

☒ RARE OR UNUSUAL RECORD☐ NEW STATE RECORD☒ ACCEPTED☐ REJECTED

9/28/77

Species: Louisiana (Tricolored) Heron
(Vernacular Name)Hydranassa tricolor
(Scientific Name-use binomial)Date(s): May 31, 1977 Time Bird Seen: 2:20 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.Locality: 1 1/2 mile west of Wellington; irrigation ditch 1/2 m. north of Bee LakeNearest Town: Wellington County: Larimer

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

Jeff ShermanBox 194Wasilla AlaskaOptical Equipment: Bushnell Sportview 7x35 binoculars & Bushnell Sentry II scope 20xIf photographed, type of equipment used: —Light Conditions: Mediocre; sun high but slightly behind birdDistance from bird (how measured): from 30-100 yards (estimated)Number of Birds Seen: 1 Sex: — Plumage: adult

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:

First seen standing in standing water of irrigation ditch. Stood alert with head & neck outstretched. After a few minutes flew up to the edge of the bank in full sun. Calmed down and lowered head and neck to shoulders, facing us. A Red-winged Blackbird flew at it, ^{it} flapped its wings and twisted its neck. Turned and tried to dance away from the blackbird & finally flew away from it and us with neck outstretched.

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:

At first sight it was a dark, slender smallish heron with a very long slender neck. Head and bill also very slender, not massive like Great Blue Heron. By comparing its length with a fence post and the Red-wing it was about 25" long.

Bill was long and slender; pale gray colored with upper bill slightly darker than lower.

Legs were long and dull yellow.

Eye was dark.

Crown & forehead were dark grey-brown.

Back of neck and sides of neck were uniform gray.

Face was dark with a lighter patch back of the eye.

Throat and a streak all the way down the front of the neck were white merging with a white breast that had a few dark brown plumes longer than the other breast feathers (or giving that appearance). The rest of the underparts, including feathering on legs was white. Back, wings, rump & tail were uniform slate gray. (Did not look for nor see a white rump.) Tail was short and rounded.

In flight the primaries were not darker than rest of wing.

(OVER)

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

Silent.

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Deep irrigation ditch with about 6" of standing or slowly flowing water. Some debris, lots of algae and many minnows.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

Green Heron is too small and has orange legs and chestnut neck.

Little Blue Heron is all dark with head and neck brown, not gray. Dappled one year birds do not show uniform dark above - white below.

Great Blue Heron is much larger, head and bill more massive. Has white, not gray-brown face. Top of head white, not dark. Underparts not all white. Has nearly black flight feathers contrasting sharply with grayer wing coverts, not a uniform gray wing.

Reddish Egret is not white underneath

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

Louisiana Heron. I saw several in Florida (May 1974) near Miami; I saw them on two occasions in Costa Rica C.A. (Nov 24, 1974 & Dec. 27, 1975)

Green Heron - Seen in Florida and Costa Rica in large numbers and about 10 times in Colorado (Boulder, Sawhill Ponds, Fort Collins)

Little Blue Heron - I saw a few adults in Florida (May 1974); Common in Costa Rica ('74, '75, '76) including some white phase and many "calico" herons.

Great Blue Heron - I've seen these birds many, many times in Colorado.

Reddish Egret - no experience

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

Peterson's Field Guide to Western Birds & Robbins Birds of N. America I used to identify the bird when we saw it. I talked to Dr. Ryder about a week later to see if anyone else had seen the bird (He said no).

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

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