

Species: Olivaceous Cormorant  
(Vernacular name)Phalacrocorax olivaceus  
(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.

Date (s): 31 October - 2 November 1985 Time Bird Seen: 31 Oct 8:30 am to 9:00 amLocality: Sweitzer Lake  
Delta Colorado Delta County  
Nearest town, county and state:Optical equipment: Nikon 9x30 binoc ; Bush & Lomb Discoverer scope x25If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: NoneNumber of birds seen: one Sex: - Plumage: ImmatureLight conditions: Various; on Oct 31 Heavy overcastDistance from bird, and how measured: From afar to 500 yds; On water as close as 35' swimming off shore using car as blind.Describe the bird's overall behavior: Sat on shore with other cormorants. Flew across lake and landed on water. Fished near shore, swimming with head up & bill tipped up, low in water. Searched for food with head under water (as loons sometimes do) then humped back & dove, staying under water for short periods of perhaps 10-20 sec at a time. At one time it fished this way remarkably close to lake edge, affording terrific scope views of the bird.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Open water; lake shore.Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):  
None



Marks used to identify the bird, or details on shape or size of  
Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of  
wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not  
enough.) Describe what you actually saw in the field. I first saw the bird  
on shore with another cormorant. While perched, the tail seemed  
and undersides were nearly all white. The 2 birds flew & immediately  
I noticed that the bird in question was ~25% smaller in length  
than the adult D-cr. Cormorant. It's neck was straighter, thinner & longer  
was not as knobby. The tail & neck extending fore & aft about equal  
distances in flight (not a long neck & short tail). The bird landed  
at far end of lake & I observed uppersides at close range in scope.  
Bird was gray-brown overall with much paler neck & underparts. Throat  
was dirty white, head gray-brown but border around pouch was much  
paler & distinct. Bill fairly slender & long (not thick & powerful) and  
was dull yellow-orange, paler toward tip and with a gray culmen.  
Rear border of throat pouch ended in a sharp point, angle slightly  
less than 90° about 1" behind & below eye. Rafe (commisure) ended  
at this sharp point. At close range scapulars appeared rounded and  
wing coverts bluntly pointed.  
Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery--  
i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:  
None.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Really only need to exclude immature D-cr. Cormorant. This  
bird was smaller than adult D-cr. Cormorant (but are young  
D-crested Corm. also smaller?). However the shape was different  
than the D-cr. Corm with straighter, thinner neck. Tail was  
long, not short as in D-cr. Cormorant. Sharp point of pouch  
behind eye was clearly more acute than D-cr. Cormorant.

Contradictory evidence -- books say bill should be more yellow  
or dull in Oliv. Corm. - This bird had yellow-orange bill (although it was  
not bright but dull)  
Prior experience with this and similar species:  
Also scapulars looked rounded, not bluntly pointed, as books  
state; but coverts were pointed.

I've seen many D-cr. Cormorants & have experience with Olivaceous  
Cormorants on Texas coast and Arrowhead Lake, Falcon Lake Texas & once in E. Colorado.

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

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Signature: Mark Janos

Return to:

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- Can Dove 5  
 \* Prairie Falcon  
 Corn Flicker 1  
 Bb Magpie 2  
 Am Coot 25  
 \* Bonaparte's Gull 1, 1st count  
 Ring b Gull 1  
 Am Wigeon 16  
 Ruddy Duck 1  
 L. Scaup 8  
 N. Pintail 4  
 Song Sparrow 2  
 Horned Lark 20  
 \* Dcr. Corm 2  
 \* Chloraceous Corm 1 imm?

Smaller by 25% than  
 ad. D-cr. in flight.  
 Neck straighter, thinner;  
 head not so knobby.

Bill fairly slender & long! not thick & powerful



8:30-9:00 Heavy over-  
 cast but decent light  
 As close as 35' (est) Saline  
 at shore

Oliv.

D-cr.

Gray-brown overall w/  
 much paler neck & under-  
 parts.

Front view: Head angular  
at sides



~2' long



Searched for  
 food w/ head  
 under water,  
 then humped & close.  
 Scapulars appeared rounded,  
 but hard to see. Wing  
 coverts bluntly pointed.

In flight tail fairly long:

