

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 11/24/00

Chestnut-collared Longspur
12 Apr 1997
Grover's L., Dickinson Co., IA
*Schoenewe, *Ed Thelen
P-0555, IBL 67:92, 68:86

Record Number: 97-24
Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATIONS

Lee A. Schoenewe, 518 W. 4th St., Spencer 51301 [*10/1/97]
Ed Thelen, 15362 250th Ave., Spirit L. 51360

PHOTOGRAPH

Ed Thelen, P-0555 (IBL 67:92)

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 67:92
Records Committee: IBL 68:86
Field Notes 51:879, 1997, P-0555

VOTE: 7 A-P

A-P, Nice photograph! I'm glad somebody got longpurs out of that storm.

more than ever before." In addition, 4 counts along the Chicago lakefront exceeded five birds each (the peak was nine May 18; JL), and three Clay-coloreds wandered E to Ohio, where they were all seen May 10 (the easternmost at H.B.S.P.; LRo, RHn, EB). Chicago's now famous overwintering **Brewer's Sparrow** was last seen Apr. 25 (JL). The Vesper Sparrow requires close attention; numbers were deemed only fair in Ohio (LRO), and in Illinois this species was described as rare across the state (PC). Le Conte's Sparrows were reported in all 4 n. states; one ranged eastward to Bay Village, OH, where it was discovered May 5 (LRi, †TF et al.). Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were restricted to the w. reaches of the Region, with several reported at Dewy's Pasture, Clay, IA, May 18-19 (S. Fairbairn, *vide* JDi), one at S.C.R. May 20 (DE), and five in Illinois. The latest Sharp-tailed was seen in Chicago June 11 (JPu). A Lincoln's Sparrow was documented in Jax.P. on the exceptionally early date of Mar. 25 (†PC), and a phenomenal 106 Lincolns' were counted on the Chicago lakefront May 8 (DS). Another impressive Chicago lakefront tally involved 185 Swamp Sparrows at Grant Park May 8 (DS). In Chicago, a white-lored White-crowned Sparrow (probably *Z. l. gambelli* based on bill color) was seen May 18-21 (JO). A Harris's Sparrow lingered in Dickinson, IA, until May 31, establishing an all-time late departure date, and another appeared at a Wilmot, OH, feeding station

May 8 (PS, m.ob.). Most remarkable was Indiana's 2nd **McCown's Longspur**. This well-described bird was found n. of Hollandsburg, IN, Feb. 19 (†ABu), within 200 yards of the site at which the state's previous record was made. The Region was awash with Lapland Longspurs in mid-March. The peak count consisted of 20,000 at Harrier Marsh, IA, Mar. 15 (SD), and that state had 8 reports exceeding 1000 birds. Farther east, a distinct diurnal flight occurred Mar. 21, when hawk watchers counted 2700 at Maumee Bay S.P., OH (ES), and 1770 at Johnson Beach, IN (KB, JMc). It was a good spring for Smith's Longspurs, with peak counts of 200 in Arcola, IL, Mar. 22 (RCh), 85-100 at Rosecrans Airport, Buchanan, MO, Apr. 16 (MRo), and 23 in Parke, IN, Apr. 12 (ABu). Thirteen Chestnut-collared Longspurs (seven males and six females) were seen at Rosecrans Airport, MO, Apr. 16 (MRo). Chestnut-collared Longspurs were also found in n.w. Iowa, with two breeding-plumaged males in Fremont, Apr. 12 (†B&LP); 16 seen in O'Brien Apr. 10 (†DKo); a male in Lyon Apr. 11 (†DHk); and a single male in Dickinson Apr. 12 (†LS, †ET, ph.).

Bobolink numbers were low in Illinois and Indiana, but counts exceeding 100 birds were made in Kentucky and Ohio. Four E. Meadowlark reports came from n.w. Iowa, where this species is unusual (TK). Extralimital Yellow-headed Blackbird reports included a male in Nobel, IN, May 3-4 (L&NC, TH), plus 4 reports from w.

Ohio. Rusty Blackbirds lingered, providing several May records; the latest involved a female in Evanston, IL, May 18 (JE). The eastward Great-tailed Grackle march continued, with numerous reports from Iowa and a count of 20 in Columbia, MO, where this species nested in 1996 (PMc).

The winter finch flight consisted of a modicum of Purple Finch; the peak count was 31 at Mammoth Cave N.P., KY, Mar. 16 (P&JB.). Small numbers of Red Crossbills were reported in every state except Ohio; the peak count was 10 (no date given) at Chautauqua N.W.R., IL (S&RB, SC). Despite the near absence of Pine Siskins across the Region, recently fledged young were detected at Annie Leich's feeder, n. of Glenwood, IA, May 25 (*vide* TK).

CORRIGENDA

In the Fall 1996 report (AFN 51:62-67), the sentence on p. 64 that begins, "The Region's first **Kelp Gull** . . ." should be replaced by the following:

SA On Oct. 19, a black-backed gull, believed to be a third-winter **Kelp Gull**, was found on a L. Michigan beach at the Migrant Trap, IN (†KB, †JDu, †m.ob., ph, video). This site is only one kilometer from the Illinois state line. The gull was seen again at this location the following morning (RHu, †RCh), and at the Gary sanitary landfill Oct. 26 (RHu et al.), but not thereafter. To date, slides of the bird perched bird (but not the video) have been critically examined by two birders with extensive southern hemisphere Kelp Gull experience. One evaluator, familiar with this species in Australia and New Zealand, felt the bird was a fairly typical third-year Kelp Gull. The other, whose experience was in South America, suggested that the gull was most likely a Kelp Gull, but noted that the molt sequence and jizz were not typical for Chile and Argentina birds. If the identification is confirmed, this will constitute the Region's first Kelp Gull record.

Contributors cited (subregional editors in boldface):

Cindy Alberico, Renee Baade (RBa), Emil Bacik, Susan Bagby, Tom Bartlett (TBa), Pat & Jane Bell (P&JB), Cindy Bencheck, Robert Bezouska (RBz), Richard Biss (Rbi), David Bohlen (DBo), Sigurd & Richard Bjorkland (S&RB), Mike Bowers (MBo), Marion Brewer (MBR), Arlene Brei (ABe), David Brooks (DBr), Ken Brock, Joan Bruchman, **Alan Bruner** (ABu) (Indiana), Todd Bugg (TBu), William Buskirk, **Fred Busroe** (Kentucky), Jim Campbell (JCb), Dennis Carter (DCa), Laura & Neil Case (L&NC), Lee Casebere, John Cassidy (Jcd), John Castrale (JCs), Hap Chambers, Robert Chapel (RCh), **Paul Clyne** (Illinois), Dona Coates (DCo), Scott Cohrs, John Cordell (JCo), Myrna Deaton, Tim DeverSteve Dilks (SDI), James Dinsmore (JDi), Stephen Dinsmore, David Dister, Jon Dunn (JDu), David Easterla, Josh Engle, Peter Erzen, Joey Fahey (JFa), Vic Fazio, Clyde Fields, Bob Fisher, Darlene Fiske, Todd Forsgren, Matt Fraker, James



After snows in April, scarce migrant Chestnut-collared Longspurs were foraging along exposed roadsides, making them temporarily easier to find. This male was in Dickinson County, Iowa, on April 12, 1997. Photograph/Ed Thelen

- Dickcissel:** First: 3 on 10 May in Appanoose Co. (RLC).
- Eastern Towhee:** First: 4 on 29 Mar at Croton Unit (CE).
- Spotted Towhee:** Last: 19 May at Hidden Bridge A. in Lyon Co. (THK)[ties latest]. Other May reports were from Woodbury Co. on the 16th (AMJ) and Clay Co. on the 10th (LAS). One at Riverton A. on 5 Mar (SJD) may have wintered. April records were from Carroll, Greene, and Story counties.
- American Tree Sparrow:** Last: 5 on 20 Apr at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).
- Chipping Sparrow:** First: 1 Apr at Liscomb (BPr). High count: 150 on 15 May in flocks along the road at the base of the Loess Hills in Fremont Co. (THK). On 19 May, 31 were on a driveway in Shenandoah (MT, JB). The migration appears to have been late and more evident than usual.
- Clay-colored Sparrow:** First: 1 May at Clive (PJW). Last: 20 May in Hardin (MPR) and O'Brien (THK) counties. High count: 34 on 10 May in Clay Co. (LAS). There were more reports and I personally saw more than ever before. Although the greatest numbers were in western Iowa, there were 7 reports from eastern Iowa.
- Field Sparrow:** First: 29 Mar in Monona Co. (PE).
- Vesper Sparrow:** First: 4 Apr in Sioux Co. (JV). On 13 Apr, after the snow storm, 21 were noted in Appanoose Co. (RLC) and 30 in Johnson Co. (THK).
- Lark Sparrow:** First: 1 May in Poweshiek Co. (MPR).
- Savannah Sparrow:** First: 20 Mar at Snake Creek M. (SJD).
- Henslow's Sparrow:** All: 12 Apr in Appanoose Co. (RLC)[3rd earliest].
- Le Conte's Sparrow:** First: 28 Mar at Harrier M. (SJD, JSi). Last: 16 May in Woodbury Co. (AMJ).
- Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow:** All: several on 18, 19 May at Deweys Pasture in Clay Co. (Steve Fairbairn fide JJD).
- Fox Sparrow:** First: 4 Mar at Davenport (PCP). Last: 19 Apr at McFarland P. in Story Co. (PWW).
- Lincoln's Sparrow:** First: 12 Apr in Appanoose Co. (RLC). Last: 31 May at Spring Run W.A. (LAS)[record latest]. Other late birds were in Mason City on 30 May (CJF)[ties 2nd latest] and 29 May at Dugout Creek (ETH).
- White-throated Sparrow:** Last: 29 May at Decorah (DeC).
- White-crowned Sparrow:** Last: 17 May at McFarland P. (PWW).
- Harris's Sparrow:** Last: 31 May at Spring Run W.A. (LAS)[record latest]. Another was late on 30 May at Oak Grove P. in Sioux Co. (JV)[ties 2nd latest]. High count: 45 on 12 May at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK). This species was seen in many locations in western Iowa in mid-May and at a few locations in eastern Iowa.
- Dark-eyed Junco:** Last: 29 Apr at Pine L. (MPR).
- Lapland Longspur:** Last: 90 on 20 Apr at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK). High count: 20,000 on 15 Mar at Harrier M. (SJD). There were 8 reports of 1,000 or more from mid-March to mid-April as well as many other reports from all areas of the state.
- Smith's Longspur:** All: 2 on 28 Mar in Carroll Co. (SJD), 31 on 11 Apr in Warren Co. (AB-photo), 1 on 26 April at Tomahawk M. in Sac Co. (PE), and 5 on 27 Apr at Union Slough N.W.R. (*MCK).
- Chestnut-collared Longspur:** All: 16 on 10 Apr east of Sutherland in O'Brien Co. (*DK), 1 on 11 Apr northwest of Larchwood in Lyon Co. (*DHe), 2 on 12 Apr near Percival in Fremont Co. (*LJP/BKP), 1 on 12 Apr in SW Woodbury Co. (WFH), and 1 on 12 Apr at Grover's L. in Dickinson Co. (*LAS, *ETH-photo).
- Snow Bunting:** Last: 14 Mar in Hardin Co. (MPR). High count: 800 on 1 Mar in Dickinson Co. (LAS).
- Bobolink:** First: 29 Apr at Kettleston Hogsback A. (DCH).
- Red-winged Blackbird:** High count: 25,000 on 13 Mar at Otter Creek M. (SJD).
- Eastern Meadowlark:** First: 10 on 8 Mar in Lee Co. (SJD). Four reports from northwestern Iowa were quite unusual: In western Sioux Co., 1 was heard and seen next to a Western Meadowlark on 17 Mar, a first county record for John Van Dyk. At Copp Prairie in Kossuth Co., 2 were singing on 27 Apr (MCK). At Gitchie Manitou State Preserve in the extreme northwestern corner of Iowa, 1 was heard on 19 May (THK). In Dickinson Co., north of the Okoboji golf course, 1 was heard on 29 May (LAS). On the breeding bird atlas study (Jackson et al. 1996), Eastern Meadowlarks were present in each of these counties except for Sioux County.
- Western Meadowlark:** The first was singing in Sioux Co. on 17 Mar (JV).
- Yellow-headed Blackbird:** First: 12 Apr at Harrier M. (JJD) and Fomey L. (BKP/LJP). By 18 Apr, 23 were at Dunbar St. (RTh), which is early.
- Rusty Blackbird:** Last: 29 Apr at Otter Creek M. (CE)[record latest].



Chestnut-collared Longspur, Grover's Lake, 12 April 1997. Photo by Ed Thelen

- Brewer's Blackbird:** All: 1 female on 6 Apr at Goose L. in Clinton Co. (PCP), 1 female on 13 Apr near Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK-details), 5 males on 13 Apr with buffalo near Benedict in Kossuth Co. (MCK), 16 males and 2 females on 20 Apr at Spring Run W.A. (LAS-details).
- Great-tailed Grackle:** First: 16 Mar at Dunbar St. (SJD). Many were reported from the following counties: Boone, Calhoun, Clay, Dickinson, Fremont, Greene, Guthrie, Monona, Pottawattamie, Tama, and Warren.
- Common Grackle:** 1 wintering at a feeder in Sioux Center stayed until 8 Mar (JV).
- Orchard Oriole:** First: 3 May at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (JLF). Others were from Allamakee, Jefferson, Johnson, and Warren counties. Birds in western Iowa are not usually reported.
- Northern Oriole:** First: 5 May at Liscomb (BPr).
- Purple Finch:** Last: 9 May at Ames (JJD). There were only 6 reports from 9 Mar to 9 May, which fits the general impression that they were scarce.
- Red Crossbill:** All: 2 on 19 Mar near Polk City (SJD), 1 on 21 Mar at Jester P. (SJD), up to 14 at Ida Grove from 13 Apr to 10 May (PE), 4 on 2 May at Ames (Dave Edwards fide HZ), and 6 on 27 May north of Glenwood (THK, RIA-photo).
- Pine Siskin:** All: 1 or 2 in Mar and 1 on 2 May at Sioux Center (JV) and 2 on 27 May at the feeders of Annie Leich north of Glenwood (THK) and a fledged young there on 25 May (Annie Leich fide THK).
- Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** All: at Muscatine, 1 on 18 Apr (THK) and 2 on 13 May (FL) and 10 in Louisa Co. on 10 May (PCP).

COMMENT

The data comprised 35 reports and 35 documentations (of 18 species). I made 1,520 entries into a computerized database, which is 25 percent less than last spring. Perhaps the decrease was due to fewer birding days due to the cold April and May.

The documentations were of high quality, and a number of rare birds were documented by individuals who are not regular reporters. It is nice to see an influx of active younger birders. I would put 9 in that category (although it is all relative), with many from northwestern Iowa, an area of the state that used to have few contributors to the Field Reports. I recommend late-May birding in northwestern Iowa.

The two new books on Iowa's birds (*Birds in Iowa* by Kent and Dinsmore and *The Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas* by Jackson et al.) were useful to several observers and in writing this report. There were a surprising number of new early and late dates, and many of these were carefully noted by contributors. The maps in both books were useful in identifying new county records. For example, I could tell that the Eastern Meadowlark that I heard at the extreme northwestern corner of Iowa was not unprecedented.

CONTRIBUTORS (* = documentation only)

Reid I. Allen (RIA, photos), West Des Moines; Jean M. Braley (JMB), Shenandoah; Aaron Brees (AB), Corydon; Marion M. Brewer (MMB), Cherokee; Dennis Carter (DeC), Decorah; Robert I. Cecil (RIC), Des Moines; Raymond L. Cummins (RLC), Centerville; David L. Dankert (DLD), Cedar Rapids; James J. Dinsmore (JJD), Ames; Stephen J. Dinsmore (SJD), Ames; Chris Edwards (CE), North Liberty; Peter Ernzen (PE), Ida Grove; Carolyn J. Fischer (CJF), Mason City; James L. Fuller (JLF), Iowa City; Rita Goranson (RGo), Mason City; Douglas C. Harr (DCH), Larchwood; *Kevin Healy (KH), Ames; *Lisa Hemesath (LH), Ames; Dennis Henrikson (DHe), Estherville; *Nelson R. Hoskins (NRH), Ottumwa; *James Huntington (JH), Iowa City; William F. Huser (WFH), South Sioux City, NE; Ann M. Johnson (AMJ), Norwalk; Jack Jones (JJ), Sioux City; Matthew C. Kenne (MCK), Algona; *Kenn Kaufman (KK), Tucson, AZ; Thomas H. Kent (THK), Iowa City; *Darwin Koenig (DK), Paullina; Fred Leshar (FL), La Crosse, WI; Paul W. Martsching (PWW), Ames; *Ellen S. Montgomery (ESM), Mason



Chestnut-collared Long P-0555
Grover's L., Dickinson Co., IA
12 Apr 1997 Ed Thelen 97-27

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DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species How many? CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR - 1 ♂
 Location? - 1/4 MILE SOUTH OF GROVER'S LAKE, DICKINSON COUNTY
 Type of habitat? GRAVEL ROAD AFTER SNOW STORM
 When? date(s): 4/12/97 Time: . 10:35 - 10:50 AM
 Who? your name and address

LEE A. SCHOEENEWE 518 W 4th ST. SPENCER, IA. 51301

Others with you GARY GRANGE

Others before and after you

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also describe voice and behavior. SPARROW-SIZED BIRD THAT LANDED ON THE GRAVEL ROAD ALONG W/ 2 HORNED LARKS JUST AHEAD OF THE VEHICLE. IMMEDIATELY NOTICED THE BLACK BREAST AND BELLY. THERE WAS A WHITE SUPERCILIARY LINE THAT SET OFF A BLACK CROWN AND A BLACK LINE FROM THE EYE TO A CHESTNUT PATCH ON THE NAPE OF THE NECK. IN THE SCOPE, A BUFFY GOLD THROAT PATCH COULD BE SEEN. THE BIRD FLEW AHEAD SEVERAL TIMES AND EXTENSIVE WHITE ON THE SIDES OF THE TAIL FORMED A DARK TRIANGLE TO THE ~~BASE~~ TIP OF THE TAIL.

Similar species and how eliminated:

- OTHER LONGSPURS - DARK BELLY & FACE PATTERN

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: DAYLIGHT; 60-100 YDS; 8X40 BINOCULARS
 20X SCOPE

Previous experience with this species and similar ones:

BREEDING BIRDS IN S. DAKOTA + LAKELAND LONGSPURS IN WINTER

References and persons consulted before writing description:

PETERSON EASTERN FIELD GUIDE

How long before field notes made? IMMEDIATELY

this form completed? 24 HOURS

Mail original form to field editor for this season.

What species? Chesnut-collared Longspur How many? 1 ♂Location? 1st curve south of Grover's Lake BOAT RAMP - DickinsonType of habitat? Gravel Road - open fields adjacentWhen? date(s): 4-12-97 time: 11:45 AM to 12:45 pmWho? your name and address: Ed Thelen - 15362 250th Ave Spirit Lake IA 51360others with you: _____others before or after you: Lee Schoenewe, Gary Grange, Lavonne Foote

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 photo)

Approximately 11:00 AM left a message on my answering machine that L. Schoenewe and G. Grange had discovered a ♂ chesnut-collared longspur near Grover's lake. I immediately grabbed my camera and headed out. This was around 11:30 AM. As I drove past the curve where it was reported I flushed a small dark sparrow-sized bird from the side of the road. As it flew I noticed some white in the tail. I turned around and within 10 minutes it flew back to the side of the road and began to feed. Its belly was black - from the lower chin to the lower belly with splotchy black on the sides. Its lower nape was a deep chesnut color with its head black except for 2 white stripes - one below the eye and one above.

Similar species and how eliminated:

Lupland Longspur
doesn't have black belly

the eye. When the bird fed, it stayed in one spot pecking at the ground. It didn't crawl around and eat on the run like luplands.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

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

good 30 yards

Sw: FT binoculars
camera - 400 mm lens w/2xPrevious experience with species and similar ones: I've seen luplands before

References and persons consulted before writing description:

How long before field notes made? same day this form completed? 1 monthMAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240