

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Smith's Longspurs How many? 6-10Location? Louise Co. - NW corner of section 24 of Oakland townshipType of habitat? short grassy hay field just east of One MarshWhen? date(s): April 15, 1987 time: 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. - approximatelyWho? your name and address: Mark Proescholdt, Liscomb, Iowaothers with you: Beth Proescholdtothers before or after you: Carl Bendorf and others

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.

We walked through the short-grassed hayfield looking for birds to fly up. On occasion one bird would fly up and fly a distance and then drop into the grass. We stalked it and it would flush again and we would stalk it again. In this way we got glimpses of this bird. One time we had pretty good looks at the bird in the grass as it walked around. This bird was very buffy on its undersides, had white spots on its shoulders, and had striking white along the edge of its tail like a vesper sparrow but was much more distinctive and striking. Several times I saw briefly a pattern of white on its head when this and other birds flew. When some of the birds flew, we heard a "dry rattle" call like lapland longspurs make. We had looks and glimpses of a number of longspurs. Some were just seen once before they flew north into the next field. Sometimes we saw one bird repeatedly as we flushed it and stalked it before it finally flew away.

Similar species and how eliminated: vesper sparrows are not buffy like this and have a very different color pattern. Other longspurs are not buffy like this and have different tail patterns.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

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

A pretty, sunny day. We had good lighting with sun at our sides and backs. We were 15-20 feet away a number of times and also further away.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

Saw one in Churchill, Manitoba.

8x30 Binocs.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Natl. Geog. Birds of N. America, Robbins' Birds of N. America, Peterson's Guide to the Birds.

How long before field notes made? about a week this form completed? May 24, 1987

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