

**RARE SPECIES DOCUMENTATION**  
**Records of Vermont Birds**

The following form has been prepared to encourage full documentation, when requested, of rare or unseasonal birds in the state of Vermont. These reports are put into a permanent file and should be as detailed as possible. New reports are reviewed annually by the Vermont Bird Records Committee, which evaluates records for their acceptability to future researchers and for inclusion in the state bird list.

Please print or type

**SPECIES:**

**Townsend's Solitaire**

**NUMBER OBSERVED:**

**1**

**OBSERVER MAKING REPORT:**

**Beth Redford**

**OTHER OBSERVERS** (and addresses if available)

**none**

**LOCATION:** (place, township, county)

**118 Sadler Lane, Williston, Chittenden, Vermont**

**DATE:**

**Friday June 24, 2016**

**TIME AND LENGTH OF OBSERVATION:**

**5 minutes**

**DISTANCES FROM BIRD:** Maximum 40 feet Minimum 40 feet

**WEATHER:**

wind direction no wind wind speed no wind

sky cover clear light in relation to observer's position full sunlight temperature 75 degrees

**OPTICAL EQUIPMENT:** (make, power, etc.)

**none**

**OBSERVER'S PREVIOUS ACQUAINTANCE WITH THIS SPECIES OR SIMILAR FORMS:**

**No previous acquaintance with this species**

**OTHER DOCUMENTATION:** Photo none Tape Recording \_\_\_\_\_ Specimen \_\_\_\_\_

If yes to the above, where is this information deposited? \_\_\_\_\_

**HABITAT:** (be as detailed as possible, include associated bird species)

**Edge of lawn and brushy edge of woods. Trees and shrubs on edge include ash, maple, elm, sumac, birch, honeysuckle. Woods is mostly mature evergreens. Other birds visiting the feeder at the time were Black-capped chickadees and White-breasted Nuthatches.**

**BIRD'S BEHAVIOR:** (feeding actions, manner of flight, displays or interactions, reaction to observer)

**Flew over to feed at my backyard bird feeder 5+ times over 5 minutes before flying away into the woods. This was a box style bird feeder with a wooden twig perch, filled with black sunflower seeds. I was not able to see where or how the bird perched in between visits to the feeder, but it was upright on the twig perch while at the feeder.**

**VOCALIZATION:** (song or calls)

**None heard**

**DESCRIPTION:** (Describe what you actually saw during the observation. We hope that observers will take field notes during the observation and before consulting field guides, etc. Additional pages with sketches and copies of field notes are encouraged.)

**I was sitting on a chair on my back deck taking a break from gardening and watching birds visit my feeder. My feeder is about 40 feet from my chair in a direct line of sight. Along with Black-capped Chickadees and a White-breasted Nuthatch, I saw a bird that I did not recognize. Because it was unfamiliar, I started noting field marks. I noted that it had a light eyering. I noted that it was grey on the back and white on the front, but it was not a Phoebe or Tufted Titmouse (larger than both, with a rounded head with no crest). I noted that the breast was white (or very light) with no markings. I noted that it was the grey and white color combination of a mockingbird, but it was the wrong shape and it didn't have wing bars. I noted that when it flew I saw flashes of white on either side of the tail that reminded me of a Dark-Eyed Junco, but the bird was a lighter color and larger and had an eyering.**

**The bird flew back and forth between the brushy edge of the woods and my feeder about five times in a five minute period. The last time it flew into the woods I noted that it swooped down a bit and then up again under the lowest branches of a deciduous tree.**

**After the bird had not come back for 5 minutes, I went into my house and checked field guides. I've never seen a bird I didn't recognize at my feeder before; I have lots of visitors but they are typical Vermont finches, sparrows, chickadees, nuthatches, small woodpeckers, cardinals, etc. The illustrations of the Townsend's Solitaire – Drab-winged adult in the Sibley Guide to birds, 2000 edition (page 400) look just like the bird I saw, except that I didn't note any markings at all on the wings (the illustrations show some slight marks).**

**Relative size and shape:**

**Similar to a robin in shape, slightly smaller and more delicate in size.**

**Head (crown, cheeks, eye, throat, nape):**

**Grey, light eyering**

**Feet and Bill (shape, color, length):**

**Didn't notice**

**Upper back:**

**grey**

**Lower back and rump:**

**grey**

**Wings (shape, length, markings):**

**grey**

**Breast, belly, flanks, undertail coverts:**

**White or light**

**Tail (shape, length, markings):**

**Grey, but flashes of white at the sides of the tail when it flew**

**IMPORTANT: WHAT SIMILAR SPECIES WERE ELIMINATED WHEN MAKING THIS IDENTIFICATION AND HOW WAS THIS BIRD DIFFERENT?**

**I noted that it was grey on the back and white on the front, but it was not a Phoebe or Tufted Titmouse (larger than both, with a rounded head with no crest).**

**I noted that it was the grey and white color combination of a mockingbird, but it was the wrong shape and it didn't have wing bars.**

**I noted that when it flew I saw flashes of white on either side of the tail that reminded me of a Dark-Eyed Junco, but the bird was a lighter color and larger and had an eyering.**

**Not an American Robin, because the back was too light a shade of grey and the breast was white.**

**Not any type of thrush I was previously familiar with, because it had no speckles on the breast.**

**COMMENTS:** (was age or sex determined?, etc.)  
No age or sex determined

This report was written from notes taken during \_\_\_\_\_ immediately after  the observation, or written from memory \_\_\_\_\_ (please attach copies of notes if available)

NAME (print)\_Beth Redford\_\_SIGNATURE (not req'd)\_Elizabeth Wright Redford\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_118 Sadler Lane\_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_June 28, 2016\_\_\_\_\_

Return electronically (preferred) to: [vbrc@vtcostudies.org](mailto:vbrc@vtcostudies.org) or mail to: Vermont Bird Records Committee, Vermont Center for Ecostudies, PO Box 420, Norwich, VT 05055