

RECORD #: 6-A-2006

IDAHO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

RARE BIRD REPORT FORM

SPECIES: Dickcissel

HOW MANY: 1 male

REPORTER: Cliff Weisse, 4125 Beaver Springs Rd., Island Park, ID 83429

REPORTER EMAIL: cliffandlisa@octobersettlers.com

OTHER OBSERVERS: Darren Clark

DATE REPORT PREPARED: 6/30/2006

DATE SIGHTING OCCURRED: 6/30/2006

LOCALITY OF OBSERVATION: Adjacent to an Alfalfa field that was being cut at the south end of S. 9th in Ashton, Fremont County.

HABITAT: In yard at field edge

CONDITIONS: Sunny and warm with light wind. Time about 4:00pm. Distance between 35 yards and about ten feet. Binocs used were Nikon 10 x 25 Mountaineer. Sun high. Bird was viewed both in sun and shade when it perched in a tree. Duration of observation about 15 minutes.

DID YOU TAKE NOTES?: Yes, later the same day

DID YOU CONSULT FIELD GUIDE OR OTHER REFERENCES?: Yes, later the same day

WHAT GUIDE(S) OR REFERENCE(S) DID YOU CONSULT?: Sibley Guide to Birds of North America

DESCRIPTION: Chunky, short-tailed bird that was larger than Lazuli Bunting. Strong face pattern with gray auriculars, pale supercilium, white throat, black lateral throat stripe that connected to black bib. Bib extended into upper breast. Breast yellow. Bill gray, thick, longer and thicker than sparrows but thinner proportionately than Black-headed Grosbeak. Rusty patch on wing. Greater coverts black with tan edges creating vertical stripes. Photos taken by Darren Clark.

BEHAVIOR: Perched on power line and in Aspen (not sure it was an Aspen) tree, sometimes singing for several minutes. Once it dropped from the power line into a shrub about 6 feet tall. When the tape was played it flew into the Aspen and soon began singing.

HOW AND WHEN DID YOU POSITIVELY IDENTIFY THE BIRD, AND WHAT CLINCHED THE IDENTIFICATION FOR YOU?

The bird was already identified. I observed the gray auriculars and pale supercilium with the bird backlit by the sun against the sky. I walked around to the other side of the bird and could see the yellow breast with white throat and black bib. This combination of field marks clinched it for me.

HOW DID YOU ELIMINATE SIMILAR SPECIES, AND WHAT WERE THEY?

There really aren't any similar species. The only other passerines that show yellow breast with band are Meadowlarks which are easily eliminated by bill shape and overall coloration as well as song.

EXPERIENCE WITH THIS SPECIES (AND SIMILAR SPECIES):

I have no prior experience with Dickcissel.

GENERAL BIRDING EXPERIENCE: 13 years.

WERE PHOTO(S), VIDEO, AND/OR AUDIO OBTAINED BY YOU?: Photo