

Red Knot
16 Sep 1984
Coralville Res., Johnson Co., IA
*M. Newlon, *T. Kent, *C. Bendorf
IBL 54:113; 55:57

Record Number: 84-25
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATIONS

M. Newlon (16 September)
Thomas H. Kent (17 September)
Carl J. Bendorf (17 September)
Carl J. Bendorf (27 September)

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 54:113
Records Committee: IBL 55:57

VOTE: 7-II

II, Good description.
II, Well described, in tremendous (and interesting) detail by
Newlon.

What species? Red Knot, juv. How many? 1Location? Sand Point, Hawkeye WA Johnson CoType of habitat? mudflatWhen? date(s): 9-16-84 time: _____ to _____Who? your name and address: M Newton 408 Wales Iowa City 52240others with you: ✓others before or after you: ? after TK CJB JF CJB Knight

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

See attachedSimilar species and how eliminated: Build, pale rump + colon pattern, feather pattern on back/corsets distinctive.Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? —

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
20-70 yds. 25X60 scope. Sun behind observer.Previous experience with species and similar ones: seen many knots on E. coast. also nearly all NAm Calidrids.References and persons consulted before writing description: NONEHow long before field notes made? during obs this form completed? 9/18

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

Red knot, imm. 1 Coralville reservoir, Johnson Co. Iowa, 9-16-84.

Location: mudflat at mouth of a marshy creek just to the west of the base of Sand Point, at the Hawkeye Wildlife Area.

Size and proportions: Bird was slightly longer than an adjacent Stilt sandpiper but much bulkier -- kildeer sized, with a large head, short thick neck, long straight bill, thick at base, and short legs. Short legs due to very short tarsus. Although larger and longer stood shorter than Stilt. Wings very long. Long wings, short neck gave it a very horizontal stance.

Description: Overall coloration grey: medium grey above, pale whitish below. Upper parts: forehead, crown, nape, back, uniform grey, finely streaked with darker grey; scapulars, wing-coverts, tertials grey with dark shaft-streaks and pale margins, a fine dark border at inner edge of pale margin. Face greyish, paler than crown; prominent white supercilium, narrow anterior to eye, wider behind it; indistinct dark line through eye. Throat paler than face or breast and without apparent streaking. Breast with a grey wash, thickly marked with fine indistinct streaks. Sides also marked, anterior marks vertical chevrons, dwindling to dots posteriorly. Side markings heavier, darker, more clean-cut than breast markings, separated from the lower edge of breast-markings by a pale unmarked area just below the bend of the wing. Belly and undertail coverts appeared pale and unmarked. Primaries long, extending beyond tail-tip, blackish; lower border of bend of folded wing also blackish. When bird spread wings, rump appeared paler than back, whitish, and there was a very indistinct pale greyish wingbar. Tail pattern not observed well.

Behavior: when first observed, associating with a juv. Stilt sandpiper, walking on mudflat about midway between the dry edge and the edge of the water. Gait rapid but slower than that of Stilt; would take about ten steps, peck at mud, then walk on. Only one other bird on the flat at that time, a juv. Buff-breasted sandpiper. When Stilt moved to water, Knot followed; in water gait changed to shorter quicker steps; probed twice, then retreated to mud. Later moved back into water, belly-deep, and began to feed Stilt-fashion, making 5-6 sewing-machine-like probes, then moving on. While probing the bill was immersed to the base but the head was not submerged. Moved to mud at edge of water, stood, preened; Stilt moved away. A juv. Sanderling mover around point onto the flat but there was no apparent interaction. When 6 Pectoral sandpipers swept over flat and settled the Stilt flushed but the Knot did not. It moved towards them but did not join them; the Pectorals moved to the water's edge and began to feed and the Knot moved away from the edge to the drier central part of the flat. While I had my attention on my notes something flushed the bird and it flew farther out the flat, to about the same position at which it had stood while preening, and stood motionless for the rest of the time I had it under observation.

Conditions of observation: range varied between estimated 20-100

84-25
NWH

yards. Good sunlight at an angle of about 80-120 degrees to the bird. Optics used were a 25x60 Bushnell scope and 8x40 Leitz trinovid binoculars.

Identification: No other calidrine sandpiper likely to be found in Iowa combines the coloration, size, and proportions of the Knot. The only species that combine the overall grey coloration and the heavy straight bill are Sanderling, much smaller, and Willet, much larger and longer-legged, with blue-grey rather than black bill and legs. The other shorebirds that are remotely similar are the Tattlers, which have more slender bills and paler legs; basic-plumaged Surfbird, which has a shorter, thicker bill, yellow at base, pale legs, and less-distinct face-pattern (but similar pattern on coverts/scapulars/tertials); Great knot, which is supposed to lack a distinct supercilium, have round black spots on chest and flanks, black upperparts, a longer, more slender bill.

Notes describing the sighting were made while the bird was under observation. They were collated to make this account 9/25. No references were consulted until the writing of the immediately preceding paragraph, when Prater et al., Guide to the Identification and Aging of Holarctic Waders, Cramp et al., Birds of the Western Palearctic, vol. 3, and Armstrong, Guide to the Birds of Alaska, were consulted for the marks ruling out the palearctic species discussed above.

What species? Red Knot How many? 1Location? Sand Point, Coralville Res., Johnson Co., IowaType of habitat? mudflatsWhen? date(s): 17 Sep 1984 time: 6:55 Am to 7:25 AmWho? your name and address: Thomas H. Kentothers with you: Tom Staudt, Jim Fuller, Cal + Bernie Knightothers before or after you: Mike Newlon

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

An all gray sandpiper. Size of a killdeer, perhaps slightly smaller, definitely shorter legged. Thin, moderate sized black bill. Slight hint of an eyeline. Generally grayish overall with whiter underparts. Upper chest seems to have a gray band, almost bib-like. White-gray underparts, but not nearly as white as killdeer. The upper parts are all gray, very light white edging to wing feathers. When the bird lifted its wings, it had a distinct midwing stripe, fairly narrow; tail light-colored gray and perhaps barred - not a good look. The leg color appeared light, perhaps yellowish or gray-yellow. Slight fine streaks on flank - very indistinct. Dark tentacles - darker than rest of upperparts. Wing stripe not seen in standing bird, but quite evident when wings lifted. Fine detail of rump not seen, but definitely white-gray. Distal tail slightly darker. " The bird walked and ran along the mudflat with a flock of Sanderlings. It fed in shallow water for awhile.

Similar species and how eliminated: Most similar in color to Stilt Sandpiper, but legs and bill much shorter and long stripe more pronounced. The shape was closer to a Pectoral.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
Early morning light coming from behind viewer. 75 yds (est). 20x scope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: have seen on East Coast.References and persons consulted before writing description: Looked at several field guides the day beforeHow long before field notes made? dated while viewing. this form completed? 5 days.

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

84-25

BIRD DOCUMENTATION FORM

CARL J. BENDORF
825 7TH AVENUE
IOWA CITY IA 52240

SPECIES: RED KNOT

NUMBER: 1

LOCATION: Coralville Reservoir (Babcock Lake) COUNTY: Johnson

DATE: 27 September 1984

TIME: 5:05 PM TO 5:15 PM

HABITAT: Mudflats and small grassy islands at edge of reservoir.

DESCRIPTION: Bird was feeding alongside Black-bellied Plovers. As it picked and walked along the shore I noted the following:

2/3 the size of the plovers, posture much more horizontal. Overall grayish bird with medium length legs and bill, both dark. Legs and bill were similar proportionally to that of a Pectoral Sandpiper. Solid light gray back with distinct light feather edgings. Tail and tip of folded wing blackish with small area of white showing just in front of dark of folded wing tip. Breast lightly streaked with soft gray in pattern like a Pectoral without as sharp a demarcation. Belly whitish with a bit of dark streaking on flanks. When bird flew I saw a narrow white wing stripe and noted the gray rump and tail.

SIMILAR SPECIES--COMMENTS: Bill length and gray rump eliminate dowitchers. Nearby Pectorals were brown, not gray and had yellow legs and no wing stripe. Plovers were upright with shorter stubby bills and black axillaries.

AGREEMENT/DISAGREEMENT OF OTHERS: NONE

LIGHT CONDITIONS: Overcast, but good light.

DISTANCE: 40 to 100 yds (Estimated) EQUIPMENT: 20 X Scope

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILAR SPECIES: Certainly was the same bird I studied 1 mile away and ten days earlier. Have seen winter birds in CA., and spring birds in FL.

REFERENCES, PERSONS CONSULTED BEFORE WRITING DESCRIPTION:
NONE

FIELD NOTES MADE? 5 minutes

THIS FORM DONE? 2 days.

84-25

BIRD DOCUMENTATION FORM

CARL J. BENDORF
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SPECIES: **Red Knot** NUMBER: 1
LOCATION: Coralville Reservoir (Sand Point) COUNTY: Johnson
DATE: 17 September 1984 TIME: 8:45 TO 9:00 AM

HABITAT: Extensive muddy edge to reservoir with some small marshy margin and sandy shore.

DESCRIPTION: Size of a very large Pectoral, which it superficially resembled in general shape and proportions. Was next to a Lesser Yellowlegs and compared to it was very stout and chunky with a horizontal posture. The legs were proportionally half as long as the yellowlegs. The bill was black and of medium length, a bit longer proportionally than that of a Pectoral and was tapered and very slightly downcurved. A lighter superciliary stripe.

Bird was a gray/white color. The back was fairly solid gray with narrow neat lighter feather edgings. Tail and folded wing tip were much darker. Upper breast lightly spotted/streaked with soft gray. Extent of breast markings like a Pectoral but without sharp demarcation. Some light streaking on flanks and a whitish belly.

The legs were dark. When bird flew, noticed a definite white stripe on the gray wings. Did not notice the tail pattern.

The feather edgings would suggest this to be a juvenile bird.

SIMILAR SPECIES--COMMENTS: Dowitchers eliminated by bill length. Pectoral eliminated by gray color and wing stripe. Plovers would have shorter stubby bill, wing stripe, horizontal posture.

AGREEMENT/DISAGREEMENT OF OTHERS: Tom Staudt was present and in agreement. Was seen and identified a bit earlier by Tom Kent, Jim Fuller, and Cal & Bernie Knight.

LIGHT CONDITIONS: At first, about 75 yards into somewhat unfavorable light. Later approached to within about 25 yards with bright sun at back, but bird flushed quickly.

DISTANCE: 25-75 yards (Estimated) EQUIPMENT: 7X35 Binos, 20X Scope

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILAR SPECIES: Very familiar with Pecs and plovers. Have seen winter Red Knot in California and spring birds in Florida.

REFERENCES, PERSONS CONSULTED BEFORE WRITING DESCRIPTION: NONE

FIELD NOTES MADE? 5 minutes.

THIS FORM DONE? 6 days.