

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 11/20/00

Red Knot

14 Aug 1995

Rathbun Res., Appanoose Co., IA

*T. Kent, *J. Fuller

P-0462, IBL 66:20, 96

Record Number: 95-62

Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATIONS

Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City 52246

Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, Iowa City 52240 [*3/24/96]

PHOTOGRAPHS

Thomas H. Kent, P-0462 (2)

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 66:20

Records Committee: IBL 66:96

VOTE: 7 A-P

A-P, The shape, size, and dark primaries on gray bird are diagnostic.

A-P, Clearly juvenile -- legs more yellow than adults.



Red Knot P-0462
Rathbun Res., Appanoose Co., IA
14 Aug 1995 T. H. Kent 9562

< X039 19+01 RECINN-14RU 254

Red Knot P-0462
Rathbun Res., Appanoose Co., IA
14 Aug 1995 T. H. Kent 9562

< X036 19+01 RECINN-10RU 254

95-62

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Species: Red Knot; **Number:** 1 juvenile

Location: Rathbun Reservoir, Island View Area, Appanoose Co., IA

Date: 14 Aug 1995; **Time:** 6:25 to about 7:00 a.m.

Name and address: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246.

Others before/with/after: found by Tom Johnson the evening before; Jim Fuller with me.

Habitat and circumstances: sandy to mud edge of peninsula on large reservoir.

Description of bird: We spotted the bird as soon as we arrived. It was dwarfed by a Willet (about 1/3 the bulk of the Willet). We did not see it directly with other shorebirds, but it seemed larger than the Sanderlings that were farther out on the point. It was an overall gray sandpiper with black bill and dull yellowish legs. The bill was just slightly longer than the width of the head, straight, and of medium thickness. The body was chunky and legs of medium length. There was a pale, whitish line through or just on the upper edge of the eye and gray wash across breast, with otherwise pale underparts. The back, scapulars, wing coverts, and tertials were gray with fine, fresh, light edge to the wing coverts at least. There was a tiny white shot at the bend of the wing. The primaries were nearly black and extended just past the light colored tail. In flight, there was a prominent white wing stripe with dark flight feathers and some black on the upper anterior aspect of the wing (which in retrospect must have been the outer wing coverts), and the tail was uniformly pale (but not quite white). The underwing appeared all light colored. The lower back appeared almost black in flight.

Voice: A soft note was heard once when the bird flushed.

Similar species: The size was too large for a peep and bit larger than Sanderlings. Dunlin and Curlew Sandpiper would have a longer, drooped bill, and be smaller with shorter black legs.

Any one have reservations?: No.

Light: Early morning sun at our backs; **Distance:** 15 yards (est); nearly filled scope filed; **Optics:** 10x binocular; 20x scope, 410 mm camera lens.

Previous experience: Have seen many, but only 3 in Iowa.

References before/after viewing: We used the National Geographic Guide while viewing.

Time of notes: started at 6:30 and continued during viewing period; **Final typing:** 1 day.

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD

95-62

SPECIES: Red Knot

LOCATION: Island View Recreation Area of Lake Rathbun (Appanoose).

DATE & TIME: 14 August, 1995 (6:25-7:20 AM).

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240

OTHERS: Previously: Tom Johnson and Mary Montgomery. At the same time: Tom Kent.

BACKGROUND: Tom Johnson reported to the Iowa Birdline that he and Mary Montgomery had found a basic plumaged Red Knot at this location about 5PM on 13 August. Tom Kent and I arrived at daybreak the following morning, and the first bird we looked at was a Red Knot.

DESCRIPTION: The general appearance of the bird was a medium-sized gray and white shorebird which was "plump". Direct size comparison was possible only with a nearby Willet, and this bird was less than half the size of the Willet. Specifically, the head was gray streaked with a white eye strip only behind the eye. The bill was dark, tubular, and straight, with a rather blunt end, and it's length was slightly greater than the width of the head. The light gray back and folded wing had prominent white feather edging. The tail was gray and longer than the black wing tips. There was also a small white spot where the wing bends. The white underparts had some dark spotting along the sides under the wing, and there was gray streaking on the upper breast. There was also some dark barring on the sides beneath the tail. The legs were a dirty yellow.

In flight, the upperwing showed light wing stripes and a darker leading edge. The underwing was generally gray. The tail was gray, and the rump was darker than the tail.

There was only once when the bird called, a very soft single note that sounded like "whew".

SIMILAR SPECIES: Basic-plumaged Dunlin, Sanderling, and Curlew Sandpiper all are smaller, have a mostly clear upper breast, and black legs. Two of those birds also have an obvious downward bill curvature.

OPTICS & CONDITIONS: The bird was viewed at distances of 30-100 feet using both a KOWA TSN4 telescope (20-60X zoom) and Swift Audubon binoculars (8.5 X 44). The day was partly cloudy, and most of the viewing was toward the southwest, with a very low sun to the back.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: I have seen 1-2 birds of this species four times previously in Iowa, and on the east coast have seen large numbers, in various plumages

REFERENCES & FIELD NOTES: Field notes were prepared in the car immediately after viewing, and no field guide was used until after notes were complete, when National Geographic was viewed the same evening. This form was typed on 16 August.