

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* in Yucatan, Mexico

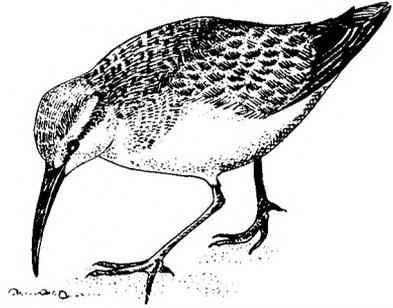
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Se da a conocer el primer *Calidris ferruginea* en México, un adulto en plumaje invernal en Las Coloradas, Yucatán, el 27 noviembre 1993. Existía un registro visual anterior en San Blas, Nayarit, en enero 1990 que seguramente fuera esta especie, pero las notas tomadas no son suficientes como para asegurar un primer registro. *Calidris ferruginea* es registrado en forma regular como vagante en Norteamérica, particularmente en el este de USA.

On 27 November 1993, the authors discovered a winter plumaged Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* among Stilt *C. himantopus* and Western Sandpipers *C. mauri* at Las Coloradas, Yucatan, Mexico. It was watched at ranges of c. 10 m with binoculars from 16h00–16h30, as it fed in shallow water east of, and parallel to, an embankment in the salt lagoons; the sun was low behind us, resulting in excellent lighting conditions. The following description is from notes made during and immediately after the sighting.

Initial impression of a bird much like Dunlin *C. alpina* in overall size and shape but with a prominent white supercilium and whiter underparts. Thus, in shape it suggested a large Western Sandpiper but its size was similar to Stilt Sandpiper. Wings long, reaching at least to the tail tip. Black bill as long, or longer, than adjacent Stilt Sandpiper, straight for c. 1 cm and then uniformly decurved to tapered tip. Legs dark, probably black and clearly not yellow like those of adjacent Stilt Sandpiper. In flight, feet did not project well beyond the tail tip as on Stilt Sandpiper. Crown, nape and upperparts buffy grey with paler edgings giving slightly scalloped effect. The bird was flushed twice and its solidly white lower rump and uppertail-coverts noted. Tail similar shade of grey to upperparts; a prominent white wingbar extended along c. 3/4 of the upperwing. Supercilium, throat, foreneck and underparts whitish without any obvious buff wash or dusky markings. The bird was not heard to call. Its size and shape, long decurved bill, dark legs, whitish supercilium and underparts, white wingbar and solidly white uppertail-coverts are diagnostic of Curlew Sandpiper and eliminate Dunlin and Stilt Sandpiper, the two most similar species. All observers have extensive experience with this species in Europe and recognized the Las Coloradas bird as Curlew Sandpiper.

Curlew Sandpiper is reported regularly as a vagrant in North America, particularly in the eastern USA¹ but has not been reported previously from Mexico, although Howell & Webb² noted that it "probably occurs [in eastern] Mexico". There is an



Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* (Lyn Wells)

earlier sight report of the species from San Blas, Nayarit, in January 1990 (R. Knapton *in litt.* to S. N. G. Howell). Whilst the San Blas bird probably was a Curlew Sandpiper, the brief notes taken were insufficient to support a first record (S. N. G. Howell pers. comm.).

Acknowledgements

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References

1. DeSante, D. F. & Pyle, P. (1986) *Distributional checklist of North American birds*. Lee Vining, California: Artemesia Press.
2. Howell, S. N. G. & Webb, S. (1995) *A guide to the birds of Mexico and northern Central America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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