

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: *Ruff (Calidris pugnax)*
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage): 1, “winter” plumage, possibly male
3. Parish: Jefferson Davis
Specific Locality: ~0.6 mi south of LA-380, about 1.4 mi WSW of the Thornwell Warehouse Association
4. Date(s) when observed: 3 November 2017
5. Time(s) of day when observed: 12:30 pm
6. Reporting observer and address: Erik I. Johnson, 102 Goodwood Cir., Lafayette, LA 70508
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): There were a number of festival-goers (Yellow Rails and Rice Festival), maybe about 30 people there while I was there. Several people with me included Katie Barnes, Katie Percy, Justin Lehman, Vitek Jirinec, Mike Stewart, and Yvette Haughney.
8. Other observers who *independently identified* the bird(s): The bird was apparently located by Jochan Baurmeister, a German native who was attending the YRARF Banding Workshop. I got the word through Mike Stewart who was with Jochan at the time.
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): The bird was WSW of the group – maybe about 75-100 m away. Mixed sun and clouds, with the sun basically overhead, but angled to the south. So we were looking into

the sun a little, but the lighting didn't affect viewing conditions dramatically.

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Swarovski EL 10x42 binoculars, Swarovski 25-50x scope, and Samsung S7 smartphone (to digi-scope photos).

11. Distance to bird(s): ~75-100 m

12. Duration of observation: ~15-20 minutes

13. Habitat: slightly flooded and barren ag field with mixed pools and mudflats

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): Loafing in large group of Long-billed Dowitchers and some Stilt Sandpipers. Head often tucked into back, but often with eyes open, and periodically lifting head to look around. Eventually something (a Red-tailed Hawk?) caused the group to flush and the flock split and went into other nearby fields. The shorebirds never seemed concerned with the nearby and growing group of birders.

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*): Compared to the dowitchers, it was similar in size and bulk – perhaps slightly longer legged. It was bright and contrasty; the underparts were white and the back was medium brown with distinct broad pale tan edges to the back feathers and secondary coverts. The head was brownish above (with feathers faintly pale edged), but with a white throat, neck, and forehead just above the black bill. The bill was much shorter than any dowitcher, and slightly down-curved. The legs were bright egg-yolk yellow (indicating adult?), although only above the “ankle” (knee) was visible. It's similar in plumage to the “white-necked variant” in Sibley (1st Ed.), but not quite as extensively white. I didn't see it in flight. It's not clear from Sibley or Pyle (2008, Vol II) that males and females can be distinguished in the non-breeding season, except by size; Jochan with lots of experience with Ruff was telling me that because it was similar in size to or slightly larger than the dowitchers, that it was likely a male.

16. Voice: not heard

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Yellowlegs have different bill shape and back pattern, Pectoral Sandpiper has dark brown hood including brown chest, dowitchers with duller yellows and duller underparts (and different back pattern). Other similar-sized sandpiper would have black or dull legs.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): Yes, by many. Mine are included here (digi-scoped).

19. Previous experience with this species: Very very little. I've seen once in LA several years ago. I'm familiar and have a good bit of experience with other regularly occurring shorebirds in Louisiana.

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

a. at time of observation: A German native!

b. after observation: Sibley Guide to North American Birds, 1st Ed.; Pyle (2008)
Identification Guide to North American Birds, Part II.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

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

Yes

23. Date: 5 November 2017

Time: 4:00 pm

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



