

rec'd 4/29

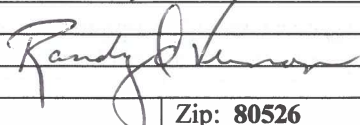
Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form (Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.)

2001-28
ACCEPTED

Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

CFO-RC FILE X:

RESULTS:

Species:(Common Name) Lesser Nighthawk		(Scientific Name) <i>Chordeiles acutipennis</i>
Date(s) of occurrence: April 16, 2001		
Number of birds seen: 1	Sex: probably female	Plumage:
Exact location: Vineland Fire Department Pond		
County: Pueblo	Nearest town: Vineland	Elevation:
Length of observation: 8 minutes	Time(s) of observation: 7:45 – 7:53 pm	
Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Nick Komar		
Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s): none that I'm aware of		
Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position: dim dusk lighting, with overcast conditions		
Optical equipment used: Binoculars: Swarovski EL 10x42s		
Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): varied from 12-15 feet to ~300 feet		
Was bird(s) photographed? no	If so, have you submitted photos? n/a	
Who took the photographs? n/a		
Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: observed flying over small pond; marsh is located nearby		
Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the Species or in supporting the identification): The bird was observed coursing the pond, at an altitude of ~10 feet to ~30 feet. It had a very fluttery, bat-like flight, more so than that of Common Nighthawks that I have observed. Wingbeats were quite rapid.		
Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size and shape and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird(s). Describe other important details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches or copy field notes): Plumage of bird was hard to see unless it was very close, as the day was late and light was dim. It did pass closely enough to clearly see the wing bars, and show itself to be a nighthawk rather than a different species of goatsucker. The wing bars were close to the wing tips; it appeared that 20% of the wing was above the bar, 80% below. (I've since learned that normally one watches for the position of the wingbar relative to the "wrist" of the wing in order to help differentiate between Lesser and Common; I was looking at the whole wing.) The wingtips seemed rounded, not sharply pointed. I was focusing on the wingbars and their position, and may have just missed white throat and white tail bar, but I did not notice any other distinctive markings – hence my conjecture that we saw a female.		
Describe bird's call or song: completely silent		
Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: Presence of wingbars eliminated Chuck-will's widow, Whip-poor-will, Common Poorwill, Buff-collared Nightjar. Position of wingbars close to wingtips, rounded wingtips, low, silent flight argues for Lesser rather than Common Nighthawk. I didn't seriously consider Aneilleian Nighthawk or Common Pauaque as candidates in the ID process. Others (Chris Wood, Mark Janos, Joe Roller) have commented that the mid-April appearance of a nighthawk argues in favor of its being a Lesser, as the Common does not appear this early.		
What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? I've observed Common Nighthawk on numerous occasions. My impression of its flight is that though it is erratic, it does not have the fluttery quality we observed. Also, all Common Nighthawks I have seen were hawking insects at a much higher altitude.		
List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation): Immediately after observing the bird in question, we made our notes, before consulting guides, in an attempt to refrain from influencing our observations through wishful thinking and the power of suggestion. After making our notes, we consulted <u>The Sibley Guide to Birds</u> and the <u>National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America, 3rd edition</u>. In the days since, I've consulted <u>Kenn Kaufmann's Birds of North America</u>, <u>Stokes Field Guide to Birds (Western Region)</u>, <u>Peterson Field Guide to Western Birds</u>, <u>Golden Guide to Field Identification – Birds of North America</u>, <u>Andrews and Righter's Colorado Birds</u>.		
This report is from notes made during _____ or 2 minutes after observation or later _____ from memory _____		
Date of written report: April 21, 2001		
Reporting observer: Randy Vernon		Signature: 
Reporting Observer's Address: 2001 Bennington Circle		
City: Fort Collins	State: CO	Zip: 80526