

Sprague's Pipit
23 Apr 1949
? Spirit Lake, Dickinson Co., IA
F. R. L. Roberts
Roberts 1949

Record Number: 81-CQ
Classification: NA

REFERENCE

Roberts, F.L.R. 1949. Sprague's Pipit in northwest Iowa. IBL 19:34.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERTATION

Tom Kent to Records Committee, 13 Sep 1993

VOTE (1981): 6-III, 1-IV

III, good observer.

IV, 2 birds seen by unknown # of observers. Description is not detailed enough.

III, Description not complete, but differentiated from Water Pipit (streaked back).

REVOTE (1981): 5-III, 2-IV

IV, 'striped back' rather vague.

III, date optimal for this species -- observer aware of need to separate Water Pipit.

REVOTE (1993): 1 A-D, 6 NA

NA, I think I would remove it from the Iowa list on lack of good documents or photo.

A-D, Description minimal but like one of the original committee members, I too feel the date is optimal and the observer aware of the differences between this species and American Pipit.

NA, Too little information. What was the habitat? This is too important a record to accept on the basis of three nondescript field marks and a lot of assumptions.

NA, No mention of leg color, striped back vague.

NA, Sprague's Pipit is not an easy identification, even today with better optics. More detail is needed on this record, even for a good observer.

NA, Too bad that face color, leg color, and flight were not noted. The marks mentioned fit Sprague's Pipit but are not very specific.

81-CQ

13 September 1993

To: IOU Records Committee
From: Tom Kent
Re: Request for reconsideration of record

Record: 81-CQ Sprague's Pipit

Reason for request: Should this species be on the state list?

Comment: There is one accepted record for Sprague's Pipit, a sight record with brief description. Included here are four records that got a majority vote in 1981 and the one that was accepted. I question whether there is adequate evidence to keep this species on the state list.

Sprague's Pipit

Roberts, F. L. R. 1949. Sprague's Pipit in northwest Iowa.
Iowa Bird Life 19:34

Sprague's Pipit in Northwest Iowa.—We saw two Sprague's Pipits on April 23, 1949. They were observed at close range and in good light. The striped back, small bill, faintly streaked breast, and complete absence of tail-wagging were all observed. We have seen them in western states before, but we have never been sure of an Iowa record, though we have several times seen Pipits which we did not differentiate definitely from the American. —F. L. R. ROBERTS, Spirit Lake, Iowa.

Brown, W. 1962. Sprague's Pipit in Iowa. IBL 32:20.

Sprague's Pipit in Iowa. Jim Keenan of Ogden raises an interesting question regarding the abundance in Iowa of the Sprague's Pipit. Jack Musgrove's check-list published in 1949 as a supplement to the Iowa Conservationist lists the species as "Rare" and the Iowa Distributional Check-list in 1954 calls it an "Accidental or Straggler." Dr. F. L. Roberts reported it from Spirit Lake in 1949, Dr. Laude has a 1950 record at Amana, it was found at Brenton's Slough near Des Moines on an I.O.U. Spring Meeting field trip in 1954, and one was seen at the same place in 1958 by Albert Berkowitz and the writer.

The A.O.U. Check-list, 5th Ed., shows its breeding range as generally northwest of Iowa, but says it sometimes winters to the southeast so that some individuals should go through the state in migration. The four records referred to are all spring dates, but Mr. Keenan's records in 1949, 1950, 1959, and 1961 are all fall dates. He says he sees almost as many Sprague's as Water Pipits, and would like to know what other records the members of the I.O.U. may have. The species has been recorded regularly in recent winters by Richard Graber in southern Illinois. WOODWARD BROWN, 4815 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines.

Brown 1971
p 538

Sprague's Pipit Anthus spragueii (Audubon)Rare migrant

Anderson (1907) cited a 1895 record, and DuMont (1934), with no record other than Anderson's, said "The present status is undetermined."

There are these recent records: 23 April, 1949, "northwest Iowa" (Roberts, 1949); 16 April, 1950, Amana, Johnson Co. (PPL); 16 May, 1954, Polk Co. (GOH); 4 May, 1958, Polk Co. (Brown, 1958); 27 May, 1962, near LaPorte City, Black Hawk Co. (Burk, 1962); 4 April, 1968, Shenandoah, Page Co. (FMB). Fall dates are all from Ogden, Boone Co.: 11 October, 1949, 29 September, 30 October, and 1 November, 1959, 13 and 22 September, 1961 (JK). There is no Iowa specimen extant.