

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 09/01/93

Smith's Longspur
1 Apr 1982
east of Polk City, Polk Co., IA
*J. Schaufenbuel
IBL 52:63; 53:36

Record Number: 82-16
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Joe Schaufenbuel

REFERENCES

Field Reports: 52:63

Records Committee: 53:36

VOTE: 6-III, 1-abstain

III, Good description.

III, Excellent description.

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

SPECIES: Smith's Longspur

DATE SEEN: 1 April 1982

SITE OF OBSERVATION: 3 mi. E. of Polk City, Polk Co. Iowa.

OBSERVERS: J. Schaufenbuel

DATE OF REVIEW: 22 Aug. 1982

METHOD OF REVIEW: mail vote

CLASSIFICATION OF RECORD: III

COMMENTS: Excellent description.

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.

EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT
SIGHT RECORD DOCUMENTATION

Species: Smith's Longspur Number: 1 (of a flock of 50-65)
Location: three miles east of Polk City, Polk Co., Iowa
Type of habitat: large (230 acre) pasture of short upland grass,
 potholes fringed with long grass, and low moist areas.
Date: April 1, 1982 Time: 9:20 to 9:25 a.m.
Observer: Joe Schaufenbuel, St. Lucas, Iowa 52166

Description of bird: After flushing many longspurs from a moist area with short prairie grass, I noticed one bird sitting still in the grass watching my movements. Using my binoculars, I observed the following marks.

A House Sparrow-sized bird with a thick conical bill. Bird was heavier bodied than a pipit or Vesper Sparrow.

Head was distinctly bicolored. A black cap extended from upper base of bill to nape. A broad white superciliary contrasted with the cap and the black eyeline below it. The eyeline extended back from the eye to nape, then downward, turning from black to a brownish as it did. This line extended frontwards to the malar area then upwards and returned to a black color. Altogether this mark formed a distinct triangle of black and brown encircling a patch of white on the auricular area. Nape color was brownish. Tail was dark brown, near-black. The underparts were buffy from chin to lower belly. Under tail was whitish. Sides had three or more short neat streaks. Wing feathers were brownish with light edges on the scapularies. Bill was yellowish to horn colored. Eye was dark.

When flushed the bird revealed a junco-like flash of white in the outer tail feathers. In flight the bird also showed a white patch at the bend of the wing.

Also when flushed the bird gave several short rough rattle calls before it flew off.

The bird was seen in excellent light, with the bird to my north and the sun behind me to the south. The bird was approached to within 40 yards before it flushed and viewed with 7x35 binoculars at this time.

Notes on this observation were taken in the field at the time of observation and typed two days after this sighting into the current form.

April 3, 1982

Joe Schaufenbuel