

Species: Red-throated Loon
(Vernacular name)Cavia stellata
(Scientific name)

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): November 29, 1980 Time Bird Seen: 9:30 to 10:30 A.M.Locality: Logan County part of Julesburg Reservoir, Colorado

Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: 10 x 50 binoculars; 20x B. & L. Balscope, Sr. all in excellent conditionIf photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: noNumber of birds seen: 1 Sex: unknown Plumage: winter plumageLight conditions: clear; sun out, behind us and slightly to our rightDistance from bird, and how measured: 300 yds. estimatedDescribe the bird's overall behavior: Bird swimming in water

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Open water of a reservoir near damOther observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):
observed by Dorothy J. Rosche and Richard C. Rosche

marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern: details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough.) Describe what you actually saw in the field. Recognized as a loon by its large size (compared to near-by C. Mergs. and C. Goldeneyes) and generally gray and whitish coloration as it swam on water. I immediately called it a Red-thr. Loon because of its longish neck, small bill which was turned upwards. The bird tended, in typical Red-thr. Loon fashion, to hold its head pointed skyward, almost cormorant-like, which gave it it's typical so-called snaky-like silhouette. I studied the bird a long time because I was aware that it was a rarity and carefully noted its upturned lower mandible. I watched for speckling on the back; there was some, but my impression was that this individual had less spotting on the back than most individual Red-thr. Loons in basic plumage have; however, it had more spotting than some individuals that I've seen (which had none).

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: All other species of loons by its small upturned lower mandible, spotting on the back, and long-necked sanky-like silhouette.

Prior experience with this and similar species: I have studied literally thousands of Red-thr. Loons in all plumages on the East Coast and West Coast, the latter as recently as January 1980. I studied many Arctic Loons on the coast of Washington in May 1979 and a breeding plumaged individual in Dawes County, Neb. in July 1979. I've been familiar with the Com. Loon all my life in the East.

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

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