

1977-02

RARE OR UNUSUAL SIGHTING

Species YELLOW-BILLED LOON
 Location BEAR RIVER (7 MI. OUTSIDE OF REFUGE)
 Date 5-28-77 Time 8:25 AM
 Weather conditions WIND FROM NORTH, CLEAR, 55°
 Lighting conditions GOOD
 Distance to bird 70 yards
 Optical equipment used BUCHNELL 7X50 BINOCULARS

Detailed description (size comparisons, all field marks observed including shape and color patterns, voice if heard)

LOW IN WATER, WITH BACK ALMOST SUBMERGED. DARK COLORATION, WITH PROMINENT YELLOW ON BILL. BILL APPEARED TO BE RATHER STOUT, WITH A SLIGHT UPTURN (?). HEAD WAS CARRIED WITH A SMALL UPTURN AND NECK WAS BENT BACK SLIGHTLY. IN SIZE, LARGER THAN A NORMAL DUCK, THOUGH NOT GREATLY SO. AFTER ABOUT FIVE MINUTES, TOOK OFF IN A LABORED PROCESS, MOVED OUT OF VIEW. PERIODICALLY DROVE; REAPPEARED IN 10-15 SEC.

What species might it be confused with and reasons for rejecting these species.

COMMON LOON: LACKS PROMINENT YELLOW BILL.

GREBES: SIZE, COLORATION. SPECIFICALLY: RED-NECKED GREBE; T-3 BIRD LACKED THE RUFOUS THROAT AND WHITISH CHEEK, AND NECK & HEAD WERE DEFINITELY LOON-LIKE; WESTERN GREBE, WHITE THROAT DEFINITELY WAS LACKING.

Description of habitat.

MARSH, ALONG RIVER.

Description of behavior. DROVE PERIODICALLY, THRASHED ALONG SURFACE IN ITS EFFORT TO TAKE TO THE WING.

Names of observers and experience of principal observer.

DWIGHT DINELY APPROX. 7 YEARS OF OBSERVATION THROUGHOUT THE WEST.

Address: Spokane, Washington