

Feb 19 2001
CFO-RC FILE #: 2001-6
RESULTS: _____

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS SIGHT RECORD FORM.

(Please print or type. Attach photographs, drawings, and additional pages if necessary).

Species: American Woodcock
(Common Name)

Scolopax minor
(Scientific Name)

Date(s) of observation: February 19, 2001.

Number of birds heard: one.

Sex: unknown, I assume both males and females give the "peent" call, if not, then it was a male.

Plumage: unknown, I assume adult.

Exact location: Lake Henry grove.

County: Crowley.

Nearest town: Sugar City or Ordway.

Length of Observation: unknown.

Time(s) of Observation: about 1 p.m.

Other observers who saw the bird with you: Mark Janos.

Other observers who independently saw the bird(s): none that I know of.

Light conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s) position): Sunny, it doesn't matter, as the bird was only heard.
It wasn't windy.

Optical equipment used: Ears only.

Distance from bird (s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): Unknown, called from the middle of the Lake Henry grove.

Was the bird photographed: no.

If so, have you submitted photos? n/a.

Who took the photographs? n/a.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: The bird was in a small riparian area on the n.w. side of Lake Henry, Crowley County, in southeastern Colorado. The habitat in the grove has cottonwoods with moist dead leaves on the ground. The grove also has a dense area of low bushes and a small marsh with cattails.

Describe the bird's behavior (flying; feeding; habits; behaviors used in identifying the species or in supporting the identification): Mark Janos and I were walking back to the car, when we both heard a distinctive "peent" call coming from inside the Lake Henry grove. It called again two more times, with about a 10 second period between the calls. Then about a minute later, it called again, three more times, with about a 10 second period between each "peent" call it made. After it called the final time, we walked back through the grove, hoping to see or flush the bird, no such luck. Both Mark and I knew the bird was a woodcock, because of the bird we got to hear and see displaying at Rocky Ford SWA, Otero County, Colorado in spring 2000. After I got home, Mark called me, and played the tape of an American Woodcock, and the "peent" sound was just like the tape.

Describe the bird in detail: This is the most important part of this report. Include overall size and shape, and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings, and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the (bird(s)).

Describe other details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, etc. That were important in making the

identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted: you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches, or copy of field notes): We did not see the bird. We heard it well though, giving the "peent" call six times. The habitat looks prefect for a woodcock, and both Mark and I thought that the Lake Henry grove would be a good spot for a woodcock to show up some day. I identified the bird by the "peent" call it gave. It sounded like the bird was on the ground, giving the call. There were no other birds in the grove, except for a couple of Song Sparrows, so there was nothing else that could be doing a perfect American Woodcock call, except for an American Woodcock.

Describe the bird's song and calls if heard: As noted above, the bird gave a "peent" call six times, and it sounded like the bird was calling from the ground.

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: Nothing really sounds like the distinctive "peent" call of the American Woodcock. Common Nighthawk perhaps, though they are different. European Starling could imitate something, though there wasn't any in there, and the call was so perfect everytime, that there was no way to bird could be a starling of any thing else.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:
I have seen one American Woodcock at Valco Ponds in Pueblo, Colorado on Dec.15, 1997, as well as hearing and seeing one at Rocky Ford SWA near Rocky Ford, Colorado, in spring 2000.

List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation): I listened to Janos's woodcock tape after the sighting, a perfect match.

This report was made from notes taken during or after observation, or later from memory .

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