

8-92-24

ACCEPTED

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

EURASIAN WIGEON

Anas penelope

Location: Metro Lake; Colorado City; Pueblo County, Colorado

Date: March 28, 1992

This bird was discovered by David Silverman.

Setting:

I received a call from Brandon Percival that David Silverman had discovered a male Eurasian Wigeon on Metro Lake in Colorado City. This bird was also seen by many birders in the Pueblo area including Brandon Percival and Van Truan. After getting directions, I took a drive to the lake and arrived about 4:45 p.m. Light was diffuse: afternoon sun and high clouds. I immediately found the bird across the lake, grazing with American Wigeons on the grassy shore. Metro Lake is a small roughly circular lake set in a foothills meadow with open shoreline. I set up my scope (Kowa 20-60X) and observed the bird for about 20 minutes at a distance of about 200 yards.

Description:

The duck was about 18" long, the same size and shape as the American Wigeons with which it flocked and fed. I only observed the bird walking on land and never saw it swim or fly. It was an adult male in breeding plumage.

The duck had a round head, steep forehead and rather small spatulate bill. The bill appeared gray. The head was a uniform deep red-brown. It had a cream-colored forehead and crown, most visible when the bird turned and faced me. The front of the underparts (breast and chest) was peach colored. The back and flanks were light gray. The flanks were bordered at the back edge by a white stripe and then the black undertail coverts. Wings and tail were compact, dark and folded.

Similar Species:

The male American Wigeons with which it flocked had a reverse coloration with peach-colored flanks and a grey head and white crown. The only other similar waterfowl with a red head would be Cinnamon Teal (lacks cream-colored crown, grey back, peach sides) and Redhead and Canvasback (lack cream-colored crown, peach sides, white bar at rear of flanks, and are typically divers not grazers).

Experience with Species:

I have seen Eurasian Wigeons on three previous occasions: one male at Barr Lake on Jan. 26, 1992; 3 males in Seattle, Washington and Vancouver, B.C. the previous week, March 20 and 22, 1992.

This report is prepared from notes made during and after observation.

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