

Oct. 18, 1981

Thoughts on Possible Long-toed Stint

The bird in question was observed by many people in a cut straw field (flooded) north of Davenport, Iowa near Eldridge, Iowa on Sept. 6, 1981. Bird was observed from 7:30 A.M. to 8:00 A.M. and again from 2:00 P.M. to 2:30 P.M. in good light.

The key field marks I picked out from these observations ~~were~~

- were:
1. small shorebird (peep)
 2. feathers on back + wings had much rusty color in them
 3. scapulars had wide buffy margins (probably immature)
 4. feathers edging mantle showed white edging forming a "V" on birds back
 5. bill was short + black
 6. legs were yellow or greenish-yellow
 7. Throat + breast were mostly free of streaks appearing basically "off-white"
 8. There was a dark stripe running between bill + eye.
 9. There was dark spot under right eye that is not a field mark.

These field marks do indeed fit the long-toed stint (*Calidris subminata*) but they also fit the least sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*). Granted, the least usually has more buffy + streaking on the breast than this bird but variations are always possible. The white "V" on the back is a stint characteristic, but leasts can also have white tipped scapulars. (Note photo of least in The National Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds by Terres)

It is not easy to find much information on long-toed stints but I did find some help in the following:

- 1.) Birds of the Soviet Union - G.P. Dement'ev + N.A. Gladkov
- 2.) Migration + Survival of the Birds of Asia - H. Elliott McClure
- 3.) Field Guide to Birds of South-East Asia - King + Dickinson
- 4.) Birds of Alaska - Iro Gabrielson
- 5.) Guide to the Identification and Aging of Holarctic Waders - Proter
Marchant
Uvorninen
- 6.) A Dichotomous Key to the Shorebirds of North America - Richard Melton

While the bird does have many field marks of the long-toed stint and even though it is strange for a least to travel alone and while this bird ^{was} with ~~an~~ other shorebirds but did not really associate with them (kept to itself) the main field mark, the toes, were really not observed. Unless the bird was collected and in hand and measurements taken on toes, I really don't think we can safely call the bird a long-toed stint.

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