

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

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NEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☒

Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: YELLOW-BELLIED LOON / GAVIA ADAMSEI
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): NOV. 01 THROUGH NOV. 19 1991Number of birds seen: ONE Sex: U Plumage: ADULTLatilong: 4 Distribution Code: Acc. Habitat Code: LLocality: UNION RESERVOIR Elevation: _____Nearest town: LONGMONT. County: WELDTime(s) observed: FIRST OBSERVED APPROXIMATELY 9:00 A.M. NOV.Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): UP TO 1 HOUR

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

BELL PRATHER

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

MARK NEKAS, JOE HARRISON, PETER GENT, OTHERS

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

FULL SUNLIGHT, OBSERVER BETWEEN BIRD AND SUNOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): BAUSCH AND LOMB 5X42 ELITE BINOCULARS
KOWA 40X SCOPEDistance and how measured: 100-200 YARDS, BEST ESTIMATE

If photographed, type of equipment and film: _____

Who else photographed the bird: _____

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

SWIMMING AND DIVING IN MIDDLE OF THE LAKE

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

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

Description (continued):

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

NONE

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

LARGE LAKE, SEEN MOST OFTEN SWIMMING IN THE
MIDDLE OR SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE LAKE.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

SIZE, PATTERN OF HEAD AND NECK, THICK-NECKED APPEARANCE
SHAPE AND COLOR OF BILL.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

I HAVE SEEN THIS SPECIES ONCE BEFORE (IN 1990) AT HAMILTON RES.
I AM VERY FAMILIAR WITH THE COMMON LOON

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

a) At time of observation: NAT. GEOGRAPHIC FIELD GUIDE, KAUFMAN'S ADVANCED

b) After observation:

2 BURPING

This report was written from reports made during _____, after observation _____, from memory X

Date and time report was written: NOVEMBER 25, 1991

Reporting observer: JOHN PRATHER Signature: John Prather

Address: 13810 WELD COUNTY RD. 1 LONGMONT CO., 80504

All reports will be maintained permanently at the address below:

Return to: CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS
DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
CITY PARK
DENVER, CO 80205

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Several features of this bird immediately led me to believe this was not a Common Loon, several of which had been seen on Union Reservoir in the week immediately preceeding this sighting. The neck of this bird lacked any strong light and dark pattern, as is typically found on Common Loons. The neck was pale in front gradually darkened to a light brown color on the nape and crown. The neck contrasted strongly with the dark back of the bird. The facial area was quite pale and a darker auricular patch was very noticeable, especially in good lighting. The bill of this bird was long and pale yellow in coloration for it's entire length. The upper mandible was slightly brighter yellow than the lower mandible. The culmen was very straight and was dusky for the first one-third of it's length, the rest being yellowish like the rest of the bill. The lower mandible was straight for half its length and then tapered to a point where it met the tip of the upper mandible. This gave the bill an upturned appearance. The back of the bird was black and showed a strong pattern of white barring. These bars were very straight and seemed to indicate this was an adult bird. This bird appeared quite large and stocky overall.

When compared with a Common Loon several days after the initial sighting this bird appeared large and thick-necked. It's bill seemed a bit larger than the Common Loons bill and had a slightly upturned appearance which was quite different from the "dagger-shape" of the Common Loons bill. The bird also appeared to ride somewhat higher in the water than the common loon, although this may have been a function of it's size.