THIS REPORT:

None required

THIS REPORT WAS WRITTEN FROM NOTES MADE DURING X AFTER X OBSERVATION; FROM MEMORY

NAME: JACK REDDALL

SIGNATURE: Jack Reddall

DATE: 10/29/96

	"BERNICLA" GROUP	"NIGRICANS" GROUP
ADULT (sexes alike)	<u>KEY DIFFERENCES:</u> 1) a narrow, white crescent (collar) on each side of the neck which is <u>incomplete in front and behind</u>. 2) black of chest <u>sharply defined against lighter color of breast and sides</u> (seen best in flight). 3) <u>grayish-white</u> breast.	<u>KEY DIFFERENCES:</u> 1) a narrow, white crescent (collar) on each side of the neck which is <u>incomplete behind but complete in front</u>. 2) solid black of chest <u>merges into the dark breast</u> (seen best in flight). 3) <u>slaty-brown</u> breast.
	 	 