

293-01-2003

Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*)

Age: juvenile

Date: Sept. 19, 2003, ~ 10:30AM-12:00 PM

Location: Gull Point, Presque Isle State Park, Erie County

Site: Flyover at Special Management Area, on ground at Thompson Flats

Observer: Ben Coulter
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Habitat: The godwit was observed resting and feeding on a mudflat, and standing in shallow water just offshore.

Distance to bird: Probably 60 yards distant at the closest.

Conditions: Completely overcast, with strong winds and intermittent rain. Temp in the 60s.

Optics: Swarovski 8.5x42 binoculars, Leica 77mm APO scope w/ 20-60x eyepiece, Nikon Coolpix 995

Description: Overall, the bird was a medium-large, gray-brown sandpiper, with a medium length, slightly recurved bill, and somewhat long legs. The bird had a black tail and white uppertail coverts, and the axillaries and underwing coverts were blackish. It was slightly larger than a Green Heron feeding nearby.

The godwit showed a dark brown crown, blending into grayish at the back of the head. There was a bright whitish supercilium ending behind the eye, bordered by dark brown lores and an eyestripe behind the eye. The auriculars and side of the face were the same pale shade as the supercilium, creating a lot of contrast with the rest of the head. The bird showed what appeared to be rusty staining of the feathers surrounding the base of the bill. The whole of the long neck was gray, with a definite brownish cast.

The base color of the upperparts was also grayish-brown. The mantle feathers showed darker centers, creating some patterning, while the scapular feathers were gray-buff at the base blending to blackish distally, with pale buff notching on the sides of the feathers. The breast was slightly darker brownish than the rest of the underparts. The flanks, belly, and sides were light grayish-brown, with a buff tint. The vent and undertail coverts were whiter. There were small dark streaks along the rear flanks.

The wings showed a narrow white wingbar, created by white tips to the outer greater coverts, and white bases to the inner primaries, and the secondaries. Each primary was blackish, with a white rachis. When folded, each primary showed a paler blaze at the tip of the feather. The primary coverts were also black. The secondaries were grayish, with white bases. The tertials were grayish brown, becoming darker at the tip, with buffy notching along the edges. The upperwing coverts were brownish gray, with faint dark markings similar to the tertials, most prominent on the innermost coverts. The axillaries, lesser, and median underwing coverts were an ashy blackish color, while the greater were paler gray. The tail was blackish, with bright white on the uppertail coverts, prominent in flight. The folded wing extended past the tip of the tail, and the feet projected slightly beyond the tip of the tail in flight.

The bird's iris was dark. The slightly recurved bill was slightly more than twice the length of the head, and was mostly dark, with a little dull pinkish at the base of the

lower mandible. The mouth lining was pink too. The legs were blackish, and about as long as the bill.

Behavior: I first saw the bird in flight over the SMA. It circled once, then flew out of view. I figured the bird would land at Thompson Flats, where extensive mud was exposed. I found it on the ground, and watched it preening, feeding, and calling.

Vocalizations: The bird called frequently. The calls were fundamentally similar to a Marbled Godwit, but much higher and shriller, one or two syllables.

Supporting Evidence: see video stills by Ben Coulter.

Similar species: Bar-tailed Godwit never shows blackish underwings or a white wingbar. Marbled Godwit is substantially bigger, and shows large amounts of cinnamon on the wings and body in all plumages. Black-tailed Godwit is lankier, with a straighter bill, and has white, not black underwings.

Prior experience: I have seen this species twice before in Pennsylvania, in August 2001 and August 2002, at Presque Isle State Park.











Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round ~~Two~~^{ONE}

Species: Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*)

Date of Sighting: 19 September 2003 to 19 September 2003

Location: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

County : ERIE

Observer(s): Ben Coulter

Date of Submission: 2003

Submitted by: Ben Coulter

Written Description: Yes

Photo: Yes

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
G. Armistead	X							
D. Heathcote	X							
P. Guris	X							
J. Stanley	X							
E. Witmer	X							
R. Leberman	X							
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments:

7/0

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

11/8/03