

Snowy Plover  
13 May 1992  
Riverton Area, Fremont Co., IA  
\*M. & B. Proescholdt  
IBL 62:76, 63:69

Record Number: 92-19  
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Mark Proescholdt/Beth Proescholdt, Box 65, Liscomb, IA 50148  
(6/30/93)

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 62:76  
Records Committee: IBL 63:69

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D, Despite some differences in the description, I believe this is the same bird as 92-18.

A-D, I agree that Semipalmated is eliminated, and that this is either Piping or Snowy. Call and absence of white rump supports identification as Snowy. Supportive is the presence of unmistakable adult at same location three days earlier.

A-D, The small black bill, central dark tail, and whistle are strong marks for this species. A basic-plumaged bird at this date strikes me as unusual. The field guides (NG, Peterson, Robbins) all indicate that the sexes are alike in breeding plumage, although NG shows slightly more brownish head and neck marks on the female. Hayman et al. (Shorebirds), Prater et al. (Guide of the Identification and Aging of Holarctic Waders), and Chandler (North American Shorebirds) all show a sex difference and Hayman illustrates geographic variation in this world-wide species better known as Kentish Plover. We learn that the bird in question had "no black or dark markings on its crown, neck, or ear patch." Does this mean that it had markings or not? Hayman illustrates *Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus* (USA, Caribbean) with the areas that would be black in the male as concolor with the rest of the upperparts in the breeding female. I conclude that the bird seen by the Proescholdts was most likely a breeding plumage female.

A-D, Dark area through upper tail coverts on this pale colored plover is diagnostic for this species.

A-D, Details provided for a non-breeding plumaged Snowy Plover.



What species? Snowy Plover - (Non-breeding Plumage) How many? 1

Location? Riverton Wildlife Area - (Fremont Co.)

Type of habitat? Huge mudflat area and lots of water

When? date(s): May 13, 1992 time: 3:00 p.m. to 3:03 p.m. approximately

Who? your name and address: Mark and Beth Proescholdt, Box 65, Liscomb, Iowa 50148

others with you: none at that time

others before or after you: Jim Fuller, Jim Scheib, Tom Kent, Armstrongs,

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.

(No one saw the bird. I'm all of others)

We were walking the mudflats to get closer ~~to~~ to the south end and flushed this bird from the grassy area far from the water's edge. It flew to the water calling a high musical whistle. In flight it showed a brown stripe down through the middle of the tail. It was the size of a Semipalmated Plover. I got it in the scope right away. It had a definite small black bill and was the shape of a small plover. It was all light brown and white in coloration. It had no black or dark markings on its crown, neck, or ear patch. The bird was standing in some water and leg color could not be seen. I noticed a light brown ear patch. Mom and I took turns looking in the scope and at books. All of a sudden it flew off as other shorebirds were flying and we never saw it again. We and Armstrongs looked until after 6:30 p.m. for it.

Similar species and how eliminated: A non-breeding plumaged Piping Plover would be the only bird that could be similar. A Piping Plover has a conspicuous white rump in flight and a distinctive call—a "peep-lo" which was different from the high musical whistle which we heard. A Semipalmated Plover would be much too dark brown in color.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

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

Sun behind us. 20' away when flushed and 30 yards away in water — estimated. 8X30 Binocs and 22X Scope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen breeding-plumaged Snowys once and breeding-plumaged Pippings fairly often but none like this.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Natl. Geog. guide, Robbins' guide, R.T. Peterson's guide, and Shorebirds book.

How long before field notes made? Mom made notes this form completed? May 31, 1992

right after viewing —  
I added notes a bit later.