

CFO-ORC FILE # 1998-48

## COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

ACCEPTED (7-0)NEW STATE RECORD       UNUSUAL RECORD Xrec'd 9-28-98**Species:** Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*)**Date:** 19 September <sup>1998</sup>~~1994~~**Number seen:** one**Sex:** unknown**Plumage:** unknown**Locality:** Prewitt Reservoir**Elevation:** ??**Nearest town:** Merino**County:** Washington**Time observed:** about 17:30 MDT**Duration of observation:** about 15 minutes

**Description:** A basically gray-and-white sandpiper larger than nearby Sanderlings with a stout, straight, blackish bill that was roughly as long as the head was deep. The top side of the bird was the same tone gray from the bill over the crown down the neck and back. The wings were the same tone of gray as the rest of the upperparts. At one point, I thought I was seeing scaly wing coverts (thus making the bird a juvenile), but the distance precluded being convinced (also, see below). In flight, the bird showed no wing stripe and the rump and tail were approximately the same color as the back, though the rump was slightly paler; again, distance precluded precise observation of detail. The underparts were mostly whitish, but with a strong gray wash across the upper chest connected to the sides of the neck, thus completely isolating the white throat. This last feature might suggest that the bird was an adult, if I remember correctly. I did not notice any streaking on the underparts, though I don't think that I would have been able to see such at such distance. The legs were dark; I could not discern eye color (though, of course, eye colors other than dark are exceedingly rare in this family). The bird foraged by probing into mud. It was noticeably larger than nearby Sanderlings which were whiter overall and more spangled than the Knot. It was about the size of nearby Stilt Sandpipers, though it was much chunkier and had a noticeably shorter, straighter bill.

Similar species eliminated by description: Sanderlings are smaller, paler. Stilt Sandpipers are thinner, longer-billed, and yellowish-legged. Curlew Sandpipers have longer, thinner, decurved bills and bright, white rumps. Surfbirds are shorter- and yellow-legged, darker, shorter-billed, stockier. Purple and Rock sandpipers are more similar to Surfbird than to Red Knot. All other contenders are either taller, larger, smaller, pale-legged, long-billed or some combination of the above.

**Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):** I did not hear it.

**What is your prior experience with this and similarly-appearing species?** I have seen 1000s of Red Knots, mostly on the East Coast (particularly in NY and NJ). I have also seen 100s to 1000s of most possible confusion species, though I've only seen a smattering of Surfbirds and no Rock Sandpipers (but, since Rock and Purple are virtually identical in basic plumage anyway, it's a moot point, since I've seen 100s of Purple Sandpipers).

**Light conditions:** sun was low behind us

**Optical equipment used:** Kowa 30x wide angle

**Distance, and how estimated:** estimated at 250 feet minimum distance

**Other observers who saw the bird with you:** Sue Bonfield

**Other observers who saw the bird independently:** John Vanderpoel, Brandon Percival, Nick Komar among others

**If photographed, type of equipment and film:** did not photograph

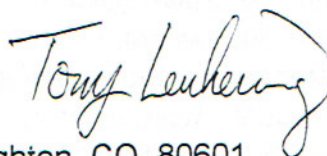
**List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:**

**a) at time of observation:** none

**b) after observation:** none

This report was written directly from field notes taken at the time of observation.

**Reporting observer:** Tony Leukering

**Signature:** 

**Address:** Colorado Bird Observatory, 13401 Picadilly Road, Brighton, CO 80601

**Date report was written:** 20 September 1998