

Sprague's Pipit
10 Aug 1984
south of Sioux Center, Sioux Co., IA
Gordon Brand fide *J. Van Dyk
IBL 54:118; 55:58

Record Number: 84-31
Classification: NA

FIELD REPORT NOTE

John Van Dyk

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 54:118
Records Committee: IBL 55:58

VOTE: 4-IV, 3-V

IV, Not enough detail for me to be confident.

V, I think the Records Committee should refuse to evaluate secondhand reports without prejudice. Can we instruct (plead with) field reports editors to ignore or return such reports on accidental species to the sender? If such reports appear in print, our data base will be no better than it was in the past.

V, Leg color needs to be included for an acceptable record.

V, Not enough detail and that 2nd hand.

IV, Not familiar with observer. Details skimpy.

IV, Rather vague. Need shape of bill especially; also gait.

Description does not eliminate various sparrow species, particularly Vesper. Does not say why bird was a pipit. Date (Aug 10) also very unlikely for Sprague's Pipit.

IV, Water Pipit is successfully eliminated. I would like one line from Mr. Brand on why he thought it was a pipit and not a sparrow. Identification is likely correct but documentation is incomplete.

Mike Newlon
408 Wales Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Sprague's report

8431

10-2-3

1984 FALL REPORT

Note: After a sabbatical year in Europe, I have returned to Iowa. My thanks to Gordon Brand of Orange City for writing and submitting field reports for this area during my absence.

Weather for the period:

August and September: warm and dry
October: cool and wet
November: mild and dry, with temperatures averaging above normal.

Species list:

- Great Egret: one individual near Sioux Center, August 21.
- Geese and ducks: migration was somewhat delayed.
- Sharp-shinned Hawk: observed about 10 individuals migrating through Oak Grove State Park, western Sioux Co., September 22.
- Cooper's Hawk: two individuals were at Oak Grove State Park, September 22.
- Broad-winged Hawk: a late migrant was in Sioux Center on November 28.
- Bald Eagle: one adult near Sibley in late October; one adult and one immature at Oak Grove Park on November 24.
- Osprey: one individual was at Oak Grove State Park on September 22.
- Common Bobwhite: virtually absent.
- Shorebirds: one the whole, a disappointing migration, probably because of the dry conditions in August and September. There were fewer species in lower numbers. Of the regulars the following were present during the period: Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, and Pectoral Sandpiper. The following deserve special mention:
 - Long-billed Dowitcher: Gordon Brand found and identified one individual near Sioux Center, August 10.
 - Sanderling: one individual near Sioux Center, August 21.

- Western Sandpiper: 3 individuals arrived at Sioux Center on August 10 and stayed about a month.
- Baird's Sandpiper: only 3 individuals were observed on August 21 -- a low number compared to normal migration numbers.
- Stilt Sandpiper: small numbers were present from the beginning of the period through the middle of September.
- Franklin's Gull: excellent migrations in October.
- Common Nighthawk: very good migrations throughout September.
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird: several migrants were in Sioux Center in late August and first half of September.
- Hairy Woodpecker: doing well in the Sioux Center and Orange City areas.
- Eastern Phoebe: one was in Sioux Center on October 15.
- Olive-sided Flycatcher: one was in Sioux Center on September 3.
- Purple Martin: in August numbers were decimated, partly as a result of an earlier black fly infestation which attacked and killed large numbers of featherless young.
- Red-breasted Nuthatch: first small flock arrived in Sioux Center on October 22.
- Brown Creeper: arrived in the first week of November.
- Marsh Wren: one was in Sioux Center on September 11.
- Sedge Wren: three individuals were found, observed, and positively identified by Ken Hollinga and Dan Rankeing along an abandoned railroad track just south of Orange City. This area is not low or wet, but consists of tall grass and brush. The birds were first observed on August 4 and then again on August 18.
- Thrushes: very poor migration: only a few Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrushes were observed, and only one Hermit Thrush (on October 15).
- Golden-crowned Kinglet: first migrants arrived in Sioux Center on November 2.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet: early date in Sioux Center: August 29.
- Sprague's Pipit: on August 10 Gordon Brand observed a pipit close to the water's edge at the lagoons of Sioux-preme packing plant just south of Sioux Center. The bird was

lighter brown than a Water Pipit, and had a distinctly striped crown and back. Unfortunately Gordon was unable to get a clear view of the legs. Gordon Brand is quite familiar with the Water Pipit.

- Warblers: generally a ho-hum to poor migration. Only one species merits mention, viz., a Bay-breasted Warbler, observed in Sioux Center on September 3. This is not a common migrant in this area.
- Evening Grosbeak: three individuals visited Sioux Center on October 30. They did not stay.
- Pine Siskin: small numbers arrived in Sioux Center on November 22.
- Red Crossbill: a flock of half a dozen or so visited Sioux Center on November 6.
- Sparrow migration: generally quite good. Two species merit special mention:
 - Lark Sparrow: 3 individuals were present near Sioux Center on September 13.
 - American Tree Sparrow: a flock of 20 on October 28 were the first arrivals.
- Northern Junco: an individual in Orange City on September 30 was early.

Dr. John Van Dyk

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December 1, 1984