

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

ACCEPTED
First ReportNEW STATE RECORD ☒UNUSUAL RECORD ☒

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

Species: Little Blue Heron / Egretta caerulea
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): September 10, 1994Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: Non-breeding adultLatilong: 28 Distribution Code: Acc. Habitat Code: MS?Locality: Horse Creek Elevation: 3900?Nearest town: Walsh, Colorado County: Baca CountyTime(s) observed: 4:00 p.m.Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 2 1/2 minutes

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):

See attached.Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light): Clear day, no wind, no note of temperature. Sun coming through trees to the west of the pool, bird standing in shaded area on edge of pool, flew off in sunlight.Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): Binoculars, Pentax 10X50'sDistance and how measured: 15 yards 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 standing very still at the edge of the pool. During my observation, it did not move except to fly away. When it flew the neck was folded back to shoulders and the legs extended beyond the tail. The wing beats were strong and regular. The bird flew west

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: There is normally a Great Blue Heron in the bridge area which I see on my way to the farm, I always look for it when passing. This day I noticed a much smaller heron, maybe the size of a Cattle Egret or slightly larger, but certainly not a Great Blue. The bird had long dark legs, a long neck and slender bill. I noted the over-all color was a beautiful deep blue-gray. I did not see any light

Description (continued): color on the bird. Its bill was dark, with a darker tip, the legs were a bluish green, tending more toward blue. There were no breeding plumes. I noted the head and neck were a slightly different color, more toward purple blue-purple. It flew before I could make good note of the eye color. It was a lovely color, and probably the most noticeable thing or first impression I had was it was uniformly colored with no light colors. The head and neck colors were a little different but not much. 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:
A small spring-fed pool about 75 feet long and 45 feet wide, containing perch, frogs, minnows and other aquatic life. The pool is surrounded by cattails and rushes. It is fairly clean and five feet deep (about) at its deepest point. It is a favorite spot for Great Blue Herons, Marsh Wrens, Red-winged Blackbirds, and an occasional mallard.
How did you eliminate similarly appearing species? It was too small for a Great Blue Heron and did not have the light-colored bill of a Reddish Egret or its Reddish head. It did not have the white underside of a Great Blue or Louisiana.

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

My experience with this bird is nil, as this was the first time I had seen one. My experience with other species that would be similar would be only from my field guides, with the exception of the Great Blue Heron which is not similar, but is the bird I was expecting to see.
List books, illustration, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification: at the pool.

a) At time of observation: National Geographic Field Guide.

b) After observation: Encyclopedia of North American Birds, Master Guide to Birding.

This report was written from notes made during xx, after observation xx, from memory xxxxxx

Date and time report was written: September 30, 1994

Reporting observer: Janeal W. Thompson Signature: Janeal W. Thompson

Address: 325 Ohio Street Walsh, Colorado

All reports will be maintained permanently at the address below:

Return to: CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS
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