

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species?Greater Yellowlegs

How Many?1

Location?Big Creek S.P.--north end

Habitat?feeding on mudflat with several Killdeer

Date?27 Nov 1988

Time?7:08-7:22 a.m.

Observers Name and address:Steve Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA 50010

Others who saw bird:several on earlier dates

Description of bird:I pulled into the parking lot at the north end of Big Creek L. to look for late shorebirds. I quickly noticed a yellowlegs feeding in shallow water along the edge of the mud. The bird was alone, and initially appeared to be smaller than a Killdeer. The legs were bright yellow. The upperparts were dark gray with light speckling. The underparts were white, except for a gray wash on the breast. I then assumed that this was probably the Lesser Yellowlegs that was at this same location on 19 Nov. A few minutes later, a Northern Harrier flew by and flushed the shorebirds. The yellowlegs took flight and, instead of the soft "tu-tu-tu" of a Lesser Yellowlegs, I heard the louder, harsher call of a Greater Yellowlegs, which the bird gave in a series of 5-6 notes. When the bird landed again(with the Killdeer this time), I gave it a closer look. Next to the Killdeer, the bird was noticeably larger. The bill was fairly long and very slightly upturned. However, I did not get the impression that the bill was as long as the bill of some Greater Yellowlegs I have seen. Because of the size, bill shape, and call note, I concluded that the bird was indeed a Greater Yellowlegs. I could not find the bird later in the day.

Similar species and how eliminated:see above

Viewing conditions and equipment:Viewing conditions were good with good light on an overcast day. Estimated viewing distance was 100 feet at the closest. I used a Bushnell 20-45x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species:I am very familiar with both species of yellowlegs.

References consulted:none

How long before field notes were made?none made

How long before this form was completed?10 hours