

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Western Sandpiper, 1 alt., 20 July 1991, Coralville Res., Johnson Co., IA  
Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246

Other observers: none

Time: 9:30 to 9:45 a.m.

Habitat: mud pools

Description: The bird was slightly larger than the Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers in the same field of view. Bill 1.5 times longer than Semipalmated. Bill about as long as head and slightly decurved. Bird probed downward in water and mud. Light superciliary line. Underparts white with small marks on sides of breast and wash across breast. Legs dark. Some rufous edging on tertials and maybe on some scapulars. Wing feathers mostly black centered with light edge. Bird always appeared larger than other peeps, so that I thought that it might be a White-rumped Sandpiper until it flew away from me so that I could see the tail well in the scope. It did not have a white rump, but rather a dark center with lighter indenting on the sides of the tail like the other peeps. Bird appeared to be in worn alternate plumage.

Song: not heard

Conditions: Hazy sky with light behind me; 30-40 yards; 20x scope.

Similar species: Bill and marks on sides unlike Least or Semipalmated sandpipers. Lack of white rump eliminated White-rumped. Rufous feathers supports identification.

Time of notes: 2.5 hours