

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

CFO-ORC FILE # 2002-197

ACCEPTED

NEW STATE RECORD _____ UNUSUAL RECORD X

rec'd 1/23/03

Species: Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*)

Date: 11 August 2002

Number seen: one

Sex: male

Plumage: adult alternate molting into basic

Locality: Jackson Lake State Park

Elevation: about 4438'

Nearest town: Goodrich

County: Morgan

Time observed: about 09:45 -10:45 MDT

Duration of observation: a total of about 20 minutes

Description:

I found the bird foraging in belly deep water within a mixed flock of shorebirds. It was slightly smaller than a Wilson's Phalarope (*P. tricolor*) that it briefly swam next to while both foraged. In that comparison, I was not only able to note the body size, but also compare bill shape. The bill of the bird in question was stout, tapering to a blunt end, and of medium-length compared to the thin, needle-like, and long bill of *P. tricolor*. I also noted that the bill was mostly black except for the proximal 1/3 which was a dusky yellow. The underparts were mostly white except for light orange-red splotches concentrated in the undertail covert, flank, and neck regions with the neck being mostly this color. Upperparts were a mixture of light gray, with white edging (I noted in particular the scapulars being this color), and black. It was apparent the bird was in a transitional plumage. The head had dark mottling on the crown that extended in a vertical line down the nape and connected with the back. A white supercilium was beginning to appear as was a dark patch behind the eye. Otherwise, the sides of the face below the eyes and extending onto the neck was the same light orange-red as described above. The eye was entirely black. The tail was short and mostly indiscernible with the wingtips projecting only to the tail tip. I did not see it in flight.

Separation from similar species:

Of the other two *Phalaropus* species, neither have red feathering in the undertail covert or flank regions nor are their bills yellow at any stage of their lives. Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*) and Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) both do not have red undertail feathers and the bill shape of *C. ferruginea* is more like a Dunlin (*C. alpina*) than any phalarope.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration): I heard none.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly-appearing species? I have seen dozens of basic-plumaged adults while birding on west coast pelagics and I saw a juvenile bird at Jackson Lake SP in October 2000 (report furnished to the CBRC and accepted).

Light conditions: Clear with the sun to the left and behind me and the bird

Optical equipment used: Kowa scope 20x60 zoom

Distance, and how estimated: estimated closest distance at 60 meters

Other observers who saw the bird with you: Tony Leukering and Jason Beason

Other observers who saw the bird independently: Rachel Hopper (ph.) on 11 August.

If photographed, type of equipment and film: I did not photograph this bird.

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

a) at time of observation: none

b) after observation: none

Reporting observer: Doug Faulkner

Signature:

Doug Faulkner

Address: Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, 14500 Lark Bunting Lane, Brighton, CO 80601

Date report was written: This report was written on 11 August 2002 from notes taken during observation.