

Semipalmated plover

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I have not attempted to document before but I will try to convince you this was the bird I saw, and being aware that according to Iowa Birds this would be a record late date.

I first saw a smallish shorebird, with my naked eye, at approximately 3:45 P.M. on 11/28/89, running along the sandy shoreline below the Red Rock Dam in the tailwaters. Using my Zeiss 10x40B binocular I recognized the small bird as a Semipalmated plover. I then picked it up with my Bausch & Lomb Discover spotting scope. Putting it on 30 power I watched the bird for approximately 5 minutes and noted: smaller than a Killdeer, moving in plover fashion, 100' away. One distinct band (wide) running across the breast toward the hind neck or toward the top of the mantle. The bird appeared to be "neckless".

The bill was plover-like with just a darkish appearance, with a lighter appearance near the forehead.

A white patch on the forehead was very distinct with a dark, black looking spot above it and a small dark, blackish looking line below it.

The belly below the breastband underneath to the undertail coverts was white. There was a white ring above the breastband. The mantle, crown dark-brownish, too dark for a piping plover.

The color was similar to the color of a Killdeer, but had no rust color on the rump. I did not note leg color. I saw it fly but took note of nothing except the white underparts, because I was surprised that another like bird was with it. It must have been out of viewing sight.