

BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

CROWLEY CBE 1988

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of unusual birds. It may be used flexibly and need not be used at all. Leave blank any details not observed. Attach additional sheets if necessary. Please print or type. Attach drawings, photographs, etc.; include all photos if an obscurely marked species. When completed, mail to the Secretary of the LOS Bird Records Committee.

1. Common and scientific name: Ruff (Reeve) Philomachus pugnax
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g. 2ad. in breeding plumage): 1 ♀
3. Locality: Louisiana: Acadia Parish: About 6 miles SSE of Crowley
4. Date(s) when seen: December 16 and 18, 1988
5. Times of day when seen: 4:45-5:15 both days
6. Reporting observer and address: Al Smalley + Gwen Smalley, 88 Egret street, New Orleans, LA 70124
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird: Mae Myers (both days); David Muth (both days); John Sevensair (Dec. 18)
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird:
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Sun to our backs but only moderately good light because late in afternoon. Light very poor at end of observation period.
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): 22x Bushnell scope.
11. Distance to bird: About 120 yds. Somewhat further on Dec. 18.
12. Duration of observation: 1/2 hr each day
13. Habitat (general and specific):

Flooded fields with sparse, scattered vegetation.

14. Behavior (flying, feeding, resting, etc.; include and stress any habits used in identification):

Feeding + flying.

15. Description (Include only what was actually seen, not what "should" have been seen. Include if possible: total length; body bulk; shape, bill, eye, and leg characteristics; color and pattern of plumage, etc. Stress field marks):

First recognized by combination of short bill, small head, and tertials blowing in the wind. These field marks by comparison with Stilt Sandpipers + Dunlins.

Bill short, moderately thick (but not plover-like), head small (pigeon-headed), body chunky with a hump-backed shape. When first seen, the legs were not visible because the bird was feeding in deep water. Later it flew to a more shallow area, and the legs appeared to be light pink or yellow (difficult to determine because of fading light - on Dec. 18, Gwen observed them to be light yellow)

In flight, the light oval marks on the flanks were seen - in fact the median dark feathers were not obvious and it looked like a horseshoe. (After I wrote these notes, I looked in Geo + Hayman et al., and they don't agree on this point). "I" is AI - Gwen did not see tail pattern.

Pattern of dark central feathers with white edgings also seen, but distance precluded detailed description of primaries, tertials, et al. Breast gray, no other markings.

Size compared with Dunlin + Stilt Sandpiper indicates ♀.

On second trip, Gwen noted feeding by head moving back + forth in water like an Avocet.

16. Voice: _____

17. Similar species (include how they are eliminated by your observations):

No closely similar species.

18. Photographs (Was it photographed? By whom? Attached?):

No

19. Previous experience with this species: Gwen + Al have seen species in Africa + US, but our most valuable experience has been with the individual observed north of Kaplan in Oct, which we studied at length.

20. Aids: List books, illustrations, birders, etc. used in identification

a) at time of observation;

none

b) after observation: Geo Guide, Hayman et al., and previous report filed by us on "Kaplan" bird.

21. This description written from: _____ notes made during observation; X notes made after observation; _____ memory.

22. Are you positive of your identification? YES. If not, explain:

23. Signature of reporter: *Alfred E. Sorensen*

24. Date and time of writing this account:

19 Dec 88; 1800 hrs.

LOUISIANA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

Species: Ruff Philomachus pugnax

Number: One, Reeve?, juv.?

Locality: Acadia Parish, La., 5 m. sse Crowley, off hwy 13&92
near Bayou Queue de Tortue.

Date: Dec. 16 & 18, 1988

Time: both days near sunset, about 4:30 p.m.

Reporter: David P. Muth

With Reporter: MM, AS, GS, JH Jr.; MM, AS, GS, JS

Other Observers:

Light: decent, sun was setting behind us

Optics: 25x scope

Distance: 100-200 yds.

Duration: thirty minutes over the two days

Habitat: flooded rice field, no vegetation

Behaviour: feeding; picked and winnowed, in company of yellowlegs, Dunlin, peeps, Short-billed Dowitchers, a few Black-bellied Plovers, and three Stilt Sandpipers.

Description:

A medium to large shorebird, about dowitcher size, but taller. Bill, drab, slightly longer than L. Yellowlegs, thick at base and tapered. Legs orangey-yellow, quite distinctive. Coloration, plain buffy on throat and breast, fading on belly. Feathering around base of bill very pale, giving it a white-faced look, which was very prominent; sides of face buffy. Back medium brown with buff feather edgings; the light might have emphasized this, but the color was independent of the light (seen both days). Tertiaries askew. Tail brown, with white rump nearly bisected by peninsula of brown feathers from the back. At a glance, looked like an exaggerated Pectoral rump with large oval white patches, but the

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white actually formed a "U". No white wing stripe.

Bird was like a plump Upland with a shorter neck and a disproportionately small head.

Voice:

Similar Species:

Pectoral: breast wrong, rump wrong. Too large

Sharp-tailed: rump wrong, too large.

Upland: rump wrong, not big-eyed, plumage and habitat wrong.

both Yellowlegs: rump and plumage all wrong, shape wrong.

Photos:

Previous Experience:

limited

Aids:

none at the time; everything relevant since.

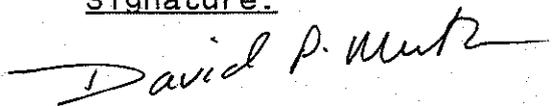
Circumstance of Description:

mostly from memory

Confidence Level:

I am certain of this identification.

Signature:



David P. Muth

Date: 2-23-89, some notes made in Dec.