

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species: Hudsonian Godwit
Number: 1 juvenile
Location: Harrier M., Boone Co., IA
Habitat: shallow pond
Date: 26 October 1996
Time: 5:52-6:20 p.m.
Observer: Stephen J. Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA 50014
Others who saw bird: James J. Dinsmore

Description of bird(s): We arrived at the main pond and quickly noticed a larger shorebird standing alone in the water. The bird was nearly twice the size of nearby Greater Yellowlegs and had a long, slightly upturned bill with a pinkish base. The bill was at least twice the length of the head with the basal two thirds pinkish and the distal one third dark. The head and neck were a pale buff color except for a darker crown and a white eyeline. The breast, belly, and vent were also pale, but not quite as buffy as the head and neck. The wings and mantle were dark gray/brown with paler feather edgings on the wing coverts and scapulars. When flushed, the wing linings were black. The upperwing was dark with a white stripe extending along the base of the flight feathers. The tail was mostly black except for white across the uppertail coverts ("white rump"). The buffy color on the head and neck and the paler feather edgings on the wing coverts and scapulars indicated the bird was in juneval plumage.

Similar species and how eliminated: The large size and slightly upturned, bicolored bill identified the bird as a godwit. In flight, the combination of a white rump and black wing linings ruled out other godwit species (Marbled, Black-tailed, and Bar-tailed).

Viewing conditions and equipment: Viewing conditions were excellent with overcast skies. Estimated viewing distance was as close as 50 m. I used 10x42 binoculars and a 20-60x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species: I have seen hundreds Hudsonian Godwits in Iowa in spring, but this was my first fall bird. I am also familiar with Marbled and Bar-tailed godwits.

References consulted: none

How long before field notes made: none written

How long before this form completed: written 28 October 1996