

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

HUDSONIAN GODWIT (2)

Limosa haemastica

Rec'd 1/20/94 up

ACCEPT 7-0

Location: Nee So Pah Reservoir; near Lamar, Kiowa County, ColoradoDate: May 13, 1994Setting:

About 5 of us were near the end of a long day of "pre-scouting" for a CFO field trip the next day. I found these two birds in mid-afternoon and we spent about an hour pursuing them as they flew low, back and forth across the lake. The original sighting was in flight with the birds well over 500 yards away. We walked closer to the birds and eventually got as close as about 200 yards as they perched on an island with other shorebirds, including Marbled Godwits. I observed them with binoculars and my Kowa TSN-4 scope (20-60x).

Description:

These were large shorebirds, about 16" long, including the bill. They were slightly smaller than the Marbled Godwits with which they waded. These birds were in breeding plumage and were very striking in flight (see next paragraph). The underparts were reddish, and at a distance the birds were overall darker appearing than the Marbled Godwits. The neck was rather long and the bill was long and slightly upcurved, about three times the length of the head, and pale at the base. The neck and head were not as dark, nor as reddish, as the body.

In flight: From above, the back and wings were very dark, almost blackish. There was a distinct, narrow white wing stripe in the upper wing. The tail was black, bordered by a narrow band of white on the lower rump. From below, the bird had black wing linings (coverts and axillaries). Overall the black tail, wing and wing linings, contrasting with the white rump and wing stripe gave a distinctive, striking look.

Similar Species:

The large size and recurved bill eliminate most other shorebirds. The American Avocet is orange above and brightly patterned. The Greater Yellowlegs and Willet are whitish, not red, underneath and have straight bills. Curlews are distinguished by downcurved bills. Of the godwits: In flight, Black-tailed Godwit is most similar, but has a stronger white wing bar and has white, not black, wing linings. Marbled Godwit is not reddish below, lacks the white rump, lacks the black tail and lacks the white wing stripe and black wing linings. Bar-tailed Godwit lacks white rump and black wing linings.

Experience with Species:

I have seen many Marbled Godwits. I have seen five previous Hudsonian Godwits in Colorado, all in breeding plumage and all in May. I saw small flocks of Hudsonian Godwits in Texas in April 1984. I have never seen Bar-tailed or Black-tailed godwits.

This report is prepared from brief notes made after observation.

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