

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
13 Oct 1995
Casey Barrow Access, Des Moines Co., IA
*John Rutenbeck, *Chuck Fuller
IBL 66:21, 97

Record Number: 95-43
Classification: NA

DOCUMENTATIONS

John Rutenbeck [3/24/96]
Chuck Fuller [3/24/96]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 66:21
Records Committee: IBL 66:97

VOTE: 1 A-D, 6 NA

NA, Possibly correct identification but details rather general and vague. Was this an adult or juvenile? Some pectorals can be quite buffy, have very distinct rufous caps, and pale supercilliums. To accept a record of this species, which is very similar to Pectoral Sandpiper, I would need a more detailed description.

NA, This bird may have been correctly separated from the very similar Pectoral but I'm not sure we have enough to go on. My biggest concern is that we have some rather subjective evaluations re. eye stripe, buffiness of breast, and extent of bib that are dependent upon close, detailed view. My recollection of Casey Barrow is of a distant sand bar where a close view might be difficult. Information on this was not included in the documentation.

NA, The bill shape and coloration is not mentioned by either documenter. The white supercillium is noted, but the shape is not described. Juvenile Pectoral is not eliminated.

NA, The time is good for Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, but it is also good for thousands of Pectorals. My first question relates to the age of the bird. Juvenile Pecs may show a good deal of buffiness. The description of the breast sounds somewhat like a Sharp-tail but there is not enough detail to be sure. Both Sharp-tailed and Pectorals can show a strong superciliary, and although there are some differences, it is not described to make any judgment. The dark brown cap leans more toward Pectoral as Sharp-tailed is rusty.

NA, The findings are suggestive, but the distance involved is great based on my own experience. I saw a lot of Pectorals this fall with prominent eyelines, dark caps, and pale breast with faint streaking. Pectorals vary a lot, so it is easy to overcall a sharp-tailed. I would require a close view.

NA, Top of head should be redder color not just darker, many Pectorals have darker cap, some quite reddish in color. No mention by either observer of shape of white superciliary. Lots of Pectorals have a well defined white superciliary. The description of these two field marks not detailed enough to say for sure if this is a Sharp-tailed. To me Pectoral not completely ruled out.

A-D, Not the most detailed description, but adequate.

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

95-43

What species? SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER How many? 1

Location? SANDBAR IN MISSISSIPPI R. AT CASEY BARROW ACCESS, 10 MILES N. OF

Type of Habitat? SHALLOW WATER, SAND, LOW VEGETATION BURLINGTON

When? date(s): 10/13/95 time: 3:30 to 5:00 p.m.

Who? your name and address: JOHN RUTENBECK & CHUCK FULLER, BURLINGTON, IA.

Others with you: CHUCK SPOTTED THE BIRD AT APPROXIMATELY 3:30 P.M.

Others before or after you: JOHN SAW THE BIRD AT ABOUT 4:30 AFTER TALKING TO CHUCK

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.

THE BIRD WAS FEEDING & PREENING IN SHALLOW WATER & ON SAND. IT WAS WITH A PECTORAL SANDPIPER AND POSSESSED SIMILARITIES TO THAT BIRD. IT WAS COMPARABLE IN SIZE AND GENERAL COLORATION, THERE WAS THE DISTINCT COLORATION IN THE PECTORAL AREA, THE BUFFY BREAST. BUT THIS BIRD PRESENTED TWO DIFFERENCES FROM THE PECTORAL SANDPIPER NEXT TO IT = A DARKER CAP AND A DISTINCT WHITE EYEBROW.

Similar species; how eliminated:

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

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

KDWA TSN-2 SCOPE WITH 20-60X ZOOM (JOHN)

Previous experience with species and similar ones: NO PAST EXPERIENCE WITH SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER

References and persons consulted before writing description:

How long before field notes made? _____ this form completed? _____

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

95-43

Chuck Fuller - Appendix to J. Rutenbeck's Documentation Form on description of Bird seen at 3:10 P.M. on 10-13-95 at Casey Barrow Access in Des Moines County. Bird was seen on a sand island in Mississippi River. KOWA TSN-4 Scope with 20/60 zoom--light-sunny with sun behind.

The bird in question was feeding along the sand/grass edge of the river along with a definite Pectoral Sandpiper (Several-perhaps up to 4), and an immediate difference was apparent. Those differences were:

- 1) An over-all buffier (tanner or browner) color.
- 2) Light buffy chest that ended like a Pectoral but not a streaked-abrupt bib like Pectoral
- 3) Definite white eye brow
- 4) What appeared to be a dark brown cap on top of head.

Over-all size and shape similar to Pectoral Sandpiper.

