

FIELD REPORTS - SUMMER 1985

Francis L. Moore

Details of Identification

Western Sandpiper        2        7-13-85        Forney Lake, Fremont Co. - WRS-SD

Two of the small peeps behaved a little differently from the other peeps that were at Forney's that day. They were not reddish brown like Least Sandpipers and had a fairly clear breast with a little streaking on the sides of the neck with a few dark streaks on their sides below the wing. There was some reddish coloration on the scapulars (not very much but still noticeable.) These two birds fed in somewhat deeper water than the other peeps there. The at times were in water deep enough that it touched the wing and fed with their heads completely under the water for quite a while at a time, this being a characteristic of Western Sandpiper behavior according to knowledgeable birders I associated with while in Virginia. The other peeps did not come close to getting into as deep water as these two birds did.

Short-billed Dowitcher 5        7-14-85        Forney Lake, Fremont Co. -WRS-SD

These five birds were still in alternate plumage. The breast of the birds were a cinnamon rust color with very small spots along the sides suggestive of dots, not bars as Long-billed would be. The throats of all five birds were clear of any barring or spotting and the back and scapular feathering had broad buffy-reddish edging. The time period would also suggest Short-billed vs. Long-billed Dowitcher, this being an early date even for a Short-billed Dowitcher.

Snowy Egret                1        7-14-85        Forney Lake, Fremont Co. -WRS-SD-RCe

We had been carefully looking over the small white herons (a total of eight immature Little Blue Herons were located) when someone said that one appeared to have yellow feet. Steve Dinsmore had located a Snowy Egret in the same place earlier in the day so we carefully scoped all of the small white herons and found one that was acting a little differently than the others; it was feeding a little more actively. After a little while of watching it through the scope everyone got a good view of the legs and feet. The legs were blackish color and the feet were definitely yellow as a Snowy Egret would have. The bill was more dagger shaped and blacker than the Little Blue Herons bills also.