

VERIFICATION OF UNUSUAL SIGHT RECORD FOR UTAH

Common Name:
Common Grackle (bronze type)

Scientific Name:
Quinscalus quiscula

Date:
May 9, 1985

Time:
3:00 p.m.

Length of time observed:
20 minutes

Number:
8

Age:
adult

Sex:
6 male, 2 female

Location:

Between the east edge of the town of Duchesne and the bridge east of town.
On both sides of the highway, especially between the highway and the Strawberry
Latilong: 7. Elevation (if known): River.

Distance to bird:
50 feet

Light conditions:
Good.

Optical equipment:
7 X 35 binoculars

Weather:
Overcast but clear.

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

Head and neck glossy blue/black. Body shiny dark brown. Eyes yellow.

Bill black. Larger than a blackbird, smaller than a Great-tailed Grackle.

Characteristic long, keeled-shaped tail. Tail did not ^{have} ~~have~~ obvious V shape in flight like Great-Tailed. ~~Sounded~~

Voice or call notes and method of delivery:

Sounded like a blackbird.

Behavior:

Mostly sat and preened. Males chased each other. Flew to side of road to eat.

Habitat:

Shrubs and small trees (Cottonwoods) alongside the river.

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

Great-tailed Grackle: Size, and shape of tail in flight.

Black Bird: Brownish body, shape of tail.

Crow: body color, shape, size.

Brown-headed Cowbird: Colors reversed.

Starling: long, keeled tail; did not have sparkly, ~~speckled~~ speckled body.

What experience have you had with this and similar species:

Identified Great-tailed Grackle at Ivins pond this spring.

Saw grackles in about every state driving from New York to Utah just prior to this sighting.

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

National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America.

Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding.

Confirmed my conclusion. Helped me distinguish between bronze or purple type and between it and Great-Tailed.

Significance of record in this area or the state:

First record in this area. Suggests species may be expanding its range.

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

Description from notes taken at time of sighting X notes made later from memory

Observer:

Bruce Heath

Signature:



Address:

2401 Quail Hollow Drive
Sandy, Utah 84092

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

None

Date prepared:

June 16, 1985

Return this form to:

Ella Sorensen
3868 Marsha Drive
West Valley City, Utah 84120