

Marsh Wren
2 Jan 1994
Browns L., Woodbury Co., IA
*Bob Livermore
IBL 64:44,45,50; 65:82

Record Number: 94-03
Classification: NA

DOCUMENTATION

Bob Livermore, RR1, Sioux City [19 Aug 1994]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: 64:44, 45, 50
Records Committee: IBL 65:82

VOTE: 4 A-D, 3 NA

A-D, Although Carolina Wren is not eliminated by this description, locale suggests Marsh Wren more likely. Call note very different from churr of Carolina Wren.

NA, The observer had the same problem getting a good look at this/these secretive species as do I. The best field mark was the call, which supports his identification. Beyond that, there is little to separate between Marsh and Sedge Wren, of which we have two winter records for each.

NA, I believe the bird was a Marsh Wren, but because the white back streaks could not be seen in a 20 min effort, I don't feel comfortable that it couldn't have been one of the other wrens.

A-D, Combination of all details makes Marsh Wren a logical ID.

A-D, Not unexpected at open water in Dec.

NA, Coloration good for Marsh Wren but also could be good for Sedge Wren as well when seen as this bird was seen. Call note eliminates Carolina Wren but does not completely eliminate Sedge Wren, the only other wrens with white eyelines that might be confused with this species.

REVOTE: 5 A-D, 2 NA

A-D, Changed vote based on habitat and location.

A-D, Call note supports ID.

A-D, The habitat and call note rule out Carolina Wren. The bold eye line, medium tail length, and rusty color strongly favor Marsh Wren over Sedge Wren. I have had some difficulty seeing back stripes on either Marsh or Sedge wrens.

NA, Without seeing white stripes on the back this record cannot be proven to be Marsh Wren and not Sedge Wren. Call note does not completely eliminate Sedge Wren as recognized by second NA voter.

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

94-03

What species? Marsh Wren How many? 2
Location? Browns Lake - Woodbury County
Type of Habitat? Cattail marsh - with open flowing water
When? date(s): January 2, 1994 time: 9:00 to 9:20
Who? your name and address: Bob Livermore, RR1 Sioux City
Others with you: John Van Dyke, Sioux Center, IA.
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, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

I was walking along the edge of a open cattail marsh with flowing water and no trees. I noticed a wren with a medium length tail and bold eye strip low in the cattails. The bird was disturbed and calling by a short tisk sound. It was slightly rusty but I was unable to see any streaking on the upper back. The wings and crown were more rusty with ^a ~~distinct~~ contrasting upper back.

Similar species; how eliminated:

There were several other species in the close vicinity (Song Sparrow, tree sparrow, Swamp sparrow, redwing blackbird. Much too large and rusty and tail too prominent for winter wren. Carolina wren would be the toughest to eliminate. The way I eliminated was habitat, call, and behavior.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.

10' to 20' - SAW it several times, light poor with light snow

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Experienced with all wrens. Especially Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Carolina Wren.

References and persons consulted before writing description: Bill Huser + Jerry Probst

How long before field notes made? _____ this form completed? JAN 2.

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).