

## THE FIRST SPOTTED REDSHANK RECORD FOR OHIO

At approximately 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, 28 August 1979, Elinor Elder and myself began our daily birding trip by heading to Huron to watch shorebirds. We arrived about 9:30 a.m. and were greeted by many Semipalmated Plovers and "peeps" on the pier as we walked out to the landfill area at Huron harbor. We 'scoped birds for sometime and listened to the different voices of each specie encountered. At approximately 10:00 a.m. I heard a "toot" call from over my right shoulder. I said "Yellow-legs coming in", then the very instant I saw the bird I said "No, the one in front is different, watch where it goes". I immediately put my scope on the bird and said "Oh my God, it's all black". I quickly stepped towards Elinor to aim her more powerful Swift Zoom scope at the bird. I knew we had a truly amazing find. "Elinor what color are the legs?" She said, "red-orange". "The bill Elinor?" She said, "Two toned, orange at the base and dark towards the tip." I said "Look at that back Elinor, look at those spots". She said "Certainly impressively spotted". Then I said "Elinor we have a Spotted Redshank in full breeding plumage."

Now came the hard part, trying to prove that it was not a Spotted Redshank. We took turns observing through her scope at 45 X. The bill was long and thin, two-toned definitely reddish-orange at the base. "Maybe it's a Ruff?" "No, there is absolutly no white underneath."

The bird was black from head to tail, front and back. "If only Ray (Hannikman) could be here", I said. We saw a small amount of gray behind the bill extending towards the eye as if some molting was beginning. It was very small in comparison to the rest of the bird. Had it not been for Elinor's scope, I would not have even noticed it. Then without any provocation the bird flew off rapidly with the Yellowlegs that had accompanied it west over Lake Erie. Elinor exclaimed "No white in the wings". Thereby eliminating the possibility of a Common Redshank.

In looking back on the event both Elinor and I have no doubts as to the identification of the bird. In closing, I want to make it clear this was not the first time that Elinor or I had observed this specie. We both have read much on the Spotted Redshank and have studied field guides diligently. There is no bird like the Spotted Redshank in breeding plumage.

Larry Rosche  
Kent, Ohio