

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM
NEW STATE RECORD ☐ UNUSUAL RECORD ☐

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

Species: Little-Blue Heron | Florida caerulea
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)

Date(s): 3, April, 1981

Number of birds seen: one Sex: unknown Plumage: 1st year bird

Locality: Sawhill Ponds Elevation: 5200 ?

Nearest town: Boulder, Colo. County: Boulder

Time(s) observed: late afternoon time?

Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.) 25 sec. on ground ; 6min. in flight

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

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

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):
bird was in full light, with sun behind and to the left while observing bird

Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): Binocs; 7 x 50 ; bushnell

Distance, and how measured: about 50 feet ; estimated

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):
The bird was feeding when I first saw it, once it realize my movements, it streached it neck out to idenify me. It remained that way for about 20 secs. then took to flight. During the first few secs. of flight its neck was extended and legs were dangaling. Then it took to a typical heron flight with legs stiff and neck in an 'S' shape.

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:

While sitting:

The bird was the shape of a Great-Blue Heron but too small, about foot & half out of the water. Overall color was a light grey to white. The belly and breast weresnow white. The sides and flanks were a light grey. The back was white with grey patches randomly placed as if ~~XXXX~~ molting. The neck was a light grey lightening at the head. The eye appeared black. There was a thin strip of flesh or pink color between the eye and the bill. The bill was fairly heavy, it was half slate grey and half black or very dark grey. There was no transition between the blake and grey, as if it was dipped into paint half way. The tail was white with no apparent grey, it was also shorter in ppoportion than the Great -Blue. The legs were long and skinny, they were a skatey grey. The wings folded were much like the baak with a little more white showing. The feet were not visible, under water.

In Flight:

The belly and breast stood out against the grey of the neck and under wings. The axillaries wer darker than the rest of the wings or the flanks. The under -tail was white as the top. The slate -grey of the legs continued to the feet, no boots.

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: The bird was in area of about a dozen small ponds, the particular pond was about 2 acres. The edge of the pond is covered with cattails and other water grasses. The bird was feeding away from the grasses. How did you eliminate similarly appearing species? IN water w/ sandy bottom

Great-Blue Heron: much larger, a G-B flew by the same time the bird took off. G-B wing beat was slow and ~~more~~ less graceful

Great Egret; has all black legs & feet, and a yellow bill

Snowy Egret: has black legs with yellow boots, and an all black bill

Am. Bittern: does not occur in a white phase and does not often feed in open water. What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

I had seen six great-blues and one bittern that day alone. I saw the egrets and the Little-Blues together at Back-Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia last August (1981). I became adept at separating the three, imm. Little-Blues and Great and Snowy Egrets.

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

a) at time of observation: I had no books with me at time of identification.

b) after observation: I look it up after I got to in Birds of N. America to see if I was correct in my identification.

This report was written from notes made during _____, after x observation; from memory _____.

Date and time report was written: 6/15/81, 1800 hours

Reporting observer: Larry Halsey

Signature: *Larry Halsey*

Address: 6422 Bluebird Ave. Longmont, Colo. 80501

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