

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Buff-breasted Sandpiper How many? 1Location? n.w. Marshall County, east of ZearingType of habitat? flooded field, slightly trashy with corn emergingWhen? date(s): May 14, 1986 time: 5:00 P.M. to 5:40 P.M.Who? your name and address: Beth Proescholdt, Liscomb, Iowaothers with you: Mark Proescholdt

others before or after you: _____

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

When we were scanning the flooded field area Mark spotted a bird that was different - "something like an Upland Sandpiper - only it isn't." It was the shape of an Upland Sandpiper or a Reeve with an upright stance, but smaller & more squatty with a shorter neck, a small "pigeon-like" head and a short straight bill that appeared dark. Its back was brown and scaly-looking, & when it spread its wings they were of the same almost-uniform brown, with the same color extending up to & over its crown. The undersides were pale buffy, lighter under its tail with no spotting or streaking. It had yellow legs & an eye ring. It was smaller than the Lesser Golden Plover that moved within a foot (or so) of it, & much larger than the Least Sandpipers in front of it. Several times it flicked its wings, & twice spreading its wings showing all white underneath (as much as we could see of them) with dark trailing edges. This was the last marking we needed to prove that it was a Buff-breasted Sandpiper we were seeing.

Similar species and how eliminated: Upland Sandpiper - this bird had a shorter neck, was too small, & had an overall buffy look of the underparts & also clear breasted. Reeve - too buffy to be a reeve and too small compared with birds close by.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

brilliant sunlight coming from behind us - 50 to 60 yards estimated - 22x Bushnell spacemaster scope + 8x binoculars

Previous experience with species and similar ones: We have seen Buff-breasted Sandpipers twice - Upland Sandpiper many times - a Ruffonce.References and persons consulted before writing description: Guides - Peterson, National Geog, Robbins, Audubon's Master GuideHow long before field notes made? at once this form completed? May 15, 1986

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