

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What Species? Bewick's Wren

How many? 1

Location? Croton Unit, Shimek State Forest. 2½ miles west of Argyle in Lee County,
Iowa

Type of Habitat? Heavily overgrown brushy area/multiflora rose, saplings, some
middle maturity and older trees.

When? date(s)? Sept. 1, 1986. Also time: about 7:30 AM ~~xxx~~
Aug. 17 ??

Who? your name and address: Robert Cecil, 327 S. 6th, Keokuk, Iowa 52632

others with you: No

others before or after you: Not to my knowledge

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. On Aug. 17, I briefly glimpsed a wren with a conspicuous superciliary stripe. As Carolina wrens were relatively common this year at Shimek, I assumed it was that species. On Sept. 1, while birding this exact same spot, I was attracted by a song I did not recognize. I assumed it was one of those gone to hell songs sometimes sung by migrating warblers early in the fall. I searched it out, and discovered it was coming from a wren. I observed a conspicuous superciliary stripe but otherwise, the bird did not look right for a Carolina. The body appeared slimmer than a Carolina, and the tail was longer. I then checked the tail, and noted white edging on the outside (not conspicuous) and white corners (more conspicuous). I also noted the uniform rusty color of the back, and the darker rusty cap. The bird's undersides appeared to be a uniform gray-white. I heard the song a couple of times, but will not try to describe it except that it was clearly not the song of a Carolina or a House Wren. I did note that it ended with a more-or-less trill. I did not see the bird again, although I looked several times.

The total viewing time was perhaps 1 minute.

Similar species and how eliminated: See above.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification? N.A.

If yes, explain: N.A.

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Lighting, OK, sun to back. Distance about 20 ft.
Optics: 10 x 40 Zeiss.

Previous experience with this and similar species: Saw this spring at Burlington. Have also seen out west, but in different color phase.

References and persons consulted before writing description:
None

How long before field notes made?

Not made

How long before this form completed? 1 week.