

1982-146010

Species: Common (BLACK) SCOTER
(Vernacular name)MELANITTA NIGRA (Peterson's New)
(Scientific name) field guide
OIDEMIA NIGRA
(2 field guides)

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 13, 1982 Time Bird Seen: 9:30 ~~10:05~~ A.M. to 10:05 A.M.Locality: Antelope Island - Gt. Salt Lake Causeway.
Davis County, Utah
Nearest town, county and state:Optical equipment: 7X50 BINOCs; 20X Spotting Scope

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ♀ Plumage: _____Light conditions: OvercastDistance from bird, and how measured: 15 yards (closest) to 75 yds.

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

Observed it swimming on water. Then it would dive & surface
10-20 yards away from where it went down.
Flew a couple of times, so we knew it wasn't an injured bird.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Open water on the Gt. Salt Lake, south side of the causeway
about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Antelope Island.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):

Mark Bromley 1480 W. Jordan Ave., Provo, Ut.
Mike Tooe Logan, Ut.
SIPA Sorenson 3868 Marsha Dr. West Valley City, Ut.

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field 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.

Size - About the same size as a wigeon or a redhead (13-14 inches)
Shape - Duck-shaped (not as chunky looking as a golden eye, but longer than a ruddy)
Plumage & color pattern - Crown was very dark, almost blackish & contrasted with a smudgy white cheek that extended into neck region before blending with darker brownish-gray breast. Back & flanks were all brownish-gray.

Bill - uniformly dark gray. Shape - not as heavy as in other scoter sp. & not like a Ruddy Duck either.
Wings - Dark brownish-black - in flight, due to sex & bird's inadequate light the paler flight feathers were somewhat muted.

Tail - Shortish & dark
Feet - darkish & blackish

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

No sounds.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Ruddy Duck - Size is smaller
Coloration of ♀: white cheek patch is whiter & restricted to cheek area.
Breast coloration is lighter brown.
Size - Ruddy is smaller.
Flight - Ruddy really patters across water to get airborne. ~~His~~ one was smoother in getting off water & didn't show lighter underparts as does the ruddy. body profile in flight compared to ruddy.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

None - Lifer

Nov. 13 evening

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

NAME (print): MERRILL WEBB

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Signature: Merrill Webb

Return to:

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2nd
state record