

Species: Little Blue Heron  
(Vernacular name)Egretta caerulea  
(Scientific name)

[A]

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): 1 Nov. 1984 Time Bird Seen: 920 am to 940 amLocality: Switzer Lake  
Delta, Colorado, Delta County  
Nearest town, county and state:Optical equipment: Bushnell Sentry 20X scope; Nikon 9x30 binoculars

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of birds seen: one Sex: ? Plumage: Imm. (all white)Light conditions: Bright sun; at back most of time; part of time from the side.Distance from bird, and how measured: 75-150 yds (estimated)Describe the bird's overall behavior: Not feeding. Stood quietly on mud; occ. preened breast with bill. Flew off to north when I approached to within ~75 yds. Silent.Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird: Wet sand & mud flats at east end of lake.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):

None



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. In size, about 2 feet long. Seemed to be same body size as a Snowy Egret. Only difference in body size or shape was neck that was longer, and "stockier" than Snowy Egret. Plumage was all white. Back had a few dusky feather tips showing through at close range. Eyes light. Bill long and slender (not stout and powerful) and saberlike. Lores yellowish-green. Bill two-toned with proximal half greenish-yellow and distal half turning to gradually dark grey. Legs and feet dull greenish-yellow; this color over front & back of legs and feet with no different foot color.

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:

Great & Great Blue Heron = Much larger size; legs yellow or black; bill much heavier.  
Egret  
Cattle Egret = bill much shorter and stouter and all one color yellow or orange.  
Neck shorter, thicker, stockier.  
Snowy Egret = Bill all dark or black (not two-toned); legs are black on front (may be yellowish on back). Legs yellowish.  
Reddish Egret = Has dark legs; pinkish bill w/ black tip.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I have experience with all N. American herons, including imm.  
Little Blues.

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

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