

323-01-1990

Long-billed Dowitcher in Erie County

Ed Kwater

On Saturday September 22nd 1990, I was birding at Gull Point on Presque Isle State Park. Shortly after dawn (7.15 a.m.), Jerry and Linda McWilliams arrived with a small group of people from Erie Audubon Society. One member of the group, Dora Porter, located a dowitcher, Limnodromus sp. which Jerry promptly identified as a juvenile Long-billed Dowitcher, L. scolopaceus and then proceeded to attract my attention.

The bird was feeding actively in sparse vegetation at the edge of a small pond. It was remarkably confiding and allowed me to approach to within twenty feet and obtain some photographs (see enclosed). Identification of the bird was based upon the following characters:

The overall tone of the plumage was very gray. The head, breast and mantle were mid-gray with the crown being a darker shade of gray. A thin, black eyestripe extended from the base of the bill to well behind the eye. A prominent white supercilium also extended from the bill base to well behind the eye. The scapulars were dark gray-brown with prominent tawny yellow edges, this being the most colorful part of the bird. The wing-coverts were gray with black feather shafts, paler whitish edoon and buffish tips. The tertials were dark

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gray with narrow buffish-white edges, but otherwise they were unmarked. The primaries were black with very narrow white edges at the tips, indicating the freshness of the plumage. The tips of the folded wings extended almost to the tip of the tail.

The breast was gray with thin black streaks at the sides and sparse black spots at the sides of the lower neck. There was a cinnamon buff tinge to the lower breast and flanks with some gray mottling on the flanks. The belly was grayish white. The undertail coverts were white with four longitudinal rows of prominent black chevrons and bars and a few spots. The tail was barred black and white, the black bars being slightly wider than the white ones. In flight the prominent white rump patch extended as a "V" up the back. The white trailing edge to the secondaries could also be seen in flight.

The bill was extremely long, approximately twice the length of the head, stout at the base and straight. It was black with a bluish-gray basal third. The legs were fairly long and grayish-green.

The call was a fairly quiet, sharp "keek", heard about a dozen times, but always uttered singly. The bird fed with the characteristic "sewing-machine" probing action characteristic of the genus and reminded me of a Common Snipe, Gallinago gallinago in this respect.

Total observation time was approximately 45 minutes. Weather conditions were stormy with a 25 mile per hour north-westerly wind blowing.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # of

Species: Long-billed Dowitcher

Date of Sighting: September 22, 1990

Observer(s): Ed Kwater

Date of Submission: 1990

Submitted by: Ed Kwater

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater	X						
B. Haas	X						
F. Haas	X						
R. Leberman	X						
G. McWilliams	X						
S. Santner	X						
P. Schwalbe	X						
TOTALS	7						
DECISION	X						

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

B. Haas

Date:

3-24-91