

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☒ A

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

Species: Red-throated LoonGavia stellata

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name)

Date(s): 17-18 December 1977Number of birds seen: 1Sex: ?Plumage: Non-breedingLocality: McClellan ReservoirElevation: about 5200 ft.Nearest town: LittletonCounty: ArapahoeTime(s) observed: 1030-1045 and 1200-1230 on 17th; 1030-1130 on 18thDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.) continuously for up to 1 hour

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

Bill Lybarger-2415 S. Memphis Way, Aurora, Colorado 80013

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):

perfect-sun shining on bird from directly behind observersOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): 15-60X Zoom telescopeDistance, and how measured: minimum-estimated 80 yards

If photographed, type of equipment and film: _____

Who else photographed the bird? Bill Lybarger; Lyle Jordan-5608 S. Foresthill, Littleton,Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying): Colo.

Observed swimming, and occasionally diving. Most often just sat on the water and preened. When preening, it rolled onto its side frequently, and also reared up, spread and flapped its wings and then settled back onto the water. When diving, it did not jump very far out of the water. About 10 times, it submerged its head and bill momentarily in the water, meanwhile swimming without ceasing.

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:

It was immediately obvious the bird was a loon, by its size (larger than a grebe or most ducks) and by its low posture in the water. Forehead and crown rather pale gray, with a slight white eyering. Nape and back of neck even paler gray. Separation between gray of head and back of neck very fuzzy and indistinct with white throat and foreneck, being especially indistinct on neck, somewhat less so on face. Back and wings gray-brown, distinctly darker than neck and head but still not particularly dark. At close distance and under the best light conditions, the abundant small white spots on back and wings were visible. Flight feathers also edged with white. Entire underparts white, with some broad grayish streaks along sides and flanks. A small spot of darkish color (exact color could not be specifically determined) in center of throat. Eye red. Bill shortish (less so than the head) and distinctly thin, yellowish-white in color, lower mandible upturned distally. Bird always held head and bill upward (usually about 15-20°).

continued

Description, (continued)

Head shape distinctive: somewhat square forehead, then a flat crown rising to a pointed occiput(rear of crown).

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:
Water supply and fishing reservoir in agricultural-suburban area.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

Common Loon-eliminated because it is vastly larger with a very thick and heavy bill, upperparts, especially head and neck very much darker.

Arctic Loon-eliminated because it is much browner on the upperparts, with a sharp line of demarcation between color of head/neck and the throat/foreneck, has a completely rounded head(forehead not squarish, occiput not peaked), lower mandible not upturned, bird does not usually carry head and bill upward. Presence of spots on back is diagnostic of Red-throated, and distinguishes it from both Common and Arctic.

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

I have seen Common Loon, in all plumages 40+ times(about 90 individuals)in Colorado, as well as in California and Texas.

I have seen Arctic Loon in California(150+ individuals), and 10 individuals in Colorado, all in nonbreeding plumage.

I have seen Red-thr. Loon in California(6 individuals)and once in Colorado(all in nonbr.

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

a) at time of observation: Used standard field guides(which confirmed the identification)and knowledge from previous observations(also confirmed the identification).

b) after observation: Used written descriptions of Van Remsen, Jack Reddall and others of Arctic & Red-thr. Loon in CFO ORC files; and used non-breeding plumaged specimens in Denver Mus. Nat. Hist.(Arctic & Red-thr.)-All confirmed the identification.

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

Date and time report was written: 27 December 1977(1100)

Reporting observer: Robert Andrews Signature: Robert Andrews

Address: 1390 So. Ivy Way, Denver, Colorado 80224

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DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY,
CITY PARK
DENVER, COLORADO 80205

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COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORMNEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☐ A

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

Species: Red-throated Loon | Gavia stellata
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): Dec. 25, 1977Number of birds seen: 1Sex: unk.Plumage: Non-breedingLocality: McClellan Lake,Elevation: 5,000 ft. (approx.)Nearest town: DenverCounty: ArapahoeTime(s) observed: 10:40 am to 11:15 am.Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.) about 35 min.

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

Judd & Linda Sundine - 5325 Garland St. Arvada, Colo. 80002; 423-6866
Peter Moulton - 8050 Niwot Rd. #35 Longmont, Colo. 80501;

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

Robert Andrews } on Christmas Bird Count Dec. 17, 1977
Bill Lybarger }

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

Full Sunlight; with observers' backs to the sun; sun on birdOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): 20x Bushnell Spotting ScopeDistance, and how measured: 300'. approximatedIf photographed, type of equipment and film: See Peter MoultonWho else photographed the bird? Bill Lybarger? (12-17-1977)

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

The bird was at rest in the only open water on the Lake.I slid a rock out at the bird and it lifted its head and looked around. It then spent some time preening, especially on the belly.

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:

The Loon was very near some Ring-necked Ducks (Aythya collar) it seemed to be about $\frac{1}{2}$ again longer than the Ducks.

- It was Loon shaped
- Drab looking (Pale)
- With small pale bill upturned lower mandible at the tip.
- Not much contrast between back of head and Face,
- Dark ^{narrow} throat band. (high on the throat)
just below the bill when the bird faced us
(OVER)

- Around the eye there was a bit of white like the hint of an eye-ring

Description, (continued)

- There was a white area that extended from the neck up to the cheek.
- Back was greyish-brown with fine white spots
- Belly pure white
- Leg & foot Dark

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

Not heard

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

On Small pond, or lake

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

Common Loon - Larger

Arctic Loon - has bill dagger shaped and straight, not upturned at tip of lower mandible.

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

Red-throated Loon - none

Common Loon - I've seen several in winter in Colo. & California

Arctic Loon - I've only seen one, it was in non-breeding plumage

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

a) at time of observation:

A Field Guide to Western Birds (Peterson)

(The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Birds (western Region))

b) after observation:

Audubon Society Field Guide to N.A. Birds (W.K.)

This report was written from notes made during X, after ___ observation; from memory ___.

Date and time report was written: Dec. 25, 1977

Reporting observer: Michael Moulton Signature: Michael Moulton

Address: 8050 Niwot Rd. #35 ; Longmont, Colorado 80501

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