

Bird Studies Canada/ Long Point Bird Observatory

P.O. BOX 160, 115 Front Rd. Port Rowan, Ontario, Canada N0E 1M0 Tel: (519) 586-3531
www.birdscanada.org/longpoint



RARITY REPORT

In order that any sight record or banding of a rare species can be accepted for the historical record, it must be properly documented. LPBO co-operators are therefore asked to complete a form in every case where a rarity is being claimed. Guidance as to which species are considered rare in the Long Point area may be obtained from the Landbirds Program Manager. Each observer should prepare his/her description independently and preferably before consulting any field guides or other literature. PLEASE PRINT.

Species claimed: Pacific Loon

No. of birds: 1 **Age:** Adult **Sex:** U

Date(s): May 19 to 21 , 2007

Place: Breakwater field station, Long Point.

Time(s) of Observation: 15:00

Who first saw the bird(s): Edvin Hanson (19 May) and Fergus Nicoll (21 May)

Who first identified it: Edvin Hanson and Fergus Nicoll

Other observers (names and addresses):

Fergus Nicoll, Hilde Johansen and Julie Webber c/o LPBO.

Any who disagree: No

Your previous experience with the species: Observer had previously observed Pacific and Arctic Loons in all plumages.

Your previous experience with any closely similar species:

(a) Formerly: Observer has extensive experience with Arctic Loons in northern Europe and Pacific Loons on the west coast of Canada and the USA.

(b) Same day: n/a

Species present for comparison: Common Loon

Which were beside it for comparison: none

Distance from observer(s): 350 m

How measured: estimate

Optical aids used: Swarovski Scope 20-60 zoom.

Weather conditions (at time of observation)

Visibility: clear

Cloud Cover: 5/10

Lighting: good

Wind direction and speed: light SW

Other relevant conditions:
(eg. rain, snow cover, etc.)

For "Waterbird " records only

Lake conditions: wavey

Wave height: 1

Height of observer above lake: 2-3m

Was observer's position sheltered: yes

Weather system preceding the date of observation (if known): unknown

Attach weather map clipping from local or national newspaper if relevant.

Associated movements of other species:

Was the bird trapped: no

Band # if banded: no

Was it photographed: yes

If yes, by whom (name and address): Edvin Hanson c/o LPBO.

Specimen or parts preserved:

Present location:

Circumstances:

From Edvin Hanson:

I was about to do the daily bird census at Breakwater, Long Point. I scanned the lake for waterfowl when I spotted the Pacific Loon. It was sitting on the water about 350 m from the shore. The bird was quite active – swimming around and diving. At one time a Common Loon was seen in direct comparison. I observed the Pacific Loon for about 25 minutes. During this time I saw all the different field marks, compared with field guides, made some notes and made sure that Julie Webber and Hilde Johansen who were working at Breakwater as well got to see the bird. I also tried to take some pictures of the bird by using my digiscoping setup. This was tricky due to the waves, but I got one picture showing the nape of the neck.

Description:

Give separate description for (a) in the field (b) in the hand. Include full measurements and wing formula with hand descriptions.

The bird was in summer plumage. Rounded gray head, with black throat and very pale gray nape. Bill held horizontally – not at an angle. Obvious white on the back. No white on the flanks. Side of the neck showed vague vertical white stripes (not an obvious collar).

Common Loon and Yellow-billed Loon:

Eliminated by smaller size (I saw a Common Loon in direct comparison for a few minutes), weaker bill and combination of black throat and pale gray nape. No white “collar” on the side of the neck. A Common Loon in non-breeding plumage would not have shown a black throat, white pattern on the back or a pale gray nape.

Red-throated Loon:

Eliminated by black throat, pale gray nape and white patches on the back. The bill was never held at the angle Red-throats often have. Summer plumage Red-throated give a rather brown impression whereas this bird was “black-and-white”. Non-breeding Red-throated give a very pale impression (especially the white face), which does not match either.

Arctic Loon:

Eliminated by more compact body-shape, head more rounded and bill gentler than in Arctic. During the 25 minutes I observed the loon I could never see any white in the flanks, not even when the bird adjusted its plumage. The nape of the neck was very pale gray – much paler than I have seen in any Arctic Loon. I have seen hundreds and hundreds of Arctic Loons in all kinds of plumages and in all kinds of lighting in Sweden. None of them have shown this pale a nape, and the body-shape is a lot more “stretched out” in Arctics. The difference in bill-shape is notable as well. Arctics have a longer, heavier and more dagger-like bill. If I had seen this individual in Sweden I would have reacted immediately.



Did you refer to any guides/other literature:

(a) at the time: yes

(b) afterwards: no

Finally, is this record 100% certain? yes

Signed:  for Edvin Hanson

Date:

For Edvin Hanson and Fergus Nicoll.

E-mail Address: s_a_mackenzie@yahoo.ca

Mailing Address: Long Point Bird Observatory
PO Box 160, Port Rowan. ON. N0E 1M0.