

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species?Dunlin

How Many?1

Location?Big Creek SP-north end

Habitat?feeding on mudflat

Date?2 Dec 1986

Time?2:15-2:25 P.M.

Observers Name and address:Steve Dinsmore, Ames

Others who saw bird:none

Description of bird:The bird was feeding with several Killdeer on a mudflat near open water. The bird was smaller than the Killdeer, but much chunkier. The head, back, wings, and tail were dark gray. The belly was white. The bill was fairly long, dark, and slightly decurved. The legs were quite short and dark. I did not hear the bird. The bird appeared to be healthy and was not there on 4 Dec. The mild weather and the good habitat the bird was in probably account for the birds lateness.

Similar species and how eliminated:The dark legs and bill eliminate Purple Sandpiper, one of only a few sandpipers likely to be around this late. All other sandpipers eliminated by the size, dark legs, long, drooping bill, dark breast, and dark, unmarked back and wings.

Viewing conditions and equipment:Viewing conditions were excellent with the sky partly cloudy. Estimated viewing distance was about 50 yards. I used a Bushnell 20-45x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species:I have seen numerous Dunlin in Iowa, including a flock of 30 less than three weeks prior to this sighting. I have seen one Purple Sandpiper in Massachusetts.

References consulted:NGS Field Guide to the Birds of North America

How long before field notes were made?none made

How long before this form was completed?6 hours