

## Painted Bunting

6 Jan 1987

Bettendorf, Scott Co., IA

\*P. Petersen, \*A. Barker

IBL 57:57, 58:76, P-0218

Record Number: 87-06  
Classification: A-E

## DOCUMENTATIONS

Peter C. Petersen

Ann Barker

## PHOTOGRAPHS

P. Petersen, P-0218

## REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 57:57

Records Committee: IBL 58:76

VOTE: 2-I-P, 2-III, 1-V, 1-VI, 1-no vote

III, I hope the photographs are conclusive, because notes were not written for five hours or four days after the observation. For a potential first state record, this is not very encouraging. The only question is whether this bird was a naturally occurring vagrant. There is a male of this species at a feeder in Nebraska at just about this same time. I heard about it on a rare bird alert, so don't know the details or outcome of that record.

V, Adult males have same plumage year around, although it may not be attained until second winter. Midwest (NE, MN, WI, IL, IN, MI, ONT) records are distributed as follows: 5 in Apr, 12 in May, 2 in Jun, 1 in Sep, 1 in Oct, 2 in Nov. East Coast records (NB, ME, NH, MA, RI, NY, NJ, PA, MD, VA) are distributed as follows: 4 in Jan, 5 in Apr, 28 in May, 3 in Aug, 2 in Sep, 1 in Oct, 2 in Nov, 4 in Dec. Bent describes how males were easily caught and common as cage birds. Roberson says it has been illegal to hold these birds since the early seventies. Almost all Nov-March birds have been present several days to several weeks. The date of this sighting and fact that the bird did not stay around are very unusual. The plumage does not argue one way or another. The first Iowa record, although undescribed, is a better record because the date and location argue against an escapee and the competent observers could hardly misidentify it.

no vote, I have no doubt what was seen and described was a Painted Bunting. The descriptions are not even close to anything else. I tend to look at this record as a possible escapee rather than a highly likely winter vagrant. This species is colorful enough and adaptable to caging that this possibility cannot be ruled out, especially in mid-winter. This species should be 1000+ miles south of Iowa at this time of year. Since Scott Co. is not a great migrant trap like the East Coast tends to be I am extremely cautious about the origin of this particular bird.

VI, I have no doubt that the bird was a painted bunting but I need more input on vagrancy patterns of this species at this unlikely time of year. The bird may have been an escaped bird to be here in Jan.

I-P, I have seen photo. While possibility of escape exists, there is precedent for vagrancy in this species. I believe this is a record of a wild bird. However neither observer addressed

this issue.

III (I-P with photos), Bizarrrre. Only real question is whether  
it might perhaps be an escape.

REVOTE (at meeting, 30 May 1987, with photos): 4-I-P, 2-V,  
1-abstain

DOCUMENTATION FORM  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

87-06

P6

What species? Painted Bunting ♂ How many? 1

Location? 1213 Broadlawn, Bettendorf, F. Scott Co. IA.

Type of Habitat? urbanyard near woods

When? date(s): 6 Jan, 1987 time: 8:00 AM to ~~9:15~~ 9:15 AM

Who? your name and address: Peter C. Petersen, 235 McClellan Blvd, Davenport, IA 52801

Others with you: Betty Hunt, Ann Barker Gil Sandvick, Brian + Corey Blevins

Others before or after you: before-Leah Levin-

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.

Fairly small finch, smaller than nearby House Sparrows slightly larger than siskins, same general shape as House Sparrows, throat, breast, belly + under tail as well as rump + lower back bright red-orange more to red than orange. Remainder of head bright blue like top of head of Indigo Bunting except eye ring red-orange. Back + upper wing coverts yellow-green. Wings + tail brown. Bill conical, grey, lighter on lower mandible, legs dark grey. Not heard. Worked below niger feeder and sat in + below nearby bushes. Associated with McCardinals. See photos.

Similar species; how eliminated: Nothing is similar in any way.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? no  
If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment. Bird within 15-18';  
Sun from right + 10X40 binoculars, 5X + 20X lenses

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen frequently in Texas + Oklahoma.

References and persons consulted before writing description: none needed.

How long before field notes made? 5 hrs this form completed? 5 hrs.

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).

DOCUMENTATION FORM  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

87-06

What species? Painted Bunting - male How many? 1

Location? 1213 Broadlawn, Bettendorf, Ia.

Type of Habitat? Under and in vicinity of backyard feeder - in nearby bushes

When? date(s): Jan 6, 1987 time: 9 AM to 9:15

Who? your name and address: Ann Barker, Rl 3, Box 190, Davenport, Ia

Others with you: Pete Petersen, Brian & Cory Blevins, Leah Levin, Betty Hunt, Gil Sandrick

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.

Gaudy songbird - approx. the size of a Song Sparrow or Purple Finch. Finch-like bill. Head blue, with red eye ring. Breast, belly & rump all bright red. Back chartreuse-green. Wings and tail brownish with hint of green. Fed on ground beneath feeder; flew to rest in bushes or on ground 15-20 feet from feeder.

Similar species; how eliminated: \_\_\_\_\_

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? No  
If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.  
Cloudy, but decent light. Seen through window at distances of 10-30 feet.  
Leitz 10x40 binoculars

Previous experience with species and similar ones: None

References and persons consulted before writing description: Nat. Geog. Guide, Peterson & Robbins field guides

How long before field notes made? (4 days) 1-10-87 this form completed? 1-10-87

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).