

Species: COMMON SCOTER

Oidemia nigra

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): October 26, 1975

Time Bird Seen: 4 PM to 4:15 PM

Locality: Baseline Reservoir

Nearest Town: Boulder

County: Boulder

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

Bruce Webb

Bill Lybarger (with me when I first saw it)

Steve Larson

Jack Reddall

Optical Equipment: 7 X 50 binoculars; 15-60X B&L Zoom telescope

If photographed, type of equipment used: _____

Light Conditions: sun shining on bird from behind observers

Distance from bird (how measured): estimated 150 feet

Number of Birds Seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: female or immature

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:

The bird was observed swimming and diving frequently, generally alone although sometimes moving near other birds such as Ruddy Ducks or Buffleheads.

Describe in great detail the bird's size, overall shape, plumage and color-pattern. Include details on shape of bill, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to the marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance in field guide descriptions is not enough. Describe what you actually saw in the field:

Bill typically duck-like, dark, with a slight bulge or hump on the upper mandible. Crown and nape dark, rich brown. Face (cheeks, auricular area, etc.) and neck pale sandy-brown. Back, wings, rump plain brown, breast and belly same color, perhaps slightly lighter.

Describe the bird's song or call, if heard, including method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight, etc:

None

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Medium-sized lake at edge of city of Boulder.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

White-winged Scoter and Surf Scoter-both appear somewhat darker in the body. Face pattern different(darker faces with two whitish patches, face and cheeks not significantly lighter than the crown). Bill on this bird appeared smaller.

Ruddy Duck-superficially similar, but different on several counts: this bird larger, different body shape(not humpbacked), darker breast, face patch sandy-brown not bright white.

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

Have seen Black Scoter only once before (2 males, 3 females Pt. Reyes, California on February 24, 1973). Have seen both White-winged and Surf Scoter several times in Colorado in fall, also on California coast.

Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation?
Standard field guides consulted, confirmed identification.

This report was written from notes made during X after observation; from memory

PRINT NAME: Robert Andrews SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: Nov 3, 1975
Street Address: 1390 So Ivy Way Town and State: Denver, Colorado ZIP: 80224

Return to: JACK REDDALL - 4450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110

Species: COMMON SCOTER

Oidemia nigra

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): 10-27-1975 & 11-1-1975

Time Bird Seen 2:00 P.M.

2:15 P.M. - EDT

Locality: Baseline Reservoir

Nearest Town: Boulder

County: Boulder

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Bruce Webb	21 Chautauqua, Boulder, Colorado 80302	
Steve Larson	2637 Valmont, #114, Boulder, Colorado 80301	
Robert Andrews	1390 South Ivy Way, Denver, Colorado 80222	

Optical Equipment: 10X50 Bushnell Binoculars; 15X-60X Zoom Telescope

If photographed, type of equipment used: _____

Light Conditions: Clear, bright

Distance from bird (how measured): 100 yards, estimated

Number of Birds Seen: One Sex: Unknown Plumage: Probably immature

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:

Small dark brown diving duck with whitish face was observed swimming and diving about 300 feet off shore at south end of Baseline Reservoir. It was alone with no other ducks nearby.

Describe in great detail the bird's size, overall shape, plumage and color-pattern.

Include details on shape of bill, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to the marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance in field guide descriptions is not enough. Describe what you actually saw in the field:

Bill, darkish and lacking any protuberance. Top of head and back of head dark dusky brown. Face, including cheek, chin, throat and side of neck whitish or pale gray. Eye, dark. Remainder of body dark dusky brown. No white speculum noticed as bird spread wings occasionally. Size roughly 20", appearing smaller than White-winged Scoter.

Describe the bird's song or call, if heard, including method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight, etc:

None heard.

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Fresh water reservoir.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

White-winged Scoter (immature): Wing marked with white speculum which is very prominent when bird flaps wing or flies. Face pattern is altogether different from Common Scoter. Has conspicuous white patches on sides of head in ear region and in front of eye.

Surf Scoter (immature): Head pattern different from Common Scoter. Has two white head patches, one over the ear and one between the eye and the base of the bill.

Ruddy Duck: Much smaller, differently shaped.

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

Over twenty years with all three North American scoters primarily from Long Island, New York where one can observe these three species in vast numbers during the winter months.

Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation?

Birds of North America by Robbins, Bruun, Zim and Singer.

This report was written from notes made during after x observation; from memory

PRINT NAME: JACK REDDALL SIGNATURE: Jack Reddall DATE: 11-7-1975
Street Address: 4450 South Alton Street Town and State: Englewood, Colorado ZIP: 80110

Return to: JACK REDDALL - 4450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110