

May 15, 2000

Red 5/19/00 apl

7-0 (A)

To: Colorado Bird Records Committee

Fr: Bob Righter

Re: Hudsonian Godwit

To Whom It May Concern:

Setting: While on a scheduled DFO trip to Bonnie Reservoir on Saturday, May 13 between 1700 and 1730, while viewing the southwest corner of the reservoir from the shoreline at Forester Grove Campground we observed an male Hudsonian Godwit.

From the angle we were scoping the sun was over our right shoulder and slightly behind us. The estimated viewing distance to where the Hudsonian Godwit was feeding was 1/4 mile. The temperature was 65° and the wind was only slightly gusty and there were no heat waves at that time of day. The conditions for viewing were excellent.

The water level at Bonnie Reservoir was low exposing a shoreline, which was most prevalent in the southwest corner of the reservoir. For the two day trip we tallied 16 species of shorebirds which indicated Bonnie was very attractive to shorebirds during our stay.

Other DFO participants: Mary Burger, Sue Schulman, and Chuck Walter

Particulars: In between two Marbled Godwits was a slightly smaller shorebird with a very long bill. The two godwits and the shorebird in question were feeding in a slough behind the main shoreline, so all we could see was the bird's body and only a little bit of their legs. We could therefore not estimate the leg length in proportion to the body.

The first suite of field marks that became apparent for this unidentified shorebird were the color tones of dark brick red for ventral side of the body, a vaguely grayish head, and the back which appeared dark.

Two possibilities occurred to us, a Hudsonian Godwit and a Long-billed Dowitcher. While the bird was feeding we thought we detected red on the bill but we were not sure if this was a fact or if we were just hoping this was true. We watched for a half an hour and were on the verge of giving it up when the bird in question flew up from the slough to the higher shore and exposed its dorsal side. We could clearly see the bright white upper tail coverts contrasting with a black tail. While up on the shore the better views of the bill clearly indicated the basal part of the bill was red, the proximate was not red and appeared dark. We looked for the godwit on May 14 but could not relocate it.