

Chestnut-collared Longspur
30 Mar 1985
Hendrickson M., Story Co., IA
*P. Martsching

Record Number: 85-09
Classification: NA

based on tail, error on date in IBL; IBL 55:70; 56:44

DOCUMENTATION

Paul Martsching

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 55:70
Records Committee: IBL 56:44

VOTE: 3-III, 4-IV

IV, Needs discussion. Can bird be identified by tail pattern alone? I have been fooled by white on laplands.

IV, In view of the poor conditions another field mark would have been desirable.

IV, The one field mark (tail pattern) may be diagnostic but considering the apparently bad weather and lighting I don't believe McCown's could be completely rule out.

IV, What about Pipits? They have much white in tail borders. Time of year and call also suggest pipit.

III, Acceptable, but not great--depends heavily on tail pattern which was well seen at close range. Also heard.

III, Terrible viewing conditions except that the bird was close. Tail pattern only. Tanya Bray and I had trouble at first in Nebraska distinguishing tail patterns of Chestnut-colored Longspur, McCown's Longspur, and the larks and sparrows, though we got better fast. He implies he could compare the tail pattern with the other two species, though.

85-09

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

SPECIES: Chestnut-collared Longspur

DATE SEEN: 30 March 1985

SITE OF OBSERVATION: Story County

OBSERVERS: Paul Martsching

DATE OF REVIEW: October 1985

METHOD OF REVIEW: Committee mail vote

CLASSIFICATION OF RECORD: IV

COMMENTS: This report depended heavily on the pattern of white seen in the tail. The Committee believes that seeing the tail pattern can be difficult and sometimes misleading, and would have liked additional information on the bird's plumage to back up the tail pattern description. Weather conditions and lighting were also not perfect at the time of observation.

The possibility of a pipit was raised, and could not be satisfactorily ruled out with the information submitted, along with, of course, other longspur species.

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.

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species CHESTNUT COLLARED LONGSPUR 2. Number: one
3. Location 3 1/2 miles West of Hendricksons Marsh, Story County, Iowa
4. Date: 30 March 1985 5. Time Bird seen: abt 4 pm to _____
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field): In flock of 300 Lapland Longspurs which also contained at least 2 Smiths Longspurs. Because it was overcast with some rain & slushy snow with the wind blowing hard out of the East, they all appeared to be darkish grayish brown. Only saw one that flew up about 2-3 feet then flew a very short way - going away from me & landed. Viewed thru the 20 x 80 binoculars the dark parts of the tail 'protruded' with 'prints' into the white part as in the drawing. The viewing distance was close enuf that the white pattern was very distinct from the Smiths & Laplands.
7. Description of voice, if heard: *je-jiv is best I can describe it.*
8. Description of behavior: foraging between rows (ridges) of soybean stubble field. The ridges were 5-6 inches High & when I walked out toward them, they'd fly up
9. Habitat - general: just as I got close enuf to begin to see them between the rows.
specific: soybean stubble field
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:
Smiths Longspur - the white edges of the tail are "straight"
Vesper Sparrow - the white edges of the tail are "straight": *tail longer*



1. Distance (how measured)? 50 yds
walked
2. Optical equipment:
20 X 80 binoculars
3. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): (~~in~~ viewed from car)
overcast, some rain & slushy snow, strong east wind
4. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
Have seen MANY times in South Dakota.
5. Other observers:
6. Did the others agree with your identification?
7. Other observers who independently identified this bird:
8. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS
BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA
9. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?
2 hours

Signature

Date: 30 March 1985

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