

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☒ A

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

Species: Little Blue Heron | Florida caerulea
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): 17 May 1977Number of birds seen: Two Sex: ? Plumage: One adult; one in first-year molting plumage
(calico)Locality: Barr Lake State ParkElevation: 4900 ft.Nearest town: BrightonCounty: AdamsTime(s) observed: afternoonDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.) observed continuously for about 5 min.Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):
None.Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):
None.Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):
Good. Clear and sunny. Birds observed with sun shining from behind observer.Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): 10 X 50 binocularsDistance, and how measured: Minimum estimated distance-several hundred ft.

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):

Birds were first observed standing on a dead cottonwood snag along the side of the lake, then observed flying together over to a marshy meadow area adjacent to where they were sitting (along the southwest side of the lake). Later, they flew off to the lake proper.

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:

Adult-Body slaty-blue in color, contrasting with a purplish-maroon head and neck. Details on bill and leg color not noted.

Immature-Mostly white, with patches and spots on blue-gray on the crown, scapulars and shoulders.

Both birds were of the same size and shape, and were noticeably smallish herons.

Description, (continued)

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

None heard.

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

Wooded edge, between a rather large plains irrigation reservoir on one side and a mosaic of cattail marsh, wet and dry meadows on the other side.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

A very distinctive bird, it resembles virtually no other heron.

Adult-Great Blue Heron is vastly largely with many plumage differences; Louisiana Heron has a white belly. Reddish Egret is superficially similar in color, but there are differences in the colors, also very shaggy on head and neck in spring.

Immature-No other white species or plumage of heron has the distinctive patchwork of blue-gray on white.

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

I have observed Little Blue Heron(all adults)previously in Texas in numbers and once in Colorado. I have never before seen the calico plumage of the Little Blue. I have also observed, in various areas(mostly Colorado, California, Texas and Mexico)all other species of North American herons, including all mentioned above.

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

a) at time of observation: None needed.

b) after observation: None needed.

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

Date and time report was written: 29 January 1978

Reporting observer: Robert Andrews

Signature: Robert Andrews

Address: 1390 So. Ivy Way, Denver, Colorado 80224

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, COLORADO 80205