



625-01-2003

Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*)

Age: possibly adult

Date: Oct. 6, 2003, ~10:00 AM

Location: Leo's Landing, Presque Isle State Park, Erie County

Observer: Ben Coulter
3431 Argyle Ave
Erie, PA 16505-1804
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Habitat: The bird was discovered in a patch of dead sedges surrounded by rushes and assorted small shrubs.

Distance to bird: It was viewed at under twenty feet.

Conditions: mostly sunny

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

Description: This was a small, buffy, short-billed, short-tailed wren. The whole head was basically buff, washed brown on the crown, which was prominently streaked with blackish and white. There was also a buffy supercilium, brown postocular line, and faint eye arcs. The ear coverts had a faint brown wash, with some spotting. The throat blended to whitish. The nape was brownish, spotted darker.

The breast, sides, belly, flanks, vent, and undertail coverts were buffy cinnamon, brightest on the rear flanks. The mantle and scapulars were brown and black, with bright white shaft streaks. The rump was orangish-buff. The wing coverts and flight feathers were blackish-brown, deeply notched with buff and rufous, making the wings look barred. The tertials were also blackish-brown, deeply notched with pale. The tail was quite short, and the rectrices were blackish-brown, notched buff.

The iris was dark brown. The slightly decurved bill was blackish-gray on the culmen, blending to straw-colored on the tomlia. The base of the maxilla was straw, becoming dark at the tip. The bill was quite short, and if superimposed backwards, it would barely clear the back of the eye. The legs were pinkish.

Behavior: This wren was very furtive and shy, and would usually remain hidden in the sedges or low bushes, but responded to spishing by jumping up to investigate. It was nervous, flicking its tail and bobbing forward repeatedly.

Supporting Evidence: see photographs by Ben Coulter.

Similar species: Marsh Wren is the primary confusion species. This species has a longer decurved bill, uniformly dark cap, bright white supercilium, longer tail, more solidly rufous body color, and less barring on the wings. Marsh Wrens also tend to prefer cattail marshes. Winter Wren should also be considered. It is very small and appears dark, with extensive barring on the brown flanks. It is also not normally found in the same habitat as Sedge Wren.

Prior experience: I have seen this species once before in Pennsylvania, in October 2002 at the Penn Warner tract in lower Bucks County.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Sedge Wren (Cistothorus platensis)

Date of Sighting: 6 October 2003 to 6 October 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

Video: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut	X							
D. Heathcote			X					
P. Guris	X							
J. Stanley	X							
E. Witmer	X							
R. Leberman	X							
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	6		1					
DECISION	X							

Comments:

7/10

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

10/9/04