

APPENDIX II

A

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTINGS
FOR
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

Species: Yellow-billed Loon ; Gravia adamsii
(Vernacular name) (Scientific name)

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students -- those studying occurrences 50 years from now -- must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Dates (s): 6 Feb 1987 Time Bird Seen: 9:40 am to 11:00 am

Locality: Pueblo Reservoir
Pueblo, CO
Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Nikon 9x30 binocs; B&L Discover Scope 20-box; Questar Scope

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: _____ Plumage: First winter

Light conditions: calm; bright sunlight; from side or oblique angle; not ideal angle

Distance from bird, and how measured: 400 yds to 1/2 mile est.

Describe the bird's overall behavior: Swam alone or with from 1-4 Common Loons. Seldom dove; occasionally stretched wings out & neck and plapping for short distances along water. Could dive abruptly with a great splash. Could motor at high speed. Held bill tilted up ~10°.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird: Open lake. Often close to edge but also out in open

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address): Bill Brockner, Warner Reeser & spouses.

APPENDIX 1I Continued

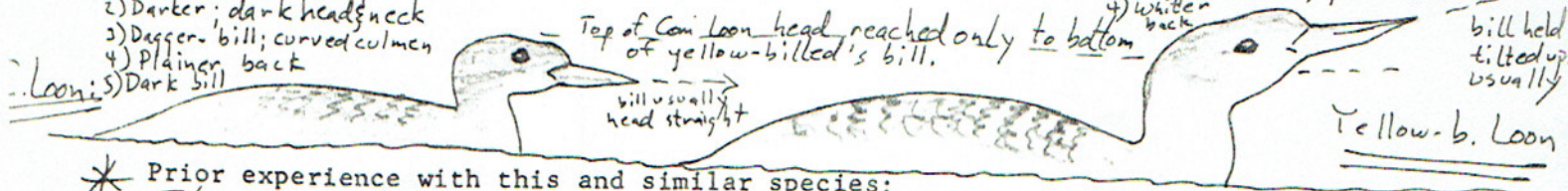
Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough). Describe what you actually saw in the field. About 3 ft. long; larger (body sl. larger) than C. Loon; Much longer and thicker-necked than C. Loon. Very pale impression overall. Gray backed, with heavy wide white-margined feathers on back forming wide white scalloped rows - heavier marked than C. Loon. Sides whitish. Flight feathers dark w/ faint white flash at base of primaries when spread-winged. Holds head & bill tilted up about 10-15° nearly all the time - often moving head back & forth. Head, face & neck nearly all white except for gray crown & nape and smudgy spot extending onto auricular patch - but not heavily marked. Dark eye seemed squinty and small against white face. Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.: Not heard.

→ (cont'd) Bill sl. heavier & longer than that of C. Loon but not much. Bill dusky yellow, especially distally where it glowed yellow. Culmen almost straight w/ lower edge of bill tilted up.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

- 1) Smaller; shorter, thinner neck
- 2) Darker; dark head & neck
- 3) Dagger bill; curved culmen
- 4) Plain back
- 5) Dark bill

- 1) Larger; thicker, longer neck faint
- 2) Whiter looking bird; dark carpal
- 3) Straight culmen; yellowish bill
- 4) Whiter back



* Prior experience with this and similar species:

I've never seen Yellow-billed Loon. I've had much experience with C. Loon - 100's of birds; 3-4 Red-throated Loons in winter plum. & perhaps 15 or so Pacific Loons in winter plum.

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

Pictures drawn from field notes (on evening of observation)

Name (print) : MARK JANOS

Mailing address: 860 SHARPE CIR; DELTA CO 81416

Signature: Mark Janos 2-6-87

Return Form To:

CFO Records Committee
c/o Curator--Zoological Collections
Denver Museum of Natural History
City Park
Denver, CO 80205

* I think this is a first winter bird rather than a winter adult due to:

- 1) Heavier scalloped back
- 2) White face & neck w/ less obvious dark auricular patch
- 3) Bill paler; not huge; Slightly uptilted, not heavily so.