

DOCUMENTATION FORM  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What species? Smith's Longspur How many? 5  
Location? Union Slough NWR, Kossuth Co. main crossdike between B pool & C pool  
Type of Habitat? marsh with open farm fields on both sides  
When? date(s): April 27, 1997 time: 9:10 & 9:20 to AM  
Who? your name and address: Matthew Kenne 709 N. Phillips Algona, Ia. 50511  
Others with you: none  
Others before or after you: none

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.

As I started to cross the dike ~~from~~ from east to west, a flock of 5 sparrow-like birds flew from the fields behind me, over head, and continued on to the far side. They ~~had~~ had a rolling, bounding flight and rattled a longspur "tic-tic-tic". They were a strong buffy color from throat to tail base. When I got to the far side (10 min.) I was scanning the cattails for 2 Am. Bittern, never expecting to see the longspurs again. From open fields to the north, 5 similar birds flew again almost over me to the south (right to left) ~~along~~ along the west side of the marsh. I assume they were the same birds, but I have no way of knowing for sure. I was unable to discern white wing coverts from my angle.

Similar species; how eliminated:

These birds didn't have white on the belly or black spilling from the face onto the chest or "bib" like Lapland Longspurs. There were no "tew" notes thrown in with the rattle calls, a possible point of separation between Smith's & Laps.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? NA  
If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.  
full morning sunlight, overhead 10-20 yds (treetop height) 8x binocs

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

I've seen Smith's on 1 occasion near Cone Marsh in early April. Many thousands of Lapland Longspurs seen.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

none

How long before field notes made? none this form completed? 4 hrs.

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