

# 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](mailto:zoiseaux@lusfiber.net)> .

1. English and Scientific names: McCown's Longspur (*Rhynchophanes mccownii*)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):  
1 in basic plumage; age and sex unknown but likely a female based on unmarked underparts.
3. Parish: St. Landry  
Specific Locality: Botany Bay Rd.- Olivier Farms
4. Date(s) when observed: 28 Dec. 2017
5. Time(s) of day when observed: 11:20-11:22 a.m.
6. Reporting observer and address: Paul McKenzie, 2311 Grandview Circle, Columbia, MO 65203
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s):  
J.V. Remsen Jr.
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s): none known.
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Overcast but good views when bird repeatedly flew over our position.
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Celestron 8x42 binoculars in excellent condition.
11. Distance to bird(s): 20-80 m
12. Duration of observation: Approximately 4-5 seconds through binoculars for at least 3 x as bird flew over us, made wide circles and repeated flight path.

13. Habitat: Ag fields- harvested soybeans that had patches of *Poa annua* and unidentified, small mustard (*Arabis* sp. ?); patches of bare soil and wet areas scattered in large field (perhaps a few hundred acres in size).

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): Bird responded to Van playing playback of songs and calls of this species. He had been playing the songs and calls of Lapland Longspur when the tape advanced to McCown's Longspur- as song and calls of McCown's Longspur were played, bird flew directly over our position and we initially were not thinking of this species as we were trying to get better looks of the Lapland Longspur we had seen with our binoculars and Kowa scope in the same field. However, once we saw the diagnostic inverted T pattern on the underside of the tail as it passed over our position, we identified it as a McCown's Longspur. Van then continued to play tape of McCown's Longspur and the bird repeatedly fly over our position in a wide circle- the bird had undulating flight and would make very large circles overhead. On a few occasions we were both able to view the tail pattern through binoculars for a few seconds as it repeatedly circled us.

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 sparrow/longspur/Am. Pipit size. In flight, we could both see a dark inverted T (\_I\_) on the tail that was formed by blackish central tail feathers and tips of outer rectrices. The combination a dark terminal band and dark central rectrices formed a diagnostic inverted T characteristic of this species. The underparts appeared clear with no apparent streaking, thus suggesting a female and not a male.

16. Voice: Calls were a dry, 2-noted rattle that was on a different pitch (lower pitched and softer) than dry rattle of Lapland Longspur we heard in the same field a few minutes earlier. Calls were not interspersed with typical "tew" notes often heard with Lapland Longspur.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): This is the only longspur that shows a diagnostic inverted T pattern on tail. Smith's Longspur would be buffier underneath with white in tail restricted to outer two rectrices. Lapland has outer rectrix white but most of tail dark. The most likely species to confuse McCown's with would be Chesnut-collared Longspur which has black triangle in middle of tail (more black on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> rectrices closest to central rectrices). This species in LA also would not be expected in this habitat.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): None. For 2.5 hrs we attempted to relocate the bird to hopefully obtain photographs but were unsuccessful.

19. Previous experience with this species: I have experience with all NA longspurs. I have observed McCown's Longspurs in basic plumage near San Angelo, Texas and observed breeding individuals on the Pawnee National Grasslands in eastern Colorado. I have observed Chestnut-collared Longspurs in basic plumage in southcentral Texas as well as on the breeding grounds on the Pawnee National Grasslands in eastern Colorado. I have observed Chestnut-collared Longspurs in basic plumage in northcentral Missouri and observe Lapland and Smith's Longspurs in basic plumage every year in Missouri. Van and I were associated with the second state record of this species when we assisted capturing an individual on a levee in New Orleans that was subsequently collected.

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

a. at time of observation: none

b. after observation: Van had a copy of the Peterson field guide that I examined to confirm my suspicions of a female.

21. This description is written from:

<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made during the observation.	Are notes attached?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made after the observation.	At what date?	28 Dec. 2017- attached
<input type="checkbox"/>	memory		
<input type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

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

Yes.

23. Date: 3 Jan. 2018

Time: 1:30 p.m.

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\_\_\_\_\_