

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 09/01/93

Smith's Longspur

30 Mar 1982

north of Lone Tree, Johnson Co., IA

*T. Staudt

IBL 52:63; 53:36

Record Number: 82-15

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Thomas J. Staudt

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 52:63

Records Committee: IBL 53:36

VOTE: 7-III

[no comments]

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

SPECIES: Smith's Longspur

DATE SEEN: 30 March 1982

SITE OF OBSERVATION: N. of Lone Tree, Johnson Co., Iowa

OBSERVERS: T. Staudt

DATE OF REVIEW: 22 August 1982

METHOD OF REVIEW: mail vote

CLASSIFICATION OF RECORD: III

COMMENTS:

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

82-15

1. Species Smith's Longspur
1 mile east of #14/F62 intersection on F62
2. Number 200 est
based on the rattling call of the birds as they flew over.
3. Location SE. corner of Johnson County Iowa
4. Date: March 30 1982
5. Time Bird Seen: 8 am to 8:30 am
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):

First seen in flight, as they approached a rattling call could be heard. As the flocks flew over, white wing patches and white outer tail feathers (as in a vesper sparrow) were observed. The birds were very difficult to locate on the ground, winter birds inconspicuously blended into the corn field.

Breeding plumage males had black caps and a black triangle around the white ear patch. These males had a white eye-brow line.
Throat, breast, and belly were a buffy ochre.
Legs were dark gray, upperparts dark brown with light streaks behind the buffy nape.
7. Description of voice, if heard: ^{somewhat like corn stalks rattling against each other. Peterson comment that the rattle suggests the winding of a cheap watch is a good comparison.} rattling, chating call heard in flight and while on ground sounded
8. Description of behavior: ^{higher than the telephone wires. I could walk up within 20 feet of these birds when they were on the ground and then the whole group would fly off. The flocks were continually making noise.} in flight, flocks of 20 or more birds, undulating flight, never much
9. Habitat - general: farm fields, flat to slightly rolling
specific: corn field stubble
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:
A few breeding plumage male Laplands were mixed in with the Smith's
11. Distance (how measured)? from 20 feet to 1/4 mile when they were in flight
12. Optical equipment: 7x binoculars
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
overcast, I was looking at the birds from many angles
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
no previous experience with Smith's longspurs. I've seen flocks of Laplands less than ten times.
15. Other observers: NONE
16. Did the others agree with your identification?
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:
other observers identified this species within a few miles of this area, but no other observations at this specific location. TOM KEAT
MIKE NEWTON
JAMES HUNTINGTON...
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
Peterson's A Field Guide to the Birds as noted on the voice and as a reference when observing the birds.
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?
note were written the day of sighting, this wasn't written until May 23

Signature: THOMAS J. STAUDT Address: 931 N. Summit

Date: MAY 23, 1982 City, State: Jowa City, Ia