

6-6-80

See letter to
T Kent Dear Tom,
8/3 July 80
in unaccepted file

Can you identify
marbled Godwit
without flushing it?

There is a degree of controversy in some people's minds over our marbled godwit. The lone bird was first found by Russ Hays, Evelyn Ehlers, Bob Flamm, and myself. To call it a godwit was obvious. It was huge with a very long upturned bill. The color was a general brownish-tan above. There was no noticeable contrast top to bottom except for the darker mottlings on the breast (~~which~~ reminded me of a white-fronted goose.) As the bird moved about and moved its wings we could see no white on the tail. We did not flush bird at this time as other members of our club were coming and we thought we might chase it off. Russ Hays thought it was a marbled and with my guide book in hand I had to agree. Russ has been birding since 1939 and is quite careful. We came back to the spot a short time later and the big bird was joined by 2 reddish (spring plumaged) Hudsonian godwits. The size difference was very obvious. The marbled was much taller and the bill was much longer. The white tail band was very evident as the Hudsonians

stretched and preened. This confirmed our identification for us.

Tom Stone + Tom Stone Jr. went up later that day and found only Hudsonians (about 12). They said our bird was probably a winter plumaged Hudsonian. I went to the marsh the following day to check this out. There were about 8 godwits there, all Hudsonians, in both spring and winter plumage. The winter plumaged birds were different than our marbled. The ~~spring~~ bands ^{on the breast} were narrower and closer ~~to~~ together and thru the scope you could see the reddish feathers coming out. The white band was visible in both ~~spring~~ phases.

It is my contention that the marbled left or moved to another part of the marsh and that only Hudsonians were left when the Stones got there. Next time I will flush the bird regardless of who is coming to see it.

I just got back from a trip to Waubesa St. Park and to Lacy Keosauqua St. Park. In the Waubesa area I found at least 4 male Summer tanagers, blue grosbeaks, western Kingbirds and a Kentucky warbler that may have been breeding. At Keosauqua there were at least 6 different singing Parula warblers, 8 Ceruleans, one blue-winged and 3 yellow-throated warblers. All could

have been breeding. I got 115 sp which isn't too bad for June. This brings my year list to 230 with hardly ~~and~~ any winter birds on it. That is only 3 away from where I ended last ~~last~~ year at 233.

Take care,

Bob Myers