

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or a similar format when submitting records for review to assure that all pertinent information is accounted for. Attach additional pages or files as necessary. Please print or type for hard copy. For electronic copy, be sure to save this file to your computer before entering text. Attach field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed (if hard copy), mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216, or e-mail electronic copy as an attachment to Paul Edward Conover at <zoiseaux@lusfiber.net> .

1. English and Scientific names:

Common Merganser; *Mergus merganser*

2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):

One adult male in alternate plumage

3. Parish:

Cameron

Specific Locality:

Hwy 27 about 750 to 1000 feet past where it curves SSW after going from Hackberry, LA (29° 56' 57.7" N; 93° 22' 04.8" W)

4. Date(s) when observed:

12/18/2016

5. Time(s) of day when observed:

Approximately 8:40 am

6. Reporting observer and address:

Walker Wilson
1917 East Eagle St.
Zachary, LA 70791

7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s):

None

8. Other observers who *independently identified* the bird(s):

None

9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light):

Skies were overcast, so there were no shadows. It was late enough in the morning that there was full daylight, considering overcast conditions.

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition):

No optics were used

11. Distance to bird(s):

Approximately 30 yds

12. Duration of observation:

Approximately 15 seconds

13. Habitat:

Open water and saltmarsh next to Highway 27

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation):

I was driving toward Hackberry on Hwy 27 north when I saw the bird flying to the west of the road. It was flying low (20 – 30 feet high), toward the NNE, but as I came up beside it and began to match its speed, it veered off toward the West, away from the highway. Though I had to keep an eye on the road as I was driving, I got so close, I feel confident in what I saw. My passenger was unable to see the bird, because the roof of the

truck blocked her view from the passenger seat. I was unable to use optics, because I was driving and I knew by the time I pulled over and got my binoculars out, the bird would be very far away, even if it was still visible.

15. Description (include only what was actually seen, *not what "should" have been seen*; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species; body bulk, shape, proportions; bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species, *or for species that are known to hybridize frequently, stress features that help eliminate possible hybrids*):

One of the first things that struck me was this was a very large bird – not as big as a Common Loon, but larger than the Red-breasted Merganser I had seen earlier in the day. The body shape was longer and leaner than most ducks. Because of the way it was veering off to the west, my best views were ventral. I noted the underside was entirely pure white from the neck to the vent. The bill was narrow (by duck standards) and orange/red. The feet were orange/red. The head was solid, dark green. The tail was darker, and there was a black-and-white pattern on the wings.

16. Voice:

I did not hear it vocalize.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):

Red-breasted Merganser is smaller and does not have that pure white neck, breast, belly, sides, flanks and vent.

Hooded Merganser is much smaller and also lacks the pure white neck, breast, belly, sides, flanks and vent.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?):

None.

19. Previous experience with this species:

I have stuffed a museum specimen of an adult male in alternate plumage collected in Washington. Otherwise, I have had no confirmed sightings of this species outside of photographs and field guides.

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

a. at time of observation:

None

b. after observation:

Sibley's field guide and internet photos were used to eliminate potential look-alikes.

21. This description is written from:

<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made during the observation.	Are notes attached?	No*
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	notes made after the observation.	At what date?	12/18/2016
<input type="checkbox"/>	memory		
<input type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

*Notes were on a 3x5 card submitted after the sighting

22. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain:

Yes

23. Date: 2/16/2017

Time: 12:45 pm

24. May the LBRC have permission to display in whole or in part this report and accompanying photos on the LOS-LBRC website and LBRC Facebook page?

Yes

If yes, may we include your name with the report? Yes