

Whimbrel  
13 May 1991  
IPS Flyash Pits, Woodbury Co., IA  
\*Jerry Probst  
IBL 61:92, 62:71

Record Number: 91-10  
Classification: A-D

## DOCUMENTATION:

Jerry Probst, 1324 S. St. Aubin, Sioux City, IA 51106

## REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 61:92  
Records Committee: IBL 62:71

## VOTE: 6-A-D, 1-NA

A-D, I believe the document to be complete enough to be accepted.

A-D, Good description.

A-D, The overall brownish tint to this bird and the reddish brown crown stripe support the Hudsonicus subspecies which is expected in Iowa. Although the documentor listed the key identifying characters I would have liked to see more details such as bill color, breast and flank striping mentioned, and rump/tail color. Whimbrel has been reported to "Iowa Bird Life" only 4 or 5 times in the last 5 years, and therefore needs to be studied in detail whenever possible to determine it's true Iowa status.

A-D, Not bad for Iowa -- looking for a Garganey and find a Whimbrel.

A-D, Description of head not very complete. No mention of crown stripe. Long-billed Curlew eliminated by head pattern and body color.

NA, How big was bird? How long was bill? How long were legs? How large in relation to the peeps present? I cannot get a feel of the bird from this description. Description is too cursory and incomplete to say beyond reasonable doubt that the bird was indeed a Whimbrel.

A-D, Adequate details noted for a distinctive bird.

## REVOTE: 6 A-D, 1 NA

A-D, I get a clear picture in my mind of a Whimbrel when I read this documentation. I don't think any other birds besides curlews could be described as having dramatically downcurved bills. I read the description without identifying the bird to two other birders and both said Whimbrel.

A-D, While I agree with NA that more details would have been desirable, the description provided points to Whimbrel. The only other shorebirds with strongly decurved bills are Curlews. These, with the possible exception of Eskimo, do not have the strongly marked head of the bird here described.

A-D, The viewing time (1 hr), distance (50 yds), and equipment (20x scope) solidify the field marks. The large size compared to Pectoral Sandpiper makes this a dowitcher, yellowlegs, or curlew sized bird. The radically decurved bill makes it a curlew type. The rufous striped crown with black eye stripes make it a Whimbrel by far the most expected of the striped crowned Curlews in Iowa.

A-D, Assuming that this was a shorebird, the bill that is

decurved at the tip and head streaking are enough to indicate a Whimbrel.

NA, Really the only thing that suggest Whimbrel is a strongly down curved (decurved?) bill. Documentation noted a pattern of reddish brown stripes and a black eye line on the head but did not establish a pattern for the stripes. Size of the bird again was not established except that it was larger than peeps and pectorals somewhere (nearby? some distance away?). I cannot tell from the documentation. Can we say from this description that this bird is truly beyond reasonable doubt a Whimbrel.

A-D, While better comparison between this bird and other shorebirds would have been helpful, sufficient dtails were given to denote a Whimbrel and eliminate Long-billed Curlew and Eskimo Curlew.

## DOCUMENTATION FORM

For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

91-10

What species? WHIMBREL How many? 1Location? IPS FLYASH PITS WOODBURY COType of Habitat? OPEN POND FLYASH SHOREWhen? date(s): 5-13-91 time: 6:00 PM to 7:00 PMWho? your name and address: JERRY PROBST 1324 50 St Auburn SC. IA 51006Others with you: CAROL BOOTSOthers before or after you: NONE KNOWN

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

LOOKING FOR GARGANEY AND NOTICED LARGE SHOREBIRD WITH DE-CURVED BILL ON OTHER SIDE OF LEVEE. SET UP SCOPE. NOTICED HEAD PATTERN OF REDDISH BROWN STRIPES + A BLACK EYE LINE. THE BILL WAS STRAIGHT AT BASE AND THE FIRST 1/2 THEN IT DOWNCURVED DRAMATICALLY. THE OVERALL COLOR WAS FAIRLY UNIFORM. BROWN + WHITISH STREAKING A LITTLE DARKER DORSALLY. IT HAD DARK LEGS. SIZE WAS DIFFICULT TO TELL BUT THERE WERE ~~PEEPS~~ (SEMIPALM, WESTERN) AND PECTORALS THAT INDICATED THE LARGE SIZE OF THIS BIRD. DID NOT FLY + DID NOT SEE WING LININGS.

Similar species; how eliminated: LONG BILLED CURLEW - HEAD PATTERN  
ESKIMO CURLEW - SIZE + BILL SHAPE + SIZE  
ALL OTHER SHOREBIRDS DON'T HAVE RADICAL DECURVED BILL.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? No  
If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.

SUNNY 50 YDS ESTIMATE

20mm eyepiece on vision ultra scan 80

Previous experience with species and similar ones: HAD ONE THE SAME PLACE 5-7-89

References and persons consulted before writing description: N.G. FIELDGUIDE

went through field guide monka as I was reviewing  
How long before field notes made? \_\_\_\_\_ this form completed? 5-16-91

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).