

# LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

## REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or a similar format when submitting records for review (to assure that all pertinent information is accounted for). Attach additional pages as necessary. Please print or type. Attach xerox of field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed, mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216.

1. English and Scientific names: Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):  
Ten, including one or more adult males.
3. Locality: LOUISIANA: Caddo Par.; Shreveport, Shreveport Regional Airport
4. Date(s) when observed: 25 January 2020
5. Time(s) of day when observed: off and on from about 9:45-11:00 AM.
6. Reporting observers and address: Steven W. Cardiff & Donna L. Dittmann
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): Charlie Lyon, Terry Davis et al. Patton.
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s): None.
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light):  
Weather clear, 40-55 F, wind SE 5-8 mph; good to excellent viewing conditions, group was able to maneuver to allow observations with mid-AM sun behind observers.
10. Optical equipment (type, power, and condition): Leica 10X binoculars – in good condition.
11. Distance to bird(s): as close as 30 ft. during flushes, then birds were generally 50-200+ feet as they circled.
12. Duration of observation: about 10 minutes combined over a 1.25 hr. period, involving at least 5 flushing events.
13. Habitat: open expanses of short grass to E/SE of airport runways and hangars.

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): It took at least 30 minutes and a mile of walking before we first flushed the flock. Terry Davis had thought he heard some rattle calls prior to the first flush so we kept working that general area and the flock finally got up. Charlie was using playback to try to make the birds circle after flushing. When the flock first got up the light was bad and they did not seem to respond to the playback. The birds moved off to the SW quite a distance and landed. We marked the spot and circled around to the SE and then approached the landing spot from the SW with good light. We almost were starting to think that we had the wrong landing location when individuals started to flush- they would not flush until we were right on top of them and then starting getting up in 1's, and 2's at a time until the whole flock was up. This time the playback seemed to work better and the flock circled around us a few times before they headed off to the north and landed again. We might have flushed them one more with the same results and then we backed off as another group of observers were on their way. The first group of observers departed and Lyon, Davis, Dittmann, and Cardiff remained to mark where they birds had landed. When the second group arrived, we proceeded to flush the flock again with the same results. After this, the birds started scattering a little more and we flushed a few of them another 1-2 times before leaving them alone.

15. Description (include only what was actually seen, *not what "should" have been seen*; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species, body bulk, shape, proportions, bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species): See photos by Charlie Lyon and Donna Dittmann in eBird list at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S63793730>

Obvious longspurs, sparrow-like birds in size, shape, and bill morphology, with white outer two pairs of rectrices, generally rich buffy under parts, and typical longspur face pattern with pale yebrow, dark postocular line, and dark outline to the auriculars. Presumed adult males had distinctive white patch on the upper lesser wing coverts.

16. Voice: a dry rattle.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Other Longspurs. Voice most similar to Lapland Longspur, which if present we think would stand out as sounding different from Smith's we would be able to tell them apart (also Smith's do not have a similar 'tew' note usually heard when Laps flush). Among longspurs, a tail pattern with a narrow white border (white outer rectrices) is only shared with Lap. However, Laps do not have uniform buffy underparts – nor share a similar face or wing covert pattern of Smith's, and especially that of adult male Smith's, which were present. Chestnut-collared Longspur can have uniform buffy underparts in winter and thus most similar to Smith's in that feature, but

CCLOs have a very different flight call and tail pattern with more extensive white on the outer rectrices and is also smaller.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): Yes, by Charlie Lyon and Donna L. Dittmann (attached).

19. Previous experience with this species: Lifer for DLD (!); SWC saw the species once previously, at this same location back in winter of 1979-80.

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):  
None.

21. This description is written from: \_\_\_\_\_ notes made during the observation (\_\_\_\_\_ notes attached?); \_\_\_\_\_ notes made after the observation (date: \_\_\_\_\_); ✓ memory and photographs.

22. Are you positive of your identification if not, explain: yes

23. Signatures of reporters: Steve W. Cardiff & Donna L Dittmann Date: 7 Feb 2021 Time: 1:20 PM









