

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Whimbrel How many? 1Location? 3 1/2 miles southwest of LiscombType of habitat? flooded field, across from marshy areaWhen? date(s): April 24, 1992 time: 4:15 to 4:20 + 4:30-4:40Who? your name and address: Beth Proescholdt, Liscomb 50148others with you: Ramona Sommerlotothers before or after you: I assume only Ramona + I saw it

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.

I went to check "Felper's Marsh", noted the Lesser + Greater Yellowlegs, then saw this large gray-brown shorebird + thought "Ah, a Marbled Godwit!" A second glance showed not an upturned bill, but a long downcurved bill. As I crept closer in the car I could see the striped crown, the contrasting lighter brown underparts + darker gray-brown back, flight feathers, tail; + the long gray legs. The bird was walking in fairly deep water, once it had its head tucked in. I watched about 5 minutes, rushed over to get Ramona who was gone but left a message. Drove back for another look, Ramona drove up behind me + we both saw it. I rushed home to call Mark before he left work. When we returned at 6:00 we couldn't find it although we searched the area for 2 hours. There was much swirling of all the shorebirds at times, + probably the Whimbrel flew off on one of those swirls.

Similar species and how eliminated: Marbled Godwit - approximately same size but difference in bill (Whimbrel carving down - M. Godwit up); Longbilled Curlew is larger without head stripes - Bristle-thighed Curlew (very remote) has rust colored rump + tail

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain: :

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

cloudy, but good light from behind me, 50-60 yards (estimated),
Nikon 8X30 binocs, 22X Bushnell scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones: I have seen 2 Whimbrels

in Iowa, several in Churchill + Oregon

References and persons consulted before writing description: I checked my field guides just to be sureHow long before field notes made? soon this form completed? April 27

The Whimbrel towered over the Lesser + Greater Yellowlegs near it.