



IOS IORC &lt;iorcommittee@gmail.com&gt;

## IORC Documentation Submission

1 message

**IORC Web Submission** <iorcommittee@gmail.com>

Thu, Dec 2, 2021 at 3:39 PM

Reply-To: iorcommittee@gmail.com

To: iorcommittee@gmail.com

1) This form submitted as supporting documentation of (check all that apply):	Unusual species
If other, please describe:	
2) Species:	Yellow Rail
3) Number of birds:	1
4) Age/Sex/Plumage:	unknown
5) Date:	2021-10-23
6) Location (include county):	Weaver Park, Urbana, IL
7) Observers:	Erin Tedesco
8) Your name:	Erin Tedesco
Street Address	██████████
Street Address Line 2	
City	██████████
State / Province / Region	██
Postal / Zip Code	██████
Country	██████████
10) Your e-mail address:	██
11) Others agreeing with the identification:	no other observers
12) Observers NOT agreeing with the identification:	
13) Description of bird (size, shape, proportions, details of both color and pattern on head, back,	Small, rail-shaped bird a little smaller than a RWBL. Flew with legs dangling so I knew it wasn't a song bird. It flew away from me, low, and then back down. It was up for all of 4 seconds but it was enough to CLEARLY see white on bottom of wings on either side of tail. Body was dark and light was not good enough to see any other details.

chin, throat, breast, flanks, wings, undertail, and tail, etc.; coloration of soft parts: bill, legs, and feet) include only details actually seen in the field :	
14) Description of behavior:	I was surprised to find a rail foraging deep in prairie grass (where I was looking for NESP and LESP). Sora and Virginia Rails I've seen at this park have always been in or very near the marsh area. This was way in the middle of the prairie part of the park. I flushed it and it popped up quickly, flapped rapidly, but seemed to want to fly as low as it could and get away and back down into cover as quickly as possible. Legs definitely dangled behind and then came down for landing. Very shy and skulky. Could not find again. That said, since I got a diagnostic look, I did not want to disturb the bird again, so I didn't try very long or hard.
15) Description of vocalizations:	none heard
16) Description of immediate and surrounding habitat(s):	I am told by Mike Ward the prairie grasses there are Big blue stem, blue joint grass and switch grass. Also patches of sumac and narrowleaf mountainmint (if my iNat observation is correct!) Like I said, there is a proper marsh there, too, but bird was nowhere near it.
17) Optical equipment used for observation (type, power):	Vortex Viper HD binoculars, 10 X 42
18) Distance/how measured?	2 feet when it flushed, dropped about 6-7 feet away. Measurement just an estimate.
19) Time of observation:	08:35 am
20) Total time of observation:	4-5 seconds
21) Weather conditions:	Overcast, no direct sun to cause glare but dim enough to not be able to see detail in colors or patterns
22) Previous experience with this species and similar species:	This is my first-ever observation of YERA.
23) Please eliminate other similar species and/or hybrids:	I've seen SORA and VIRA in flight quite a few times so I knew this was too small to be those, but it definitely had a rail shape and flew like a rail.
24) Were photos obtained?	No
25) If so, by whom?	N/A
26) Books and illustrations consulted and advice received. How did these influence this description?:	Looked at eBird photos immediately after to confirm. I looked at my Peterson phone app to see what general size it should be. However, I knew to look for the white on the bottom of the wings as a field mark. I am pretty sure I saw this bird 2 days prior, but light was terrible and I couldn't see any field marks at all. And it was an even shorter look. This time I was closer in better light to confirm ID.
27) How long after the observation	I put the observation into eBird immediately and texted Zak and Colin at 8:35am.

were field notes recorded?	
28) How long after the observation was this form completed?	39 days
29) Additional remarks (URLs can be entered here):	<p>I talked to Joe Lill today and learned that I needed to document this bird here. I am doing a County Big Year and have already broken the record. I told Colin Dobson, Mike Ward and Zak Sutton immediately. Zak searched for the bird about 15 minutes later but did not find it. I did not report it publicly because I feared folks would trample one of the only good sparrow spots in Champaign County! It rained the next day so Mike Ward was unable to look for it and Colin could not either. I hoped to have at least one of them back up the observation since it was way too fast to photograph (for me and my equipment!) I still have the observation hidden on eBird as I do not want anyone in Champaign County and the surrounding area angry at me for not reporting this rare bird. But my actions are in the best interest of a sensitive habitat and a shy skulky species I didn't want to be harassed. However, the minute I saw the bird flush, I told myself in my head to look for the white and it was indeed there, on either side of the tail, very clearly, even though it was a quick look.</p>