

APPENDIX V
UTAH FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS
UTAH BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

Reporter/Observer: Pg 1 of 2
Nelson Boschen 0-1998-03

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE. FOR UTAH BIRD RECORDS CODING ONLY.

Lat/long _____ Record type _____ Serial No. _____
Habitat _____ Disposition _____ Cx Nos. _____

Common Name Great-tailed Grackle
Scientific Name Quiscalus mexicanus
Obs. date 12-17-88 Time(s) 1000-1008
Duration of obs. eight minutes
Distance from bird 15 to 45 yds
Light conditions Full sun at my 3 o'clock position
Optical equip. Nikon 9x30 binos
Photo equip. none
Notes made at time of sighting X Date report prepared _____
Notes made later from memory _____ 12-18-88

Weather at time of this observation.
clear, calm, 37°F.

Prior weather and number of days since change
Even w/ an occasional cloudy day + light intermittent rain there have been no severe precip or wind days for at least 2 weeks.

Locality The Moab sloughs
in Moab, UT

Lat/long block number 18

Enter number of birds in each category.	GENDER(S)	AGES(S)	PLUMAGE(S)	PHOTO(S)
Total number observed.	Males <u>9</u> Females <u>7</u> ♀ or Imms <u>7</u> Unknowns _____	Adults <u>9-16</u> Juv/Imms <u>0-7</u> 2/3 yr birds _____ Unknowns _____	Breeding _____ Transition _____ Eclipse _____ Dark phase _____ Winter _____ Light ph. _____ Other _____	Available _____ Enclosed _____
<u>16</u>				

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

Ad. Males: ~ 16" long (~ 2" shorter than the B-b. magpies perched among them). All black w/ a metallic purple sheen from top of head down to the shoulders + upper back (breast not checked); bright yellow eye; tail long (close to body length), strongly keeled, w/ a roughly wedge shape; bill dark, equal to or slightly less than head length, w/ a slight down-curve + almost a straight line w/ head.

Ad. Females: ~ 3" shorter than the males + w/ bill similar; all dark brown (+ faintly metallic on wings + back) except for cinnamon-brown on face to lower breast (where there was no visible streaking + no discernible earpatch); tail a narrow elongated wedge w/ no keel + proportionately shorter than on the male. Eye appeared dark, but not sure.

Field marks which were not seen. Why not? Purple sheen on male breast — not checked before birds flew. ing dark + thus possibly Imm. Females already in ad. plumage (no breast/flank streaking), but psbly they did have a dull ylw color not + less contrast w/face color. These same factors earpatch on the Females, but, still, if there fainter than I expected from field guide illustrations, which, in fact, vary drastically! (Golden '83; Nat'l Geog. '83; Aud. Master Guide '83.)

Variations from expected field marks. I only had time to check eyes of 2 females, on both appeared ready in ad. plumage (no breast/flank streaking), discernable due to distance, angle of flight may be why I also saw — no eyeline or were any present they had to be much were any present they had to be much were any present they had to be much

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

Common Grackle: Would have been much shorter than the magpies (4" or more) w/relatively shorter tails, + w/no dark brown + cin./brn Females. Males have bronze instead of prpl sheen to backs, etc.

Boat-tailed Grackle: The males should not have the extensive purplish sheen + the nearest ones to our area should not have bright yellow eyes.

Note on Females: Although the males were easily fit to a species, the females were not; they varied depending on which field guide I used. Is there such variability, or are one or more guides in error? Golden '83 — Using this, I would call them G-T's; tho an illustration is lacking, they were certainly not like the gray B-T. shown.

Nat'l Geog. '83 — By plumage color, here I would have called them B-T's, w/color + pattern just like the female shown, but without the strong earpatch.

Aud. Master '83 — Tho the lighting looks strange on both females (i.e. both sp.), the G-T. illustration is closer (no brownish-white on throat area; the more obscure eyeline + earpatch may have been on "my" birds.) although the cin.-brown did not extend down to the legs.

Behavior of this bird. Other species seen with this one. Any interaction between birds? When first seen, some on ground were walking, not hopping. Perched w/no sex separation. Flew as a loose flock without other species, tho stragglers were common in flight + feeding (single birds found feeding on ground twice later in day). Magpies were perching + feeding among them, but the magpies remained when the grackles left in a "broken" flock of 2 or 3 "groups". No obvious behavioral interactions with the magpies.

Habitat at this location. Adjacent or near by habitat, if significant. Desert riparian wetlands fed by creek, springs + irrigation runoff, but w/area covered by water magnified by beaver dams. Vegetation in immediate perch/feeding area is mature groves of Fremont cottonwood, Russian olive, + willow species, all interlaced with each other + scattered shallow water.

Describe bird's song or sounds. Regularly calling a loud low-pitched "chuck" (singly), deeper + louder than the "chuck" call being constantly made by the Red-winged Blackbirds all around me close by.

Print reporter's name, address, phone number.

Nelson Boschen
P.O. Box 20
Moab, UT 84532

Signature Nelson Boschen

What is your experience with this or similar birds? Closely observed nesting G-t's in Moab sloughs summer of '84 + '85; males obvious but w/only Golden guide + no notes females only vague memories of being different than B-T. illus. In past years many B-T's seen in FL + on TX coast; again males obvious, but females only vague memories. Com. Grackles observed thrice in Moab sloughs last winter (bronze backs visible), but otherwise only vague childhood memories in NJ.

Corroborating observers not reporting separately.

Print Name _____	Signature _____
Print Name _____	Signature _____
Print Name _____	Signature _____
Print Name _____	Signature _____