

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS
SIGHT RECORD FORM

CFO-RC FILE #: 1997-14
rec'd 12-12-97

RESULTS : ACCEPTED 6-1

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE. ATTACH PHOTOGRAPHS AND ADDITIONAL PAGES IF NECESSARY.

SPECIES: TRUMPETER versus TUNDRA SWAN Cygnus buccinator versus C. columbianus
(Common Name) (Scientific Name)

DATE(S) OF OCCURRENCE: 12/07/97

NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: 1 vs 1 SEX: Unknown PLUMAGE: Adult

EXACT LOCATION: Both at Gaynor + Little Gaynor Lakes along Oxford Road east of N 95th Street

COUNTY: Boulder NEAREST TOWN: Longmont ELEVATION: 5004 feet

LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: 60 minutes TIME(S) OF OBSERVATION: 1410-1510

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO SAW THE BIRD(S) WITH YOU:

Don & Mary Hunt

(303) 823-0918 (h)

Bill Kaempfer

(303) 939-8005 (h) 492-4486(w)

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY SAW THE BIRD(S):

Bill Prather

ROSSGULL@aol.com

Myron & Susi Plooster

mplooste@du.Edu

LIGHT CONDITIONS (QUALITY; DIRECTION RELATIVE TO BIRD(S); POSITION):

A direct North/South angle from Mooring Drive (n.side of Gaynor) would put both SWANS into a harsh and difficult to deal with lighting angle. So we came around to a west-n.west/east-s.east angle for best angle versus lighting. At Little Gaynor, A wooded structured BIRD BLIND helped. Mostly overcast sky helped as

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED: as well.

15 X 45 Simmons Scope along with Swift 8.5 X 44 Binoculars

DISTANCE FROM BIRD (ESTIMATED UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED): 100 maybe 150 yards

WAS BIRD PHOTOGRAPHED? Yes IF SO, HAVE YOU SUBMITTED PHOTOS? No

WHO TOOK THE PHOTOGRAPHS? Mary Hunt used a VIDEO CAMCORDER. I don't know yet how good

details will be projected on a viewing screen.

DESCRIBE THE GENERAL AND SPECIFIC HABITAT IN WHICH THE BIRD(S) OCCURRED:

Gaynor Lake appears like a mid-sized reservoir surrounded on three sides by high-priced housing.

Little Gaynor seems closer to a small-sized reservoir with new housing on its east and west end. Gently rolling horse pastures dominate beyond the south side.

DESCRIBE THE BIRD'S BEHAVIOR (FLYING; FEEDING; HABITS; BEHAVIORS USED IN IDENTIFYING THE SPECIES OR IN SUPPORTING THE IDENTIFICATION):

At both sites, both SWANS stayed with each other for company. At Gaynor Lake, they walked around on the ice staying away from other waterfowl like Canada Geese for example. When 100+ "Honkers" flew in to land, both SWANS went to Little Gaynor. At Little Gaynor, both SWANS foraged exactly alike. The TRUMPETER seemed rather proud of itself, by maintaining a straight and tall position to carry its head and neck. This created an image of the contrasting TUNDRA SWAN to be 2-4 inches shorter.

Also, while foraging both swans tolerated a 8 Species Community of waterfowl.

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 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 OF FIELD NOTES):

This report compares & contrasts both TRUMPETER & TUNDRA SWANS when side-by-side. Both swans, perhaps 2X larger versus Canada Goose plus all white, stood out -like a signal flag - wherever both happen to be. However, when alone, tipped up foraging, foraging under water and against a snowy -covered backdrop, these two could disappear for short intervals.

The Trumpeter Swan held its head and neck very straight and tall versus the Tundra Swan. This behavior thus gave a 2-4 inch taller look plus more dominant command versus the Tundra Swan in relation to eight other waterfowl species. From top of crown to tip of glossy -black bill showed a steady grade: like maybe "roman-nose effect." The Tundra showed a slight rounded effect dipping where forehead meets the bill just enough to be noticeable. In both swans, the eye-color flat black relative to the glossy quality of the bill. Legs and feet of both swans are glossy black when lighting angles are just right; these are flat black otherwise. For the Trumpeter, no color change below the eye on the bill is apparent. This Tundra Swan individual has more like a whitish circular dot under its right eye. At 30X scope view, I was not able to view this same mark under its left eye.

The Tundra Swan showed pure white plumage on crown, nape, side of face, neck, mantle, wings, rectrices, and plumage underparts versus the Trumpeter Swan. The Trumpeter showed pale oxide blotching on crown, forehead, plus wing feather edges when the wing is folded. Otherwise, both swans did not show any immature traits to plumage.

DISCUSS SIMILAR SPECIES AND HOW YOU ELIMINATED THEM:

TUNDRA SWAN - see detailed notes above.

MUTE SWAN - Triangular shaped lore below eye contrasting to large pinkish to orangish bill with black tip and black knob where bill meets the forehead.

SNOW GOOSE - smaller and short-necked compared to a Canada Goose. Pink to-Orangish bill with black line to upper and lower mandible. Also, black primary wing feathers.

WHAT IS YOUR PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES?

One or both Swans have earned a good record of occurrence in Boulder County. However, other birders get where swans show up better than I do. Both these SWANS together is a FIRST-LIFER-EVENT for me. I have an past experience with swans during other winters: 3 out of 7 years

LIST BOOKS, GUIDES, RECORDINGS OR OTHER SOURCES CONSULTED AND HOW THIS INFLUENCED YOUR IDENTIFICATION (DURING AND AFTER OBSERVATION):

National Geographic Society's Field Guide to Birds of North America

American Bird Conservancy's Field Guide: All The Birds of North America.

The Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding; Volume 1

THIS REPORT WAS MADE FROM NOTES MADE DURING XXX OR AFTER XXX OBSERVATION, OR LATER FROM MEMORY

DATE OF WRITTEN REPORT: Dec. 15th, 1997

REPORTING OBSERVER: D.W. KING

SIGNATURE: _____

ADDRESS: Mark Janos
10 Sedum Ct.
Pueblo, CO 81001

D.W. KING
P.O.Box 1539
Lyons, Colorado 80540-1539

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name)

TRUMPETER SWAN

CYGNUS BUCCINATOR

DATE OF OBSERVATION	TIME OF OBSERVATION	NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN	SEX	PLUMAGE
1-4-98	14:15 TO 14:30	one	?	
1-10-98	TO	one	?	
	TO			

LOCALITY: South Gaylor Lake ~~Elm~~ Boulder county

ELEVATION: 5100' COUNTY: ~~Elm~~ Boulder

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THE BIRD (Names, Addresses, Telephone Number)
1-10- Dave Quisenberry 6254 S Elmira Cir Englewood Co 80111 3037967603

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: Zeiss Wx40 / Kowa TSU-4 20x60 zoom

WEATHER CONDITIONS: 1-4- sunny / calm 40° 1-10 - cloudy / NW wind 20°

BIRD/SUN ORIENTATION: Sun over Bird either Left or Right - IE Bird between observer & sun

DISTANCE FROM BIRD AND HOW MEASURED: 50-75 yds GUESS

BEHAVIOR AND DEMEANOR: 1-4 - Bird was swimming with TUNDRA SWAN Among hundreds of ^{VARIOUS} CANADA Geese AND DUCKS. The Bird seen feeding (Neck down & Tip up) AND PREENING

1-10 - Bird was seen Again with TUNDRA SWAN & CANADA GEESE. However the Lake almost completely frozen. The Bird was resting on ICE occasionally lifting its head to stretch or preen

DETAILED DESCRIPTION (EMPHASIS ON KEY FIELD MARKS): Relative size and shape; plumage and color pattern of head, upperparts and underparts; shape and color of bill, wings, tail, feet and legs; eye color.

1-4) Lg White Bird approx 1 1/2 times size of nearby CANADA Geese and slightly larger than TUNDRA SWAN. Bill black lacked yellow spot of TUNDRA, eyes black, neck slight brownish-red wash (dirty looking), body, wings tail white. Legs not seen

Head Remarkably Flat, Black Lores to & including EYES. the forming a V between other eye and base of bill

1-10) Lg White Bird. Larger than Canada Geese, similar in size to nearby Tundra swans. Bill black w/o yellow spot of TUNDRA SWAN, eye DARK. Neck dirty colored - REST of Body white. Legs not seen. Again Black Lores including eye with deep 'V' between eyes

DETAILED DESCRIPTION (continued):

HABITAT: Lake

VOCALIZATION (call/song; how delivered-perched, in flight; frequency; duration):

NONE

ELIMINATION OF SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

The comparison of the "paired" Tundra swan was great

The smaller Tundra swan had yellow spots on lores

the black went straight across from eye to eye noticeably
different from Trumpeter swans V between eyes

PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

I HAVE SEEN A few BIRDS in Wyo & Colo. AND MANY

Tundra swans growing up in Minnesota, Numerous Mute swans
in central Michigan

BOOKS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND ADVICE CONSULTED THAT INFLUENCED THIS REPORT:

NABCK Nat Geo 2nd ed.

THIS REPORT WAS WRITTEN FROM NOTES MADE DURING AFTER OBSERVATION; FROM MEMORY X

NAME:

Ric Olson

SIGNATURE:

ROL

DATE:

3-10-98

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