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Latilong _____ Reporter _____ Sci Name _____
 Habitat _____ Record type _____ Serial No. NOV 15 REC'D - 043
 Date/time _____ Disposition _____ Cx Nos. _____

Common Name Surf Scoter
 Scientific Name Melanitta perspicillata
 Sight date 10/31/82 time 1030 MST duration 20 mins
 Distance from bird 30 to 200 yards
 Light conditions Skies overcast, light diffuse
 Optical equip. 9x25 Nikon binoculars
 Photo. equip. none
 Number of this species seen 1
 Notes made at time of sighting Date this report was prepared. 11/03/82
 Notes made later from memory
 Photo available Photo enclosed

Weather at time of this observation.
 Overcast skies, occasional rain, temperature about 10C. A rain squall line had just passed, some NW winds.
 Prior weather & number of days since change
 Similar weather for several days preceding. Date was end of passage of minor weather system.
 Locality
 Great Salt Lake, seen from Antelope Island Causeway in Great Salt Lake State Park, Davis County, Utah. Exact spot about 2-3 miles in lake from Davis Co shoreline.

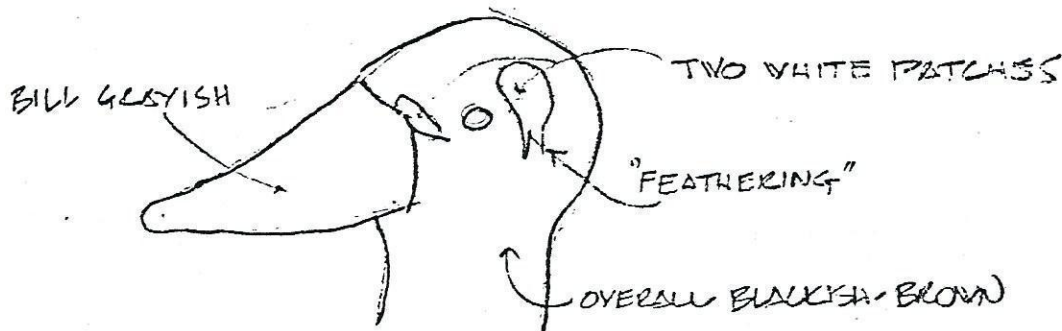
Male or Female Sex Unk.
 Adult Subadult Juv/Imm
 Age unk. ♀ or Imm _____ year bird
 Basic Plumage Breeding Eclipse
 Light Phase Dark Phase Molting

Description of bird. Size, Colors, all field marks OBSERVED - Unique features of this bird, if any.

The bird was a scoter-shaped duck swimming among some ruddy ducks. By comparison the bird was a bit larger than the ruddies, but exhibited many similar behaviors including preening. Overall the bird was a dark blackish-brown color with no particular contrast other than those following. The head was marked on either side with two white patches, one near the lores and one behind the eyes. The loreal patch was smaller than the auricular. Patches were not regular in shape but were elongated vertically and the auricular feathered out at the bottom. The bill was a slightly lighter grayish color and contrasted weakly with the head at short distances.

The wings were dark with a possible darkening of the wing linings.

According to the Peterson Field Guide to the Birds (1980) the distinctness of the face patches indicates a younger bird. I have not used this field mark before and, as such, considered this bird to be either immature or female. The illustration and description correspond closely to Peterson's "young birds."



COPY OF SKETCH IN FIELDNOTEBOOK.

Field marks which were not seen. Why not?

Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds (1980) indicates that the principal field marks are the dusky brown color and, in the female and more clearly the immature, the two white face marks. All of these were seen.

Variations from expected field marks.

None noted.

List similar species and describe why or how you eliminated them.

Because of the shape the bird in question had to be a scoter. The markings of the face of the common (now black) scoter are completely different from the markings of this bird. This leaves the white-winged which I eliminated because (a) there was no white in the wing of the bird observed; (b) the pattern of the bill meeting with the face was vertical and on the face in the bird observed and is curved onto the bill in the white-winged; and (c) the pattern of the white patches is not the rounded and horizontal elongated as in the white-winged.

Behavior of this bird. Include names of other birds with this one and any interaction.

I noted this bird at two times. The first time, about 1100-1115 MST the bird was in a flock of three ruddy ducks and some lesser scaups, one of the ruddies and the scaups soon moved away. The scoter remained with the other two ruddies and all three preened themselves and picked at their feathers while I watched.

The second observations, about 1200 MST, the bird was by itself and swimming around farther off the casueway.

Habitat this location and near by or adjacent habitat if significant.

Bird was on the freshwater (Farmington Bay) side of the causeway. Whether this was due to the freshwater or to the fact that the saline (Great Salt Lake) side was choppy and the freshwater in the lee of the causeway cannot be determined.

Describe birds song or sounds.

No sounds were made that I heard

Names of other observers.A/C+phone#

What is your experience with this or similar birds?

I have considerable experience with scoters as I lived and birded in the San Francisco Bay area for several years. This includes all three species and some of the plumage variations. I have seen this plumage before, but see note regarding whether it is immature of female in description section.

Print name & mailing address below.

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