

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☒ A

Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: Sprague's Pipit | Anthus spragueii
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date: October 12, 1991Number of birds seen: 2 Sex: Unknown Plumage: Bird 1 - adult
Bird 2 - juvenile?Locality: Northeastern most Colorado - Road 30, 7 miles east of Highway 385 Elevation: 3700' ±Nearest town: 8 1/2 mile ESE of Julesburg - (Same locality as 1989 birds) County: SedgwickTime(s) observed: Bird 1 1:50 - 2:00 PM Bird 2 2:10 - 2:15 PMDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): Bird 1 10 min ; Bird 2 5 min.

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

None

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)

Someone reported 4 Sprague's Pits on Oct 13th

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

Strong sun and fairly strong wind made viewing difficultOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): 20x telescopeDistance, and how measured: Bird 1 250 feet Bird 2 100 feetIf photographed, type of equipment and film: No

Who else photographed the bird? _____

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

Bird 1 called from north of the stubble field from open plowed ground with very short winter wheat. This bird walked. I did not force it to fly.
Bird 2 flew several times ahead of me in the 20-foot wide green grassy strip around the stubble field.

Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern. Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observe in the field:

Bird 1 Sparrow-size with a yellowish breast with brown streaks (breast color more like American Pipit than any birds I saw in 1989 - different sub-species ??) streaking only on upper breast - lower breast plain and paler. Back of head streaked brown. Back plain dark brown become blackish brown on lower back and tail. I did not see the scaly pattern on the back that is shown in National Geographic. The face was pale buff with a very large black eye surrounded by a small white eye-ring. The legs were pink. Bill pale, moderately slender.

Description (continued):

Bird 2 This bird was much paler than Bird 1. The breast was off-white with more subdued streaking than Bird 1. The face paler but same large black eye and eye-ring as Bird 1. Bird 2 had an off-white semi-collar at the base of the plain ear patch that was much more prominent than that illustrated in National Geographic. When the bird flew I did not pick up white on the outer tail feathers but I really struggled with this bird because I was looking into the sun. Except for these and the pink legs really glistened in the sun. I was trying hard to make this a Vesper Sparrow, the black eye, I was trying hard to make this a Vesper Sparrow. Bird 2 back same as Bird 1

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

Bird 1 uttered 1 short pipit-like call from the ground. Otherwise I probably would not have spotted the bird way out in the winter wheat field.

Bird 2 - No sound.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

Flat open farmland just south and above the S. Platte River lowlands. This year the stubble field (last year's wheat cut 10" high and weeds grown in) is totally surrounded by plowed ground - mostly planted to winter wheat. The birds seem to like the low grassy strip around the stubble.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

Longspurs have heavier bills, prominent ear patches, intricate back patterns. They do not have large black eyes or pink legs. Vesper Sparrow and other sparrows also do not have large black eyes and pink legs (Field Sparrow has pink legs but small pale eye)

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

Saw 6-8 Sprague's Pipits in this same locality in 1989. I could not find them in 1990. I think ~~the~~ 1990 was a bad year because we had several cold fronts with 2-4 inches of snow. Early October this year has been entirely Indian Summer with no snow.

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: None

b) after observation:

Birds of North America

Goeda Guide (a very poor condition of Sprague's Pipit)

National Geographic

(fairly accurate illustration of Sprague's Pipit)

This report was written from reports made during _____, after observation _____ from memory ☒
Date and time report was written: October 17, 1991

Reporting observer: L. W. Dan Bridges Signature: L. W. Dan Bridges

Address: 1925 S. Vaughn Way #207 Aurora, CO, 80014

All reports will be maintained permanently at the address below:

Return to:

CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS
DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
CITY PARK
DENVER, CO 80205

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☒

Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: SPRAGUE'S PIPIT | ANTHUS SPRAGUEII
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): 17th OCTOBER 1991Number of birds seen: 4 Sex: UNKNOWN Plumage: ADULTLocality: 7 miles east of Hwy 385 in Road 30 Elevation: 4300'??Nearest town: JULESBURG County: SEDGWICKTime(s) observed: BETWEEN 11 AM AND NOON: 2 BIRDS STUDIED FOR 10-15 MINUTES EACHDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 2 MORE SEEN FLYING AWAY

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)

DAN BRIDGES

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

WALKING TO THE NORTH WITH SUN DIRECTLY BEHIND ME - BRIGHT SUNSHINE

Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): 10x BINOCULARS, 20x TELESCOPEDistance, and how measured: BIRDS STUDIED WERE 15-25 YARDS AWAY

If photographed, type of equipment and film: _____

Who else photographed the bird? _____

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

BIRDS WERE IN WINTER WHEAT FIELD OR ON ITS EDGE. WHEN DISTURBED THEY MOSTLY
FLEW INTO THE COVER OF THE CENTRAL STUBBLE FIELD.

Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern. Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observe in the field:

FIRST SAW BIRD FLYING AWAY. IT HAD CONSPICUOUS WHITE OUTER TAIL FEATHERS. I THEN
LOOKED AT IT THROUGH THE TELESCOPE. THE SIDE VIEW WAS OF A LIGHTISH BROWN BIRD
WITH A LIGHT FACE AND A DARK EYE. CLOSER OBSERVATION ALSO REVEALED :-

Description (continued):

WHITE EDGING TO MOST OF THE BACK FEATHERS AND TWO PROMINENT WING BARS. THE FLANKS WERE BUFF AND THE CHEST CLEARLY DARK STREAKED. THE BELLY WAS WHITE. THERE WAS A DISTINCT WHITE EYE RING. THE BILL WAS QUITE LONG AND POINTED - DAGGER LIKE, AND IT SEEMED QUITE THICK AT THE BASE. I SAW THE LEGS BRIEFLY ON ONE BIRD AND THEY WERE PINK. I DIDN'T SEE THE RUMP ON EITHER BIRD, AND IN FLIGHT I COULDN'T TELL THAT TWO OUTER TAIL FEATHERS WERE ALL WHITE.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

ALL BIRDS GAVE A SERIES OF LOW CALL NOTES WHEN DISTURBED - OFTEN GIVEN WHEN FLYING. MY KNOWLEDGE OF VOCALIZATIONS ISN'T GREAT, BUT IT DIDN'T SOUND LIKE AMERICAN PIPIT.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

USUALLY FOUND IN WINTER WHEAT FIELD OR ITS EDGE - OFTEN FLEW INTO COVER OF STUBBLE FIELD.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

AMERICAN PIPIT - FACE PATTERN, BACK PATTERN, CHEST PATTERN, BILL SHAPE, LEG COLOR

LONGSPURS - MANY PLUMAGE DIFFERENCES, DIFFERENT BILL, TAIL PATTERN, LEG COLOR, CALL NOTE.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

NEVER SEEN SPRAGUE'S PIPIT BEFORE - VERY FAMILIAR WITH AMERICAN PIPIT

AND COLORADO LONGSPURS (NEVER SEEN SMITH'S LONGSPUR).

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC FIELD GUIDE

b) after observation:

This report was written from reports made during X, after observation _____ from memory _____
Date and time report was written: 6pm OCTOBER 17, 1991

Reporting observer: PETER R. GENT Signature: Peter R. Gent

Address: 55 S 35th ST, BOULDER, CO 80303

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DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTINGS
FOR
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

Species: Sprague's Pipit; Anthus spragueii
(Vernacular name) (Scientific name)

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students -- those studying occurrences 50 years from now -- must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Dates (s): 19 Oct 1991 Time Bird Seen: 10:20 am. to 10:35 ~~pm~~ a.m.

Locality: 6.8 miles east & 1.0 mile south of
Julesburg, Colorado
Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: B&L Elite 10x42 binos; KOWA 60x scope (at 20 yds).

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: one Sex: - Plumage: adult

Light conditions: Excellent; sunny, from behind.

Distance from bird, and how measured: As close as 20 yds (piced off).

Describe the bird's overall behavior: Bird walked casually through the grass and out into a plowed field where it perched quite still on a dirt clod. It flushed if I approached too close on foot, flew a short distance, and landed; hiding in the grasses. Does not wag tail. Has an alert, upright look.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:
Border between wheat stubble and plowed corn field. The border is narrow, with dried weeds and short, green volunteer wheat emerging.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):
None

APPENDIX II Continued

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough). Describe what you actually saw in the field. Small (~5" long), slender, upright pipit. Legs and feet pink. Bill

long and slender, dark upper mandible but pink below. White outer tail feathers, blackish inner tail feathers, but 2 central tail feathers were greyish-brown. Rump greyish-brown with dark streaks. Feathers on back blackish with distinct pale, tan fringes. Back is distinctive, with feathers in long, neat scaly rows. Shoulder grey-brown; wing brown with tan wingbars. Tertiaries dark brown with broad pale edges. Crown dark, with distinct tan streaks, finer on hindneck. Face bright buff with darker smudge behind eye. Black eye with bright white eye-ring, quite wide but fading into buffy face. Throat and belly bluish. Breast heavily overlaid in center and sides (but not on lower flanks) with dark streaks. Venter and tail white.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

A "sweet" "sweet sweet" call given as it flushed.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Long slender bill and white outer tail feathers indicate a pipit. Water Pipit has nearly unstreaked back & crown, dark legs, no eye-ring. Other pipits lack eye-ring, have streaks on flanks.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I saw one Sprague's Pipit well, and heard and saw several others in flight in early Oct 1988 in Kansas

This report was written from notes made during _____ after ☒ observation; from memory _____.

Name (print) : MARK JANOS

Mailing address: 10 SEDUM CT. PUEBLO, CO 81001

Signature: Mark Janos

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