

DOCUMENTATION FORM

For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

Species: Whimbrel

Number: 1

Location: Hawkeye Wildlife Area (Coralville Reservoir), Johnson Co.

Habitat: Gravel bar in reservoir.

Date and time: June 7, 2000, 6:00 p.m. – 6:15 p.m..

Name and address: Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Ave., North Liberty, IA 52317

Others with you: None.

Others before or after you: Mike Dooley before.

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

A large brown and white shorebird with a long downward-curved bill and a striped crown. There were no other birds nearby for comparison, but it was approximately crow-sized. The bill was black, very long, downward-curved, very wide at the base and tapered towards the tip. The legs were long and blackish. The eye was dark. The face and chin were whitish. There was a very thin buff-colored median crown stripe, wide chocolate-brown lateral crown stripes, white eyebrow stripes, and thin brown eye stripes. The neck (back, sides, and front), breast, and upper belly were covered with fine brown streaks, with brown barring on the flanks. The lower belly, vent, and undertail were off-white. The upperparts (scapulars, coverts, and tertials) were checkered with dark brown and buff.

In flight, the uppersides of the primaries appeared solid dark brown, the tail appeared brown with light brown banding, and the underwings appeared light brown.

During a brief flight, the bird gave two series of 5 or 6 rapid whistled high-pitched notes.

Similar species eliminated: Long-billed Curlew has a much longer bill, lacks the striped crown, has a different call, and is more buff-colored, especially on the underwings.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification? No.

Viewing conditions: Estimated 50 yards, full sunlight from side, viewed with 20x-60x telescope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: I have seen one other Whimbrel and several Long-billed Curlews.

References and persons consulted before writing description: National Geographic Field Guide.

How long before field notes made: 90 minutes.

How long before this form completed: 90 minutes.