

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species SANDERLING 2. Number 1
3. Location Martin Marietta Sand Pits, Waterloo, Iowa
4. Date: July 26, 1980 5. Time Bird Seen: 9:00 to 9:15
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):
Seen alongside Least Sandpipers (4) and Pectoral Sandpipers (2) and Greater Yellowlegs (1). A little larger than Least Sandpipers and quite a bit smaller than the Pectoral Sandpipers. Very light in coloration. White on belly and all under parts. White ran up neck and into nape area. Wing was dull gray color with contrast with rest of lower region. Head was extremely light colored with dull gray striping through the forehead and crown, and a dull gray eye streak with white line above eye. Legs were very dark. Beak was black and appeared very heavy at base with slow taper toward end. When flushed the bird mixed in so fast with other peeps and shorebird that the wing pattern was not seen, so that field mark will have to be left off.
7. Description of voice, if heard: Not heard.
8. Description of behavior: Bird seemed to hold its body more horizontal than the accompanying shorebirds around it. It also seemed to have a faster and steadier run than the others.
9. Habitat - general: Sand pit with 1" to 6" standing water.
specific: Mud basin sand pit with shallow water with willow trees and weeds around the outside edges.
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:
Semipalmated Sandpiper: I have never seen a semipalmated sandpiper in that white plumage. Western Sandpiper: there was no apparent droop to the end of the beak. Least Sandpiper: I have never seen a Least Sandpiper this light colored.
11. Distance (how measured)? Approx 50 feet - eye. 12. Optical equipment: 7x35mm Baosch + Lomb Roof Prism Binoculars.
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
Sunny; Sun to South of both observers (including me) and the bird. Light on bird was bright sunlight at side angle from south. I was watching bird facing E. or NE.
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: I have seen this species on numerous occasions along the Atlantic Coast in Virginia and North Carolina in the winter and fall months while along side Semipalmated, Western, and Least Sandpipers.
15. Other observers: Bob Myers
16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes.
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: Bob Myers came to same conclusion as me.
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 5 hours.
- Signature: Francis S. Moore Address: 264 Western Ave.
- Date: July 26, 1980 City, State: Waterloo, IA 50701