

A Red Phalarope in Hattiesburg, Mississippi

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On Sunday, 9 October 1977, we observed a Red Phalarope (Phalaropus fulicarius) swimming in one of the Hattiesburg Sewage Lagoon ponds. There had been a heavy rain during the night, but the sky started clearing at dawn and a bright sun was shining when we found the phalarope. There was a light to moderate wind blowing from the north.

When we first sighted the bird, it was about 40 m away from us. We were immediately struck by the whiteness of the bird which was not unlike that of a Sanderling in winter plumage. The bird was relatively fearless and eventually swam to within 5 m of us. We observed the bird for 15 to 20 minutes. The following field characteristics were noted. The bird was quite white below, with a uniformly colored pale gray back, and a darker line marking the back edge of the folded wing. We observed the back carefully; it had no streaking or other marks on it of any kind. The bird had a gray stripe along the back of its neck. This stripe split into two parts at the back of the head, forming a "Y" on the top, back part of the head. This gave the bird a distinctly "bald" look on the top of the head. A distinct "Phalarope mark" went through the eye. The bill was not longer than the length of the head at the same level, and it did not have the "needle-thin" appearance of the bills of the Wilson's and the Northern phalarope. The bill was dark, but not jet black. The base of the bill was thicker than the rest of the bill and showed a slight yellow coloration whenever the bird held its head at just the right angle. This is, as far as we know, the first observation of a Red Phalarope in the state of Mississippi.

Black-necked Stilt: a New Breeding Species for Mississippi

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The Black-necked Stilt (Himantopus mexicanus) breeds in North America from Mexico and the southwestern United States east along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts as far as South Carolina (American Ornithologists' Union 1957). Although stilts have nested in Alabama (Imhof 1976) and

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