



IOS IORC <iorcommittee@gmail.com>

Rare Bird Documentation Submission

1 message

Wed, Dec 26, 2012 at
6:27 PM

To: iorcommittee@gmail.com, [REDACTED]

1) Reason for documentation: Unusual species Christmas Bird Count Record

2) Species: Hoary Redpoll

3) Number of birds: 1

4) Age/Sex/Plumage: adult male

5) Date: 22 December 2012

6) Location: Klehm Arboretum, Rockford (Winnebago)

7) Observers: Daniel T. Williams
Russ Cline

8) Your name: Daniel T. Williams

9) Mailing address: [REDACTED]

10) E-mail address: [REDACTED]

11) Others agreeing with the identification: Larry Balch, Brad Grover, Randy Grover, Gary Jahnke. I called Brad and Larry upon discovering the bird. They immediately drove to the arboretum with their CBC teammates, found the flock, and called me to confirm that they had located the bird and agreed that it was a Hoary Redpoll.

12) Others not agreeing with the identification: None known.

13) Description of bird: We found a fairly large flock of redpolls (93 total redpolls). Upon spotting the flock, we moved in closer (30') and looked again. I quickly saw one that stood out because it was very frosty white, much brighter, and whiter, than all others in the flock, distinctly so in comparison to the adult male Common Redpolls.

The subject was in close proximity (1-2') of a male Common Redpoll, presenting us with an immediate opportunity to compare the two.

Moving in even closer to 15', the bird's position was, at first, ahead and above us, and later, for nearly 5 minutes, was almost directly above and in front of us with the sun mostly at our back or quartering over our shoulders.

The subject was a small finch (less than 6"), slightly larger than a Pine Siskin. At first, appeared to be same size as the other redpolls, but, in comparison to Common Redpolls close by, subject looked very slightly bulkier, but that may have been a vagary of its puffed out feathers. Very frosty pale back, head, breast and belly, particularly in comparison to all other redpolls nearby. Brighter white secondaries and coverts (bright, large wing bar) than all other redpolls, even male Commons, in comparison.

Breast white, clean and unstreaked, with very pale pink wash mostly on sides of upper breast. Very faint small streak on side of breast at bend of wing barely protruded toward the breast. Other redpolls had richer reddish pink

coloration on breast. Subject's pink was much subdued and less extensive than male Commons by direct comparison.

Flanks barely streaked with a faint grayish brown (2 faint lines) from below bend of wing back to below rear wingbar. Undertail coverts and vent white and completely unstreaked. (This view from under the bird at close range. Even though the bird's body presented a slight shadow because of the angle of the sun, I was close enough to be able to get good views of the undertail and ascertain the absence of streaking.

The face was very pale (white) with only a very slight buffy brown wash on and around the auricular area. Nearby Commons, including males, had defined brownish auricular area or crescent vertical line across the auricular area. No pink coloration on the face or cheeks. Pale pink wash stopped on the breast before reaching the neck area. The whitish face extended above the eye. Eye was dark.

Chin was a pale charcoal/grayish, not as extensive as the black chins of other redpolls with which it was associating or in proximity.

Red cap on front of crown most visible when the bird was leaning forward to eat catkin seeds.

Back was frosty white with pale gray-brownish streaking. No well-defined, or dark, streaking on the back.

I was only able to get 2 quick views of the bird's rump while it was feeding because the bird was above me. The rump was bright white. I did not see any streaking on the bird's rump, although the edges of the rump were partially concealed beneath the bird's folded wings. The center of the rump was unstreaked.

Tail was dark gray/slate colored and notched in the center at the tips.

Conical bill was pale orange/yellow. Bill was not as long or sharp as Pine Siskin, but shorter and thicker. I did not regard the forehead as presenting the "pushed in" appearance of the face/bill, as described by some.

Feet/legs were black.

14) Description of behaviour: Feeding on Birch catkins with large group of Common Redpolls in a small stand of birches. Trees were close together-not more than 20-25 feet from end to end (estimate). Brief, short sallies back and forth between trees to change feeding locations.

15) Description of vocalizations: I can't distinguish between Common and Hoary calls. A number of the members of the flock were vocalizing "redpolls" flight calls and chatter.

16) Description of habitat: Small stand of Birches ~ each 15-25' tall with catkins in an area predominately surrounded by Spruce, Pine, and Arborvitae.

17) Optical equipment used: Leica 10X

18) Distance/how measured: 15-50', mostly 15-20'.

19) Time of observation: 11:10-11:20 a.m.

20) Total time of observation: 10 minutes continuously.

21) Weather conditions: clear, sunny, with sun behind the observers or quartering the bird from behind the observers.

22) Previous experience: Often in northern MN during CBCs there every other year. In Alaska, daily in Nome on trips in 2004 and 2006, and previously Churchill, Manitoba. Several times in IL.

23) How were similar species eliminated? See species description for contrast with Common Redpolls, with which it was associating during the entire time of observation, including, from time to time, within 6 inches of several male Common Redpolls.

24) Were photos taken? No

25) Photographer's name:

26) Books consulted, advice received: I checked the Sibley redpoll rating scale on the internet when I returned home. The subject graded out at 16-17.

27) Length of time after field notes were recorded: immediately

28) Length of time after this form was completed: 4 days

29) Additional remarks: