

Ruff

26 May 1991

1.5 mi. nw of Bayard, Greene Co., IA

*R. Myers, *Maridel Jackson

IBL 61:92, 62:70

Record Number: 91-11

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATIONS:

Robert K. Myers, 1479 K Ave., Perry, IA 50220

Maridel Jackson, 410 S.W. Westview Dr., Ankeny, IA 50021

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 61:92

Records Committee: IBL 62:70

VOTE: 7-A-D

A-D, Eloise and I were present when this bird was being observed. We studied this bird for several long minutes, from many different angles. We felt satisfied with the identification and Bobs document seems to cover the bird thoroughly.

A-D, Convincing description of size, shape, and tail which eliminate other species and an excellent drawing. It seems extremely unlikely that any partially albino shorebird would also have all the characteristics of a Ruff described in this documentation.

A-D, I agree with R. Myers that the most convincing feature is the wide white outer tail edges, this is diagnostic in all plumages according to NG. NG also shows a breeding plumage male with a white ruff, which this bird seems to be in the late stages of moult too. In addition, bill shape, head size, body proportion, and leg color make this an easy A-D vote for me.

A-D, Excellent details of size, shape, and tail, which eliminated other species. I, too, looked through several books trying to find a picture that approximated the plumage of this bird, and I, too, failed. Nevertheless, very convincing. Excellent description and drawing by Myers.

A-D, Excellent description of an unusual plumaged bird. Everything in these documentations is consistent with Ruff and beyond doubt on this one.

A-D, Great descriptions and documentations! The Rough Ruff Drawing was very good and helpful. I would have loved to see the plumage of this bird.

Iowa Ornithologists' Union

91-11

Documentation of Extraordinary Sight Record

Species: Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*)

Number: 1

Location: approx 1½ miles northwest of Bayard, Iowa

Date: May 26, 1991

Time: We watched from about 3:00pm to 3:45pm
and left bird there

Habitat: Flooded field

Distance: Approx. 150 yds (eyeball guess)

Optical equipment: KOWA Scopes 20x - 60x

Light: Bright mostly overcast day - we were viewing
to the east - sun was to our right - slight breeze

Other Observers: Gene + Eloise Armstrong and
Walt + Maridel Jackson.

Behavior: The bird was feeding with many dunlin
and a few lesser yellowlegs. Feeding pattern
was a methodical pecking.

Books used: We used most of the standard guides
to try to make some sense out of this critter,
but of my library the best information probably
come from Shorebirds by Peter Hayman.

Description: I first noticed this bird as we were scanning a bunch of dunlin and this bird "stuck out." I immediately suspected a ruff but we spent a lot of time trying to figure what else it might be.

Size & Shape -: The bird was about the size of a ~~tax~~ lesser yellowlegs (also present) but was of different proportions. The body was too heavy (chunky) for a yellowlegs - being more dowitcher like.

The neck was fairly long - more so than a dowitcher but maybe a little shorter than lesser yellowlegs.

The head was definitely small for the size of the bird. The legs were also fairly long ^(Knobby knees) and again probably a little shorter than a lesser yellowlegs. These basic proportions helped at once to eliminate many species.

Color: This is where it really gets weird. The bird's head and upper neck were very tawny (similar to buff breasted sandpiper) The lower neck (sides and nape) and mantle was ~~an~~ unmarked white. The throat, breast and greater wing coverts were grayish brown. Some light feather edging was noted in ~~the~~ wings. The primaries and flanks were more brown and less grayish. The belly and under-tail coverts were whitish.

Eye - appeared dark - hint of line thru the eye.

Bill - About medium build (not thin or heavy). It was tapered and about as long as the bird's head. Appeared dark in color.

Legs - Dull yellow - not bright like yellow legs.

Tail - This is the one feature along with the basic shape that convinced me. On several occasions the bird would fly a short distance from one part of the pool to another. One flight gave me an excellent view of the tail from behind. The tail showed very large white areas on each side extending from the belly and undertail coverts to a dark terminal band ~~and~~ at the end of the tail. A brown strip extended from the back thru the rump to ~~the~~ the terminal band. The rump and tail were, therefore, white-sided. The brown strip down the center of the tail was probably less than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the width of the tail.

Conclusion: If the bird would have had no color at all I still would have called it a ruff from the proportions. Ruff plumage is variable to say the least. Hayman in

Shorebirds tells of a plumage sometimes (rarely) worn by non-breeding males that closely resembles this one.

It is most interesting to note that in 1986 on a Spring IOU Meeting field trip a number of ~~of~~ us (many) found a very similar bird just west of Boyard. This bird had white all the way around the neck and breast. IT was feeding with dowitchers and we dubbed it a "hampshire dowitcher". We suspected a breeding male ruff but very long viewing distance, extremely strong winds and impossibility of getting closer left the ID up in the air. We drove away in despair. It's seldom you get a second chance at something like this so when this year's bird appeared it was truly dejavu.

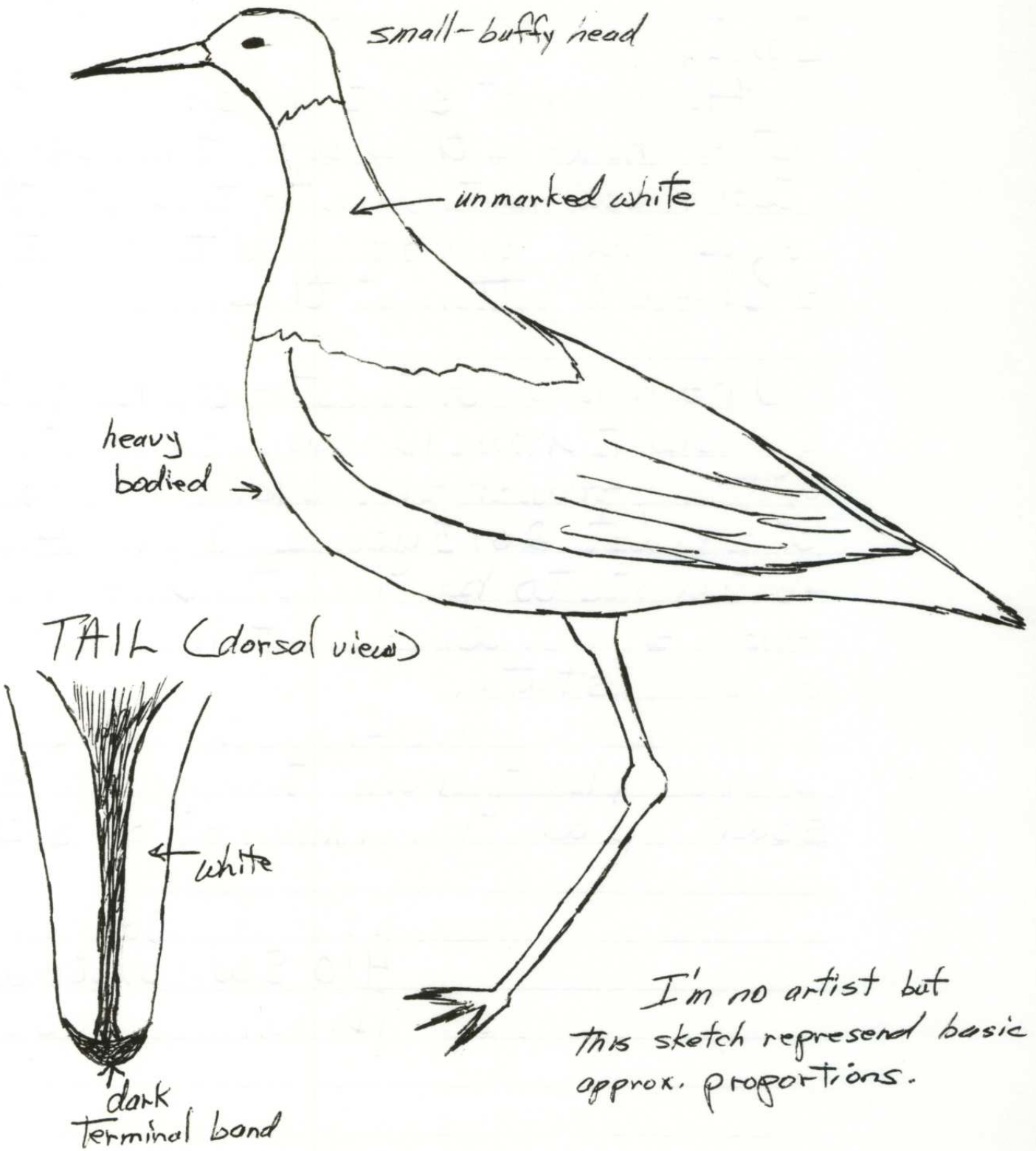
Robert K. Myers 5-31-91

1479 K Ave.

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Rough Ruff Drawing

Ruff - page 5
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11-19
11-11

prison
BFT
Bondy

11-11

6-2-91

Coyle,

Have not seen this component -
either help - this won't be very
technical but due to the court
I should attempt this.

I have been in contact with the servers
which have been in contact with
the court much more for the last 2 or 3 years.
I am sure to be sure - a similar
case seen in the state -

to have, but I am sure that the
scrap up all the information for a case.

410 S.W. 2nd Street
D. I.

11-19
11-11

Ruff
Observed May 26, 1991
Sunday afternoon

Other's present were Bob Myers,
Eugene and Eloise Armstrong
and my husband Walt
was also with us.

The bird was wading and feed-
ing in a large sheet water
area NW of Bayard (1 1/2 Miles
prox). The water was on the
east side of gravel road.

Other species nearby were numerous
dunlins, pectoral sandpipers,
buff-breasted sandpipers, a
greater yellowlegs and various
other peeps.

This bird was obviously larger
than the dunlins and somewhat
bigger than nearby sandpipers.
It appeared a bit smaller than
yellowlegs and was definitely
heavier built. Its legs were long,

appeared somewhat heavy (thick) jointed and bent as bird fed. They appeared yellow-orange in color. (light wing was SW of us but distance was fairly great).

Its head seem small for its full, plump body. Its bill was about as long as head size and had a slight droop. Side of face and bill closest to face appeared buffy, top of head grey.

The most notable difference was a fairly wide, white neck ring that went completely around ^{neck}. However it did not seem as distinct under neck area which was light like its belly but not as extreme white. These white feathers seemed to be fairly flat like its other feathers, not really puffed up. They did not appear

to extend down into its back area which was a grey-brown, somewhat darkish.

Only scoped it once, briefly, in flight. It appeared fairly light on its underside and tail had large white areas.

We observed this bird for quite a long time from several locations along the road and field-water.