

Species: Downy Woodpecker (Albino)

Number: One

Location: Willow Slough, Anderson Twp., Mills County, Ia.

Date: Apr. 27, 1978

Time bird seen: Seen for about 10 minutes about 4:30 p.m.

Description:

Appeared all white in flight, and about the size of the Harris Sparrow that flew across the road with it. Fed among last year's cornstalks, sometimes perched vertically on upright stalks, and sometimes perched on horizontal ones (or the ground?) Hopped. Alert and active.

At first it appeared all white ~~xx~~ with a white light brown stripe through the eye. Also had a narrow moustach stripe of the same color. Light ~~xx~~ brown also on crown (darkest on forehead), a vertical stripe on center of nape, and a little [light brown] about the bend of the wing (on wing itself or feathers above it?). Eyes dark. Bill a light brownish color that ~~xx~~ matched the eye stripe. At first I thought the back, wings, and tail were truly white like the underparts, but some of the white spotting on the wings and the white outer tail feathers showed up, so these parts were really the palest tan or off-white.

Habitat: Feeding among cornstalks. When it left it flew into the woods.

Similar species eliminated: Behavior and shape were those of a woodpecker, as was the undulating flight. What pattern was visible was ~~xxxx~~ that of a Hairy or Downy Woodpecker, and the size and beak eliminated the Hairy.

Distance: 1 1/2 times the width of a barely 2-lane gravel road. ~~xxxx~~ (Across a ditch, feeding in the very edge of a field) This distance would be about 30 ft. (Estimated from the approximate width of a 2-lane road) *Seen w/ 7x Binoculars + 20x telescope*

Light: Sky solidly overcast, but light enough for good observations. At first the bird was east of the N-S road, later west, but this made no difference in the light or shade, due to the overcast.

I am familiar with the Downy Woodpecker, which is common here, and the more uncommon Hairy.

Other ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ observers: None.
No books used.

~~xx~~ The description written above is quoted word-for-word from the notes written immediately after the bird flew off. The rest of the report is based on the rest of my notes and memory.

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