

UTAH SIGHTING OF HUDSONIAN GODWIT

Account by Keith E. Evans

On Sunday, October 29, 1995, I observed and photographed a Hudsonian Godwit along the causeway to Antelope Island, Davis County, Utah. The bird was first observed by Sheila Noall and I at about 9:30am. The weather was calm, partly cloudy, and the light was good. The Godwit was feeding near the first bridge on the way out to Antelope Island. The bird was first sighted through 7 X 42 Leitz binoculars. After noting differences from the more common Marbled Godwit, a spotting scope was used for a more detailed look. The scope was used at between 20 and 30 power settings. The first unusual characteristics observed were the more grayish coloration (compared to the Marbled Godwit) and the black tail. A repositioning gave a good view of the white rump patch. I photographed the Hudsonian Godwit with an Olympus camera, a 400mm Novaflex telephoto lens, and Kodachrome 200 film. Enclosed are two prints. The first is a 5X7 inch print of the best transparency showing a side view of the bird. The second is a 3X5 inch print that is out of focus, but is of the bird flying away and shows the white rump patch, the black tail, and the characteristic wing pattern.

The Hudsonian Godwit was still in the same place at about 2:00pm when Sheila and I returned from a day of birding on Antelope Island. Later, I called John Bellmon. John and I returned to Antelope Island causeway at about 4:00pm. The bird was in the same place and still feeding intently. The bird seemed very hungry and spent the entire day feeding next to the road at the first bridge. John and I viewed the Godwit in good light with our binoculars. Other birds observed in close proximity included Eared Grebes (including one partial albino), Northern Shovelers, Sanderlings, Western Sandpipers, Least Sandpipers, Killdeer, American Avocets, California Gulls, Ring-billed Gulls, Lesser Scaup, and Willets.

/s/ Keith E. Evans