

From: azfo@azfo.org
Subject: ABC Report of Glossy Ibis observed on 18_April_2011 by Gary Rosenberg
Date: April 21, 2011 at 2:41 PM
To: Kurtrad@att.net, drbrdr@att.net, ghrosenberg@comcast.net, mollymp@flash.net
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Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

Date observed: 18 April 2011
Initial observer(s): Paul Lehman
Exact location: Paloma Ranch, about 1/2 mile west of entrance, and 1/4 mile south of I-8
County: Maricopa
City: Paloma Ranch
Elevation: 1000 feet

Submitted by: Gary Rosenberg.

Number observed: 1
Age: adult
Sex: unknown

Time observed: about 9:00 am
Duration of observation: 20 minutes
Minimum distance from bird: 50-100 yards
Optics used: Leica Scope with 25-50 x lens
Position of sun: Sun was at our back
Habitat: agricultural fields, ditch with irrigation water

Others who observed this bird: Gary Rosenberg and Barbara Carlson
Anyone known to disagree: None

Was the bird identified before consulting any guides: yes
Identification guides used: None
Were notes taken before or after the observation: After
How well was the bird seen: Very Well

Detailed description:

After looking for migrants at Paloma Ranch, we checked a couple of irrigation ponds west of the ranch headquarters in the agricultural fields between the ranch and the heron rookery. We spotted a large flock of about 300+ White-faced Ibis, and decided to try and check the flock carefully for Glossy Ibis - as it has been Paul's experience in the past that about 1/300 in these large migrating flocks have the potential of being Glossy Ibis - he had found 3-4 previously in the state - mainly along the Colorado River - using this reasoning. So we got as close to the ibis flock as possible - about 50-100 yards - got out of the vehicles and scoped the flock. Rather quickly, Paul spotted an adult Glossy Ibis in with white-faced. The bird was, luckily up on the road in a rather "close" group, which made it easier to spot and relocate. At one point the flock was flushed by a passing vehicle, and when they re-settled, we were able to spot the bird a second time. It was, in all regards, a "typical-looking" Glossy. I keyed in on searching the head patterns of the ibis to locate the bird. It was actually rather easy to pick out amongst the White-faced Ibis. In studying the face pattern for several minutes - using 25 power, and raising it to about 40-45 power, I was able to compare the face and eye directly with many close by White-faced Ibises. The overall plumage of the bird was that of an adult, and, for all intents and purposes, identical to the nearby White-faced. I did not look at the legs, but the plumage looked the same. The face and eye were very different though. At all times the face looked gray with no hint of pinkish or brown tone. both the upper border and lower border of the gray face was edged with a rather distinct, narrow white line - which did not extend to behind the eye. There was no white visible behind the eye. The eye appeared dark - with no hint of red visible. In contrast, there were many White-faced Ibis nearby for direct comparison - and I was able to look at the Glossy, then look at different White-faced to see if what I was seeing was accurate, or perhaps an artifact of the lighting. All of the White-faced showed some degree of pinkish in the face, had wider white borders to the face, which always looked like it extended behind the eye, and showed distinctive reddish eyes. There was great variation in the different plumaged White-faced Ibises - as multiple ages and plumages were present - but at no time did I see a White-faced that did not show pinkish in the face, or reddish in the eye color, and none showed the narrow white borders above and below. The Glossy, in comparison, looked pure and as typical as one can look like. We attempted to obtain some video through the scope, but the video did not come out great.

Vocalizations:

None

Behavior:

Seen with large flock of White-faced Ibis. Seen preening.

What similar species were considered and why were they eliminated:

White-faced Ibis - see above

Experience with species:

I have seen thousand's of Glossy Ibis, having grown up in the East, but it has only been in the last 20 years or so that I have looked at Ibis critically, with the hope of finding one in Arizona or elsewhere in the West. I have seen one other in Arizona - the Maricopa area bird several years ago - and I have found my own "out-of-range" birds in West Texas at Lake Balmorhea. When I have been close to Glossy Ibis, I have taken the time in studying the face patterns - and I have seen thousands, if not tens of thousands of White-faced Ibis - and have on many occasions studied the face patterns, eye color and variation within the White-faced Ibis.

Experience with similar species:

I have seen thousands of White-faced Ibis over 35 years of birding in the West - and have studied the face patterns and eye color, and variation within this species.

Was the bird photographed: yes

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Url:http://www.azfo.org/ArizonaBirdReview/SubmittedHtml/GLIB_Paloma_Ranch_Rosenberg_18_April_2011.html