

Chestnut-collared Longspur  
12 Mar 1983  
southeast of Hills, Johnson Co., IA  
\*C. Knight  
IBL 53:55; 54:39

Record Number: 83-18  
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Calvin A. Knight (documentation, notes, and copy typed by  
Secretary of Records Committee)

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 53:55  
Records Committee: IBL 54:39

VOTE: 6-III, 1-IV

III, good description.

IV, Need all parts observed.

III, Fairly good description of male Chestnut-collared  
Longspur. I have no doubt of identification though documentation  
is sketchy.

III, Plumage description seems fine--head markings would  
eliminate a melanistic Lapland Longspur or something similar.

REVOTE (at meeting, Oct 1983): no change in the vote.

## Summary of Review of an Ornithologic Observation

by the Records Committee

of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union

SPECIES: CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR

DATE SEEN: 12 Mar 1983

SITE OF OBSERVATION: Johnson County

OBSERVERS: C. Knight

DATE OF REVIEW: 1983

METHOD OF REVIEW: Mailing to Committee

CLASSIFICATION OF RECORD: III

COMMENTS: While the description provided was not entirely complete (not all parts of the plumage were described), the Committee felt that the details provided were complete enough to eliminate any other possibilities (such as partly melanistic Lapland Longspur, etc). This was a generally well-written documentation of a species that, along with Smith's Longspur, may well prove to be regular in small numbers in Iowa.

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 OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

(copied from handwritten form for readability by T. Kent 6/20/83)

Chestnut-collared Longspur 1  
 Johnson Co., Iowa--2 mi. East of Hills & 5/10 mi. so.  
 Soy-bean stubble field.  
 March 12, 1983 5:40 PM to 5:50 PM  
 Calvin A. Knight, 425 Lee St., Iowa City, Ia.  
 (others with you): Bernardine M. Knight

\*See attached Field notes.

Bird was walking and feeding in field with both Lapland & Smith's Longspurs. At times both these species were in the scope at the same time with this bird, making it easy to compare the three species except for the tail pattern which I could not pick up while the bird was on the ground. Size appeared to be similar altho this bird had perhaps a more delicate appearance than the others. Leg color could not be determined nor could I separate its voice from the others.

(similar species): Lapland & Smith's Longspurs were in field of scope--close proximity--at same time making comparison easy.

(viewing conditions): Overcast day with light fading.  
 60'-70'--about width of roadway beyond fence. 8x40 binoculars & 15-60 power scope at 15 to 20 power.

(previous experience): None! a first sighting.

(references): A Field Guide to the Birds--Peterson

(notes/form): 45 min 24 hr.

\*3-12-83 35 (degrees)

5:30 PM overcast

Soy bean stubble field

Field with several hundred Smith's Longspurs & many Lapland Longspurs. Using a (window?) mounted scope--15 power--I was studying a small cluster of Lapland Longspurs @ 60'-70' from car when I caught one bird with sharply different facial features: The chin and throat were yellowish to white (.) the solid dark chest--not black--with dark continuing under belly. Cheek was mostly white with dark eye stripe & white stripe over eye from mandible to rusty neck collar. Rusty neck collar about 1/2" wide from cheek and dark chest over neck but not extending up over head--head dark.

Back was streaked and appeared darker than the Lapland Longspurs. Studied bird for perhaps 10 minutes but tail was low in stubble and could not establish any tail pattern. However, when bird flushed for the split second that it was in the scope there was a flash of white on the tail similar to the Smith's Longspur. The Laplands showing very little white as they fly. No noticeable wing bars. Both Bernie and I feel certain that this bird was a Chestnut-collared Longspur.

1 mile east of Sand Road on F62 (Hills Road) & 5/10 mile south on Johnson Co. gravel road.

(signed): Cal Knight

What species? Chestnut-collared Longspur How many? 1Location? Johnson Co., Iowa - 2 mi. East of Hills & 5/10 mi. So.Type of habitat? Soy-Bean Stubble FieldWhen? date(s): March 12, 1983 time: 5:40 PM to 5:50 PMWho? your name and address: Cabrin A Knight, 425 Lee St., Iowa City, Ia.others with you: Bernardine A Knight

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.

See attached field notes

Bird was walking and feeding in field with both Lapland & Smith's Longspurs. At times both these species were in the scope at the same time with this bird, making it easy to compare the three species except for the tail pattern which I could not pick up while the bird was on the ground. Size appeared to be similar although this bird had perhaps a more delicate appearance than the others. Leg color could not be determined nor could I separate its voice from the others.

Similar species and how eliminated: Lapland & Smith's Longspurs were in field of scope - close proximity - at same time making comparison easy

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? -

If yes, explain: -

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

Overcast day with light fading  
60' - 70' - about width of roadway beyond fence

8x40 binoculars & 15x60 power scope @ 15 to 20 power

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

None! a first sighting

References and persons consulted before writing description:

A Field Guide to the Birds - Peterson

How long before field notes made? 45 min this form completed? 24 hr.

3-12-83 35°

5:20 pm - Overcast

Long Bean Stubble Field

Field with several hundred Smith's Longspurs & many Lapland Longspurs using a Uds mounted scope - 15 power - I was studying a small cluster of Lapland Longspurs a 60'-70' from car when I caught one bird with sharply different facial features:

The chin & throat were yellowish to white & the solid dark chest - not black - with dark continuing under belly. Chest was mostly white with dark eye stripe & white stripe over eye from mandible to rusty neck collar. Rusty collar about 1/2" wide from chest & dark chest over neck but not extending up over head - head dark.

Beak was checked and appeared darker than the Lapland Longspurs. Studied bird for perhaps 10 minutes but tail was low in stubble and could not establish any tail pattern.

However, when bird flushed for the split second that it was in the scope there was a flash of white on tail similar to the Smith's Longspurs. The Lapland's showing very little white as they fly.

No noticeable wing bars

Both Dennis and I feel certain that this bird was a Chestnut Collared Longspur

Ed Wright

1 mile East of Sand road on  
FG2 (Hills Road) & 5/10 mile  
south on Johnson (Gravel) road