

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 09/01/93

Smith's Longspur

9 Mar 1983

4.7 mi. south of Nichols, Muscatine Co., IA

*C. Bendorf

IBL 53:55; 54:39

Record Number: 83-11

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Carl J. Bendorf

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 53:55

Records Committee: IBL 54:39

VOTE: 7-III

What species? Smith's Longspur How many? 20

Location? 4.7 miles south of Nichols, Muscatine Co. along HWY 70.

Type of habitat? Area of short grass with partly frozen standing water at edge of larger cultivated fields

When? date(s): 9 March 1983 time: 3:50 to 4:05 PM.

Who? your name and address: Carl J. Bendorf, 825 7th Ave. Iowa City, IA. 52240

others with you: _____

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Observed about fifty longspurs feeding on gourd. Most birds were clearly Lapland Longspurs, both male and female in winter or early breeding plumage. Approximately 20 of the birds were observed as follows:

Same general shape and size as Laplands. Back and top of head streaked brownish color, entire breast and belly a uniform buffy or yellowish wash, side of face was light brown in background with a faint but distinct dark brown-grey triangle surrounding a central lighter spot on cheek.

Wings generally brownish with faint suggestion of white shoulder patch on some of the birds. Full white outer tail feathers on bird in flight. Also heard a distinct "ticking" or "winding watch" call as birds would fly. Unable to determine if came from Smith's or nearby Laplands.

This description is more a blending of observations of several birds rather than a description of a particular individual. There was variation in shade of buff on breast and in the completeness and distinctiveness of face pattern.

Similar species and how eliminated:

Other longspurs and Vesper Sparrow eliminated by distinct buff color of breast and by face pattern.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? _____

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Overcast sky, but light was good. Estimated 15-20 yards with 7x Binoculars and 20X scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Saw flock of Smith's in 1982. Quite familiar with Laplands.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

NONE

How long before field notes made? 5 minutes this form completed? Next day

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240