

CBC RARE BIRD DOCUMENTATION FORM

Submitted as documentation of (check all that apply):

Unusual Species Unusual Date Unusual Habitat

1. **MOST IMPORTANT:** On back of form give complete details of this observation. Use additional sheets as needed. Include information on the bird's plumage, shape, size, vocalizations, habitat, behavior, etc. Describe exactly what you saw; include photocopies of your original notes and sketches. Name the species that you considered ID contenders; explain how you eliminated them.

2. Count Name: Orilla Verde Count Code: NMOV

3. Species Hooded Merganser Age Sex F # 1

4. Date (s) of Observation Dec. 17, 2014 Time 4:20pm to 4:30 pm
Earlier/Later dates by others, if known _____

5. Place Lower Ranchitos (West edge of Taos) - Rio Pueblo
Nearest Town Taos County Taos

6. Observer Robert Templeton
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7. Observation Details:
Other Observers Tom Jackman
Optics Used Swarovski 8x42
Distance From Bird ≈ 30 yards Viewing Conditions Low light, poor color resolution

Weather, sky cover Overcast

Photo Taken? No Video? No Sound Recording? No Specimen? No

Are these available to the CBC Regional Editor? _____ Where are they? _____

8. Past Experience: With this or similar species? Hooded Merganser (M+F) obs > 30 Eared Grebe obs > 10
9. References or Advice Consulted: Sibley's + National Geographic

10. Was this report done from notes made during or after observation or from memory? from memory

Signature Robert Templeton Date 12-20-2014

Observers please give this form to your compiler. Compilers please send all rare bird forms directly to your regional editor. Contact information for regional editors can be found at: <http://birds.audubon.org/programs/cbc/cbc-regional-editors> or in the latest CBC issue of American Birds on-line under Regional Summaries, sign up at: <http://www.audubon.org/mediaset/cbc-photo-contest> UPLOAD your CBC PHOTOS to the website at: <http://www.audubon.org/mediaset/cbc-photo-contest> and then email them directly to your regional editor along with this form.

Hooded Merganser; NMOV; Taos, NM; Taos County; Female=1

At about 4:20PM we (me, Tom Jackman and John Lay) were walking west along the Rio Pueblo, about 0.5 miles west of Lower Ranchitos Road. About 75 yards downstream, there were 5 Mallard in the creek. As we came closer, the Mallards floated down-stream to a wide, calm place created by an irrigation dam with two overhanging Russian Olives. From this vantage point, the Mallards would appear and then disappear and reappear from behind the tree branches.

By this time, the light was very low. It was completely overcast and it was only about 20 minutes before sunset.

As we walked closer, maybe 30 yards, a different bird floated into view. It was significantly smaller than the Mallards. Two features immediately jumped out: the short merganser-like bill and a backward thrusting crest/ear patch extension. I first suggested Hooded Merganser and then considered the only other possibility that came to mind, Eared Grebe. I suggested that possibility, but Tom felt the bill shape was clearly merganser and I agreed. Additionally, it did not reveal any of the lighter whitish neck markings expected for a wintering grebe.

It was not possible to discern any color. The bird just appeared medium dark in shades of gray. The head shape was flattened on top and the head was close to the body.

At that point, the Mallards all flew, but it appeared the potential merganser had not. We now moved downstream, using the trees as cover. As we stepped out from behind the last tree, the "merganser" flew directly away from us (west) at eye level. The bird appeared basically dark gray, with some lighter gray on the wings. Given the light, I really cannot say exactly where the light gray was on the wings, other than it appeared fairly close to the body.

Nearby winter records:

NMOV: Recorded on 106th and on CW on 109th.

NMDI (Count center 16 miles SW of NMOV center): HOME recorded 8 out of 18 years.

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