

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Smith's Longspur How many? 1 (female)

Location? Eden Farm S. of Iowa City in Johnson Co. same location as previous years

Type of habitat? open fields - bean stubble & fall plowed

When? date(s): Apr. 17, 1986 time: 9:10 am to 9:20 am

Who? your name and address: THOMAS J. STAULT

others with you: 517 Dearborn, Iowa City, Ia. 52240

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.

bill thin and long for longspur, lower mandible lighter than upper.

dark crown; light brown facial area surrounded by a darker but faint "Triangle". Eye strip of this outline was more pronounced.

Nape was brown, not as dark as crown or back.

upperparts and wings darker brown. A white shoulder patch was noted on wings. This feature really stood out.

Flanks and underparts to undertail coverts were an even pale buff. The bird always faced away so the extent of buff on breast or any breast markings were not observed.

The bird showed conspicuous white outer tail feathers in its one short flight.

The bird emitted a short metallic rattling call 3 or 4 times during observation. This same rattle call was heard at at least two other locations in the field during observation.

Similar species and how eliminated: vesper sparrow has a chestnut colored shouldered patch and eye ring. other possible longspurs have whitish underparts, not buffy. The bill on this bird was thinner and longer than on other longspurs.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? _____

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
Sun to my left as I looked south 30-40 ft 8X binoculars
Clear

Previous experience with species and similar ones:
yearly spring sighting of Smith's in same area since 1982

References and persons consulted before writing description:

How long before field notes made? 2 hrs this form completed? 2 hrs

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