

Dickcissel
24 Jan 1987
Davenport, Scott Co., IA
*A. Barker
IBL 57:57, 58:75

Record Number: 87-07
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Ann Barker

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 57:57
Records Committee: IBL 58:75

VOTE: 6-III, 1-no vote

no vote, Good description and not a surprising occurrence.

III, Documentation does describe winter plumage male

Dickcissel. This bird is a possibility since they are throughout Iowa in breeding season, perhaps this bird was recovering from an injury and could not make the flight south. Very good description eliminates any other species.

III, There are records of wintering dickcissels in Iowa and out to the east coast and I would think it unlikely to keep one as a cage bird. It would therefore seem likely that this is a correct ID (good description) at an unusual date.

III, Excellent description--as usual in winter, was at a feeder with House Sparrows.

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

87-07

What species? Nickcissel How many? 1

Location? on ground near feeder @ RR3, Box 190, Davenport

Type of Habitat? Short grassy area under feeder, near bushes + Scotch Pines

When? date(s): 1-24-87 time: 11:30 to 12:00

Who? your name and address: Ann Barker, RR#3, Box 190, Davenport, Ia 52804

Others with you: Bill Barker

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.

Same size and shape as House Sparrows with which it was feeding, on the ground. Food on ground was millet-cracked corn mix. Bill similar to House Sparrow. What caught my eye was the definite chestnut shoulder patches and the yellow on the face and breast. Bright yellow eye line, and yellow line back from corners of mandible. White chin; mottled black bib with white at sides of bib. Definite yellow on breast below bib. Belly whitish and clear. Back and tail were brown splattered with black; indistinguishable from House Sparrows when he was facing away from us with head obscured. Foraging behavior (ground feeding) identical to House Sparrows. Almost certainly would never have noticed him, had I not been looking at the Sparrow flock with binocs (counting for the feeder survey.)

Similar species; how eliminated:

House Sparrow - Lap. Longspur. Field marks - this bird had definite black bib, bright yellow on breast, yellow eye line, chestnut shoulders

* Will send photo if he returns. We got the camera set up in telephoto, but the bird flew when we opened the door to take the picture.

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

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

Bright sunny day; birds were in sunny spot 50-60 feet from our kitchen; seen from inside, looking east (not into sun). Leitz Trinovid 10x40 binoculars

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen many in summer

References and persons consulted before writing description: Nat. Geo. Guide, Iowa Birds

How long before field notes made? 6 hrs this form completed? 6 hrs

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