

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

SUPPORTING DETAILS: UNCOMMON OR RARE SPECIES/HIGH NUMBERS

CBC Name Bonin Coll. Band Date 12.30.89 Compiler Dickson
Observer writing this account & date P. Dickson

SPECIES Tundra Swan NUMBER, AGE, SEX 2 Ad., 1 Ad.
Distance from bird(s) 100 yds, 40 yds Relative size of bird 2-3 x Snow Goose

HEAD & NECK (Describe forehead, crown, auricular, malar region, median line, etc.) Crown higher, rounder than Trumpeter Swan

EYE & LORES (Describe supercilium, ring, stripe, color, etc.) Yellow Spot on lores

(Bill)

UPPER & LOWER MANDIBLES Black w/ slight salmon streak barely visible
~~LEGS & FEET~~ on back lower edge (tip) of upper mandible. Inside of bill pale pink

UPPERPARTS (Describe nape, back, rump, upper tail coverts, etc.) white

UNDERPARTS (Describe throat, belly, side, flanks, crissum, etc.) white

(Tail)

RECTRICES (Describe inner, middle, outer tail feathers, color pattern, shape, etc.) white

WING (Describe color, length, shape, linings, bars, coverts, leading & trailing edges, etc.) white

VOCALIZATION Ho-ho-ho w/ nasal quality, also augh augh augh oo-oo
~~BEHAVIOR~~ Lacks "brass" quality of Trumpeter.

Date of observation _____ Time _____ Weather _____ Sky _____

Duration of observation _____ Bird - Sun orientation _____

Exact location _____

Habitat _____ Other observers _____

Optical equipment _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS See letter on Swans for this (Colla-Bosnia-Brow.) & Shreveport count vlt 2 have attached.

AN ACCOMPANYING SKETCH OR PHOTOGRAPH CAN BE MOST HELPFUL

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January 18, 1990

Steve Cardiff & Donna Ditman
LSU MNS
119 Foster Hall
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Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Dear Steve & Donna:

The Tundra Swan presence in the Shreveport area deserves a fuller explanation which I think you will find of interest.

On Shreveport count day, December 23, I spotted 1 juvenile swan on Cross Lake. You will find a supporting detail sheet with the Shreveport count for this swan listed as "Swan sp.". In that description I indicated that as it was a juvenile and as it did not call it was not identifiable. That particular swan was not seen again, at least not in that location. Employees at a boat landing on Cross Lake told me that one swan had been present since at least December 18. The day of the Shreveport count was during the big freeze; the lake was two-thirds frozen. The next day, December 24, the lake was completely frozen save a couple of small holes kept open by birds. The last I had seen of the juvenile swan he was headed due south flying straight and gaining altitude. We certainly thought that we would hear of its presence somewhere in the state but did not expect to re-discover it ourselves. We were wrong!

Despite prior scouting in the area near Elm Grove, Louisiana, it was not until the day of the Caddo-Bossier-Bienville count that I again spotted a single swan, this time an adult in the air 40 yards over my head. I immediately preceded to send my truck into a loop d' loop on the muddy road! After leaping about and screaming like a madman to four other observers some 300 yards away and toward whom the swan was flying, I was satisfied that they would see it as well but was surprised when they heard it call. Now not only did I have someone to back me up but I no longer had "Swan sp.", we had Tundra Swan. (I somehow felt my integrity might fall into question if you editors noted one guy seeing single but different swans in two different places on two different counts with no backup!)

Following the direction of this birds flight I found two adults and was able to study them closely getting yellow lores, head profiles, and one even so kindly opened its mouth so that I could see pale pink mouth lining. They also called. The next day we had 14!

As of today, the 14 are still present and 6 are wearing neck collars, numbers K172 - K177, with corresponding color leg bands on the left, FWS bands on the right. Neck collars are black with white numbers; leg bands are white with black numbers. The birds were banded by myself and Mac Hardy at LSUS Museum in cooperation with Wildlife & Fisheries. Using a rocket net, we tried for 10 of the birds; four escaped, and six were caught and banded. We intend to collect one adult and one juvenile for LSUS in the next day or so leaving 12 birds. The flock is currently made up of 11 adults or sub-adults and 3 juveniles. Ten of the adults show yellow lores and one bird which we had in hand appears to be a second-year bird whose yellow spot is present but is very faint.

We have the banding operation including the net shot and closeups of the birds on video. If you are interested, let me know and I will send you a copy.

Our intent with the banding is to provide migration and wintering data for a "family group" type flock of Tundra Swans using an interior flyway and an unprecedented wintering area. This, to my knowledge, is the first banding of such a flock. To speculate, the ice is probably responsible for their presence but we would still expect an interior wintering area next year and and, if so lucky, reports of a migration path originating in the central Canadian artic as opposed to Alaska. It is the central Canadian population which has accounted for the increases in the Tundra Swan population over the last 40 years. Perhaps band sightings of these birds will disclose a distinct population or pattern of usage in the central states. Just where sightings will come from is anybody's guess but it will certainly be interesting.

Yours in conservation,



Paul M. Dickson