

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or a similar format when submitting records for review to assure that all pertinent information is accounted for. Attach additional pages or files as necessary. Please print or type for hard copy. For electronic copy, be sure to save this file to your computer before entering text. Attach field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed (if hard copy), mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216, or e-mail electronic copy as an attachment to Paul Edward Conover at <zoiseaux@lusfiber.net> .

1. English and Scientific names: Chestnut-collared Longspur *Calcarius ornatus*
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
1 adult male, with black belly so mostly or entirely in breeding plumage (which seems odd?)
3. Parish: Caddo
Specific Locality: Gilliam airstrip, Gilliam Airport Road (off road 3049 north of Gilliam). Coordinates: 32.84033, -93.84406
4. Date(s) when observed: 2016-12-27
5. Time(s) of day when observed: 10:24 and 10:28
6. Reporting observer and address: Jelmer Poelstra, 270A Edwards Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27516
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): none
8. Other observers who *independently identified* the bird(s): none
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): The bird was seen flying right overhead as well as to the north of my position, with the sun fairly high up, though mostly behind clouds, in the SSE.
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Leica 10*35
11. Distance to bird(s): 6-20m
12. Duration of observation: 5 minutes

13. Habitat: The bird was (presumably) first flushed from an airstrip with short grass that also held Sprague's Pipits, then landed briefly on a bare field (which held American Pipits, Horned Larks and a Lapland Longspur), and then landed again on the airstrip.

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation):

While attempting to get good looks at some Sprague's Pipits that I had seen from the road, I was walking around on the airstrip and suddenly heard an unfamiliar and immediately “interesting-sounding” call, coming from almost directly overhead, and nearby, so I carefully checked the birds that I could see overhead. Among the pipits was a bird with a very striking black belly and breast. I followed this bird which then landed on the bare field next to the airstrip, but just out of view behind a ridge. As I walked towards a position from which I would hopefully be able to see the bird, I heard the same calls and saw the bird again in flight. It then landed back on the airstrip near the western end of it, i.e. almost next to road 3049. It was not visible in the grass, but I thought that just like the Sprague's Pipits, it might appear in view with some patience, so I next opted to first get my telescope out of the car, but I never refound the bird again. Many American Pipits were continuously flying around (as the airstrip was in between field on which those were foraging), and there were also several Sprague's Pipits, Horned Larks, and one Lapland Longspur – the chaos of that situation means the bird can have easily flown off undetected.

15. Description (include only what was actually seen, *not what "should" have been seen*; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species; body bulk, shape, proportions; bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species, *or for species that are known to hybridize frequently, stress features that help eliminate possible hybrids*):

The bird was about the same size as the pipits that it was seen flying directly alongside with (these were mostly Sprague's), but was more bulky and compact. Even though there was no direct comparison, the bird seemed clearly smaller and more compact (e.g., shorter-tailed) than Lapland Longspur – the only other longspur that I am familiar with. Belly and breast were almost entirely black, but with some with “patchiness / spottiness” on the flanks, presumably caused by broad white tips to some feathers. Meanwhile the rear (undertail coverts, undertail) and front (throat, face) end of the underside of the bird were very pale, making for an overall striking appearance among the drab pipits. Views of the upperside of the bird were more brief and distant, but the bird was overall dark on the upperside with striking amounts of white on the tail – clearly more than a Lapland would have. I tried to look for the chestnut back of the head but could not distinguish this, which makes sense giving the brevity and distance of the views of the upperside. The bird was only seen in flight.

16. Voice: Rattle-like flight calls that were more liquid and less dry and sharp than those of e.g. a Lapland Longspur. Some of the more rattle-sounding calls are somewhat reminiscent of a Snow Bunting, while other calls are barely rattly at all and even sound American Pipit-like. No “pjuu”-type calls were heard. Calls were recorded and can be found here: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S33227491>.

Some similar recordings of Chestnut-collared Longspurs:

<http://www.xeno-canto.org/339563>
<http://www.xeno-canto.org/196475>
<http://www.xeno-canto.org/161055>

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):
Other longspur species. None of these have an entirely black belly and breast, and differ in flight call – judging by recordings, it appears that all three other species have sharper- and drier-sounding rattles.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?):

I made sound recordings of the call which can be found at
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S33227491>.

19. Previous experience with this species: none

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

a. at time of observation: Sibley app.

b. after observation: xeno-canto.org (sounds)

21. This description is written from:

<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made during the observation.	Are notes attached?	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made after the observation.	At what date?	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	memory		
<input type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

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

Yes

23. Date: 2017-01-03

Time: 23:48

24. May the LBRC have permission to display in whole or in part this report and accompanying photos on the LOS-LBRC website and LBRC Facebook page?

_____ Yes _____

If yes, may we include your name with the report? __ Yes _____