

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 11/20/00

Red Knot

29 Sep 1995

Saylorville Res., Polk Co., IA

*Stephen J. Dinsmore, *Chris Edwards

also 30 Sep, 1, 3 Oct; IBL 66:20, 96; Dinsmore 1996

Record Number: 95-42

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATIONS

Stephen J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames 50014 [3/24/96]

Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Ave., North Liberty 52317 [3/24/96]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 66:20

Records Committee: IBL 66:96

Dinsmore, S. J. 1996. Red Knots at Saylorville Reservoir. IBL 66:114-115.

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D, juvenile.

A-D, Would we find more Red Knots if we looked in Sanderling habitat? (Breeding and winter ranges are virtually identical).

The mantle was entirely pale gray. The folded primaries appeared dark gray to black. The bill was black, about the length of the head, and had a stout, tubular appearance. The bird made several short flights, during which I noted the pale wing stripe contrasting with the dark upperwings and the dark tail. At a distance, the bird appeared so pale that it might easily have been overlooked as a Sanderling. Based on the mantle pattern and lack of any buffy wash on the neck and underparts, I concluded the bird was an adult in basic plumage. However, it is possible the bird was a juvenile that had already completed the molt to basic plumage. This bird remained in this area through 26 October and was seen by several others.

These are the seventh and eighth records of Red Phalarope in Iowa. There are four previous records from Saylorville Reservoir: 30 September-3 October 1988 (Dinsmore and Engebretsen 1989), 4 August 1991 (Dinsmore 1992), 25-30 September 1991 (Proescholdt 1992), and 26 October 1991 (Proescholdt 1992). The other two records are from 8-9 November 1992 at Rathbun Reservoir (Kent 1993) and 25, 29 November 1994 at Spirit Lake (Gordon Brown, pers. comm., Schoenewe 1996).

LITERATURE CITED

- Dinsmore, S. J. 1992. A second Red Phalarope at Saylorville Reservoir. *Iowa Bird Life* 62:86-87.
- Dinsmore, S. J., and B. Engebretsen. 1989. Red Phalarope at Saylorville Reservoir. *Iowa Bird Life* 59:19.
- Kent, T. H. 1993. Red Phalarope at Rathbun Reservoir. *Iowa Bird Life* 63:82.
- Proescholdt, M. 1992. Two more Red Phalaropes at Saylorville Reservoir. *Iowa Bird Life* 62:87-88.
- Schoenewe, L. A. 1996. Red Phalarope at Spirit Lake. *Iowa Bird Life* 66:111-112.

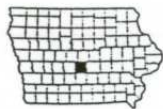
4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014

RED KNOTS AT SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE

On 1 September 1995 I observed a Red Knot with a group of about 100 shorebirds on a distant mudflat at the north end of Saylorville Reservoir in Polk County. I watched the bird at a distance of 300-400 m from 8:55-9:10 a.m. The bird was larger, stockier, and shorter-legged than several Lesser Yellowlegs and Stilt Sandpipers with which it was feeding. The bill was straight, thick, and about the same length as the head. The legs appeared dark at a distance. The underparts were white and appeared unmarked. The mantle and head were gray, similar to the color of a basic-plumaged Sanderling. When feeding, the wings appeared darker than the upperparts. The bird made two short flights. In flight, the bird appeared nearly uniform pale gray except for darker primaries and a pale rump. Since the underparts appeared very white and unstreaked, I concluded that the bird was probably an adult in basic plumage.

On 29 September 1995 I was birding the same area when I noticed a larger shorebird with a small flock of Sanderlings. I watched the bird from 7:45-8:20 a.m. and identified it as a juvenile Red Knot. This bird was about half again as large as a



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Sanderling with a similar stocky, short-legged appearance. The legs were dull yellow-green, but sometimes appeared dark. The bill was black, of medium length, and straight. The head and upperparts were light gray except for a faint, pale supercilium and pale edges to the feathers of the mantle. The underparts were whiter with a pale gray wash to the upper breast and some faint gray streaking on the breast and flanks. The vent was white. The tail was dark on the distal half, while the uppertail and rump were paler and barred with dark gray. In flight, the outer primaries were darker than the rest of the wing and there was a pale stripe along the base of the flight feathers. This bird remained here through at least 3 October and was seen by numerous birders.

There are about 15 previous records of Red Knots in Iowa, all but two since 1984. Most records are of juveniles in August and September. There are two other records from Saylorville Reservoir: three adults from 5-6 August 1986 at Oak Grove Beach (Dinsmore, S., *IBL* 57:24, 1987) and two juveniles from 3-6 September 1989 at Sandpiper Beach (*IBL* 60:14).

4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE IN POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY

BABS AND LOREN PADELFORD

On the morning of 24 September 1995 we were birding Lake Manawa in Pottawattamie County when we found a Black-legged Kittiwake sitting on the water about 25 yards off the west shore. We watched it from 10:30 to 10:45 a.m. During that time, it remained in the water, but moved out toward the middle of the lake. We returned later, but, at first, could not find the bird. After a few minutes, it flew to the same area where we had seen it that morning. We observed it from 6:15 to 6:20 p.m., this time from as close as 15 yards.

The bird was a medium-sized gull, approximately the size of a Ring-billed Gull. It appeared to be molting from first alternate to second basic plumage. The mantle was light gray, about the shade of a Ring-billed Gull. There were faint carpal bars on the inner portion of the upper wing. The outer primaries appeared black. The crown, forehead, face, and nape of the neck were white. There were dark gray smudgy ear patches connected by a lighter gray band across the back of the head. The notched tail was all white except for a thin black terminal band. The bill was almost completely yellow except for a hint of a very thin black outline at the base. The legs were short and black. There were no bands on the legs.

We again saw the bird and photographed it on 26 September. It was sitting on a rock on the west shore of the lake. During this observation the bird was much closer than on the 24th, and we noticed it had dark eyes.

On one occasion, the kittiwake was seen sitting on the railing of the fishing dock on Boy Scout Island southeast of the original location. Usually it was seen near the west shore. It was also reported on 28 September, 1 October, and last on 2 October.

The Black-legged Kittiwake was also photographed by Tom Kent and Jim Fuller, and observed by many Iowa and Nebraska birders. This individual was both the oldest bird of this species documented in Iowa and also the record earliest date (*IBL* 66:21-22, 1996).

1405 Little John Rd. Bellevue, NE 68005

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DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species: Red Knot
Number: 1 juvenile
Location: Saylorville Res., Polk Co.
Habitat: large mudflat at north end of reservoir
Date: 29,30 September and 3 October 1995
Time: 7:45-8:20 a.m. on the 29th
Observer: Stephen J. Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA 50014
Others who saw bird: m.ob.

Description of bird(s): I was watching a small flock of Sanderlings when I noticed a larger shorebird in their midst. This bird was about half again as large as a Sanderling with a similar stocky, short-legged appearance. The legs were dull yellow-green, but sometimes appeared dark. The bill was black, of medium length, and straight. The head and upperparts were light gray except for a faint, pale supercilium and pale edges to the feathers of the mantle. The underparts were whiter with a pale gray wash to the upper breast and some faint gray streaking on the breast and flanks. The vent was white. The tail was dark on the distal half, while the uppertail and rump were paler and barred with dark gray. In flight, the outer primaries were darker than the rest of the wing and there was a pale stripe along the base of the flight feathers.

Similar species and how eliminated: Sanderling was eliminated by size and wing and tail patterns, all of which were compared directly in the field. No other shorebird is likely to be confused with this species.

Viewing conditions and equipment: Viewing conditions were good, although the bird was a good distance away. Estimated viewing distance was 250-300m. I used a 20-60x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species: I have extensive experience with this species from North Carolina. I have also found several in Iowa since 1984.

References consulted: none

How long before field notes made: none made

How long before this form completed: written 5 October 1995

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DOCUMENTATION FORM FOR IOWA BIRD SIGHTINGS

Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Avenue, North Liberty, IA 52317

What Species? Red Knot

How many? 1

Location? Saylorville Reservoir (Jester Park), Polk Co.

Type of Habitat? Muddy sandbars in reservoir.

When? October 1, 1995, 3:15 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

Who? Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Ave., North Liberty, IA 52317.

Others with you: James Huntington, Chris Caster

Others before or after you:

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.

Approximately one-fourth larger than nearby Sanderlings. Short-legged, very plump sandpiper. Bill straight, thick, black, and relatively short. White supercilium. Crown and upperparts plain gray. Tips of folded primaries black. Underparts whitish. Legs greenish. While flying, it was larger and darker overall than nearby Sanderlings, with no bold light or dark markings.

The bird associated with a flock of twenty Sanderlings. It was seen actively feeding along the shoreline and flying between several sandbars.

Similar species; how eliminated: Dowitchers have a much longer bill, longer legs, and a darker back. Stilt Sandpiper has a longer neck, much longer legs and a longer, drooping bill. Willet is much larger and has boldly patterned underwings. Dunlin is smaller and has black legs and a longer, drooping bill.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification? No.

Viewing conditions: Full sunlight, 300 - 1000 yards away. Viewed with 8 x 40 binoculars and 15x - 60x telescope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: None with Red Knot; familiar with regular Iowa shorebirds.

References and persons consulted before writing description: National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America.

How long before field notes made? Three hours.

How long before this form completed? Three hours.