

## UTAH ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

## Verification of Unusual Sight Record

Species: Trumpeter Swan *Cygnus buccinator*

Date: Jan. 1, 1985

Number: 3

Age: Adult

Sex: Unknown

Locality (exact address or other specific information to describe location,  
such as x miles north of x intersection):

Fish Springs NWR

County: Juab

City:

Elevation: 5000

Time: 2:00 PM

Length of time observed: 15 minutes

Habitat: Partially frozen pond, surrounded by marsh

Distance to bird: 200 feet

Light conditions: overcast

Optical equipment: 15-60X scope

Observer: Richard and Ella Sorensen

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

Bob and Georgeen Bond on the following weekend.

DESCRIPTION. Write a detailed description of the bird's appearance, including  
size, shape, plumage pattern color, and any unique features.

Very large white birds with long necks. Head flat, bill black and much less concave than the Tundra Swans which were near by. The bill seemed to make a straight line down from the flat head. There was no yellow and any of the three bills. The angle of black around the eye was larger than on Tundra Swans and seemed to partially encompass the eye. Two of the three had very prominent orangeish "lips". Richard felt they were present also on the third but light. When at rest the necks were held back at the base.

Photographs showing the birds in profile are available.

Voice was heard repeatedly. It was much lower pitched than the Tundra S.

The only similar species is the Tundra Swan. It was ruled out by voice, the rounder head, shorter appearing more concave bill, which reaches the eye with a smaller angle. The profiles are different appearing.

The lack of yellow is not a reliable field mark because the Tundra Swan sometimes lacks this mark but the fact that none of the three had yellow on the bills certainly doesn't hurt the Trumpeter identification since the almost always lack yellow.

Behavior: Sat alone on the ice until too many cars stopped to look.  
(the only two on the refuge that day came by just after we found the swans) The Swans then flew a ways off and put their heads down and went to sleep.  
Describe what specific feature(s) you saw and/or heard that caused you to come to your conclusions:

What similar species might it have been, and how were these eliminated?

See above

What experience have you had with this and similar species?

We have seen many Tundra Swans and have seen Trumpeter in Yellowstone and on last year in Salt Lake City.

Books, illustrations, and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

None Photographs verified by Tim Provan, Guy McCaskie  
Jon Dunn and Paul Lehman

Significance of record in the area and/or the state:

Additional material (attach drawing, photograph, tape recording if available):

Photograph available

Signature:

Address: 3868 Marsha Dr.  
West Valley City, Utah 84120

Date prepared: January 5, 1985 from notes taken at the time of sighting