

## VERIFICATION OF UNUSUAL SIGHT RECORD FOR UTAH

Common Name: BLACK PHOEBE Scientific Name: *Sayornis nigricans*  
 Date: 2/3/90 Time: Early afternoon Length of time observed: Approx. 2 minutes  
 Number: 1 Age: Adult Sex: —  
 Location: South Davis Sewage Treatment Plant  
 West Bountiful, Utah  
 Latilong: 6 Elevation (if known): Approx. 4,200 ft. above  
 sea level  
 Distance to bird: Approx. 30-40 ft. Light conditions: partial  
 Diffused, bright — thin overcast  
 Optical equipment: Tasc 7x35 binoculars  
 Weather: 35°-38°, breezy, partial sunshine/overcast

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

The bird was a larger "sparrow size" (for lack of a more specific description). It was uniformly black, with the exception of a white belly, white undertail coverts, and white outer tail feathers (obvious when perched as well as when it flew). It had no wing bars. It had a dark eye and a sharp, black bill.

Voice or call notes and method of delivery: NONE THAT I HEARD

Behavior: It was perched on a horizontal piece of wire fencing about three feet from the ground. It flew out over the nearby ground and returned to its perch. When we approached it flew out and hid to another spot on the fence. It did this twice before flying further down the length of the fence and then flew out of sight.

Habitat: Flat land next to ponds near Great Salt Lake. Grasses and desert scrub vegetation. This area is right next to an active sewage treatment facility.

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

Dark-eyed junco, specifically the slate-colored form. The junco has a pale conical bill - this bird had a black sharper bill. The junco (slate-colored) is grayish sometimes (?) shows brown in its back [I've seen this] - this bird was blacker.

What experience have you had with this and similar species: I've observed black phoebes in several areas in California and in Southern Utah. I've seen slate-colored juncos several times in the Salt Lake area in winter. There has been one in the lower area of City Creek canyon this winter that I've observed three times.

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

Consulted field guides after sighting, although I didn't feel I needed to.

Significance of record in this area or the state: Very unusual for northern part of Utah, especially in winter.

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

NONE

Description from notes taken at time of sighting \_\_\_ notes made later \_\_\_ from memory

Observer: DAVID JENSEN

Signature: David Jensen

Address: 116 'B' STREET #3  
SLC, UTAH 84103

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

MARGY HALPIN GREENVILLE ROLES  
RAY SMITH  
MARK STACKHOUSE

Date prepared: 2/10/90

Return this form to: Ella Sorensen  
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