

Lazuli Bunting
16 May 1986
Martin-Little Sioux R. A., Cherokee Co., IA
*Marion Brewer
IBL 56:91; 57:98, Brewer 1986

Record Number: 86-03
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Marion M. Brewer

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 56:91
Brewer, M. M. 1986. Lazuli Bunting in Cherokee County. IBL
56:96.
Records Committee: IBL 57:98

Vote: 7-III

'III, Nine of 11 previous reports listed in Iowa Birds are also from May, and five of these are from NW Iowa so time and place is perfect for this record. An experienced birder under good conditions (four minutes at 30 yards with spotting scope!) have yielded a very good description. Feeding along edge with Indigo Buntings sounds very typical for Lazuli Bunting.'

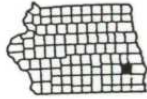
'III, An expected finding at this location and date with good description by experienced observer.'

'III, Description of color and size adequate to eliminate any other species.'

'III, Good description. Time, place, company, and circumstances perfect. Obviously a migrant group of Indigo Buntings.'

'III, Peculiar. Molting male Indigo Bunting can look odd, but one would not expect one to look just like a Lazuli, as described.'

LAZULI BUNTING IN CHEROKEE COUNTY



MARION M. BREWER

The afternoon of 16 May 1986 was cool and cloudy with a promise of rain. Not wanting to stay indoors, I proceeded to the Martin-Little Sioux Recreation Area, a 170 acre park on the east side of the Little Sioux River that is 4 miles east and one-half mile south of Larrabee. The park has a wide variety of habitats with a large amount of hardwood forest and three pine plantings of about five acres each. Near the east edge of the park, I pulled off to look at 6 male Indigo Buntings feeding on the roadway. At first I thought a bluebird had joined them, but the white wing bars told me I had a new bird for my life list. Through my telescope, mounted on the car window, I observed that the bird was the same size as the Indigo Buntings with a bright, almost iridescent, medium-blue head, two white wing bars (top one wider), cinnamon colored chest, white belly, and much darker wing and tail. The buntings appeared to be feeding on dandelion seeds. The road in this section of the park runs along the main timber with honeysuckle hedge on the other side of the road. On the way out, I had to put my windshield wipers to work.

RR 2, Box 25, Cherokee, IA 51012

The IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. IOWA BIRD LIFE and I.O.U. NEWS are quarterly publications of the Union.

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Summary of Review of an Ornithologic Observation
by the Records Committee
of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union

SPECIES: *Lazuli Bunting*
DATE SEEN: *16 May 1986*
SITE OF OBSERVATION: *Martin-Little Sioux R. A.*
OBSERVERS: *Marion Brewer*
DATE OF REVIEW: *9-1-86*
METHOD OF REVIEW: *Vote via mail*
CLASSIFICATION OF RECORD: *III*
COMMENTS: *Vote: 7 III*

The date, location, company and circumstances for this sighting were perfect - just what we would look for and expect. Add to this an experienced observer, favorable viewing conditions, and a good description and the record easily passed the Record Committee's vote.

The opinions expressed here are based on the information available to the Committee and should not necessarily preclude an alternate interpretation by those who observed the bird firsthand.

Any action may be re-reviewed upon submission of additional evidence.

Explanation of Classification:

- I = labeled, diagnostic specimen, photograph, or recording available for review by the Committee
- II = acceptable sight record documented independently by 3 or more observers
- III = acceptable sight record documented by 1 or 2 observers
- IV = probably correct record, but not beyond doubt
- V = record with insufficient evidence to judge
- VI = probably incorrect identification, escapee, or otherwise unacceptable record

Classification is based on the highest category agreed upon by six of seven committee members.

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

86-03

What species? Lazuli Bunting How many? 1Location? 4 east of LarrabeeType of habitat? edge of hardwood forestWhen? date(s): May 16 1986 time: 3:32 PM to 3:36PMWho? your name and address: Marion m. Brewer rr #2 Cherokee, Ia. 51012

others with you: _____

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

In a flock of 6 male indigo buntings that were feed on a roadway that runs between a hedge row the main timber. This male Luzuli bunting was the same size as the indigo buntings. At first glance was reminded of a male blue bird. The head was of bright medium blue, back and wings darker blue with black. White wing bars with top bar wider than the other. Cinnamon breast, white belly, Rump was blue, medium colored conical bill.

The birds were feeding on the ground at the roads edge, I thought they might be feeding on dandy lion seeds.

Similar species and how eliminated: Blue bird (white wing bars)

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? _____

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
Cloudy day, viewed with a 15 X 345 power spotting scope at a estimated distance of 30 yards.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: none

References and persons consulted before writing description: Audubon, Peterson, and national geographic.

How long before field notes made? At the time this form completed? 4 hours

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