

RECORD #: 5-B-06

IDAHO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE
RARE BIRD REPORT FORM

SPECIES:

Short-billed Dowitcher

REPORTER:

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OTHER OBSERVERS:

Lisa Weisse
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DATE REPORT PREPARED:

5/21/2006

DATE SIGHTING OCCURRED:

8/27/2005

LOCALITY OF OBSERVATION:

West end of Island Park Reservoir, near Island Park, Fremont County.

HABITAT:

Mud Flat ar receding reservoir

CONDITIONS:

Mid day on bright sunny day with little or no wind. Binocs were 10x and scope was 60x at distances as close as 15 feet. Camera used is Olympus C2100 digital at 10x optical zoom.

DID YOU TAKE NOTES?:

No, not at all

DID YOU CONSULT FIELD GUIDE OR OTHER REFERENCES?:

No, not at all

WHAT GUIDE(S) OR REFERENCE(S) DID YOU CONSULT?:

DESCRIPTION:

Shorebird with very long bill and medium length legs. Obviously a dowitcher. Juvenile plumage. All feathers of upperparts had neat, even, complete edges and tips of pale buff. Tertials have buff edges and extensive buffy internal markings that are diagnostic for Short-billed Dowitcher. Those internal markings were small buff spots or dashes arranged in a line parallel with the lower edge of the feather (on the folded wing) and they became dense enough to form a solid line on the outer half of some tertials.

BEHAVIOR:

Preening and roosted on exposed mud with Long-billed Dowitchers, Lesser Yellowlegs and one Stilt Sandpiper. No vocalizations were heard.

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

Identification of juvenile dowitchers is straight forward given reasonably close views. This individual looked fairly bright for Long-billed from a distance. Upon closer examination the diagnostic internal markings on the tertials were easily seen.

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

Juvenile Long-billed is the only species that could be confused with this individual. Snipes have longer bills and striped upperparts. As mentioned above the tertials with extensive internal markings are diagnostic and therefore eliminate Long-billed Dowitcher.

EXPERIENCE WITH THIS SPECIES (AND SIMILAR SPECIES):

I see hundreds to thousands of Dowitchers annually and spend quite a lot of time studying plumage variation, especially in Long-billed which are far more common than Short-billed.

GENERAL BIRDING EXPERIENCE:

13 years total, about 10 as a serious birder.

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

Photo