

**First record of the Wood Sandpiper.
Tringa glareola, from Bermuda**

Eric J.R. Amos and David B. Wingate

ON OCTOBER 21, 1981, E. Amos discovered a Wood Sandpiper among a small group of late season shorebirds in a rain pool on the Pembroke Marsh dump near Hamilton, Bermuda. This bird had not been observed on a previous check (October 18) and its restless behaviour suggested that it had just arrived. After reporting this find to D. Wingate, both of us returned on October 22 and 23 to make detailed observations and to obtain photographs. A 3-day period followed when neither of us was able to get into the field and when the dump site was checked again on October 27 the bird had disappeared along with most of the other shorebirds. It was never found again there, or at any of the other regularly checked shorebird habitats on Bermuda.

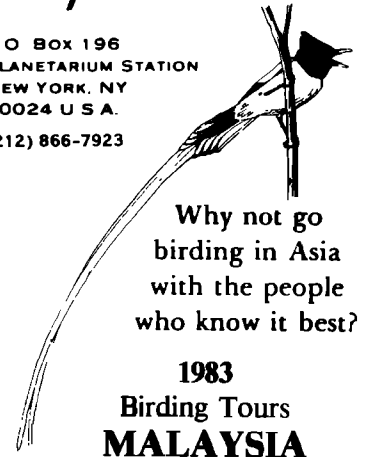
During the 2 days that observations were made, the bird was studied at 30-foot range with 10 × 40 binoculars and

photographed in kodachrome film, using a camera equipped with a 500 mm telephoto lens. A total of 18 photographs was obtained, some of which show the bird in company with Greater Yellowlegs, *Tringa melanoleuca*, Solitary Sandpiper, *Tringa solitaria*, and House Sparrow, *Passer domesticus*. (See Figs. 1 and 2).

The following description is a compendium from our field notes of October 22. Best described as intermediate in size and colour between a Lesser Yellowlegs and a Solitary Sandpiper. Closer in size to a Solitary Sandpiper but legs proportionally long, comparable to Lesser Yellowlegs. Leg colour greenish yellow. Bill slightly longer than head, relatively thick and straight and bi-coloured with the basal half greyish. A pronounced whitish line over the eye. Head and neck otherwise dusky brown with fine streaking, forming a dusky col-

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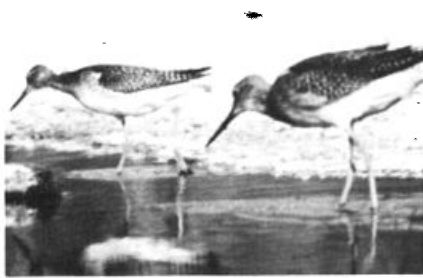


Fig. 1 Wood Sandpiper (l.) in company with Greater Yellowlegs at Pembroke Marsh Dump, Bermuda, October 23, 1981.

Fig. 2 Wood Sandpiper at Pembroke Marsh Dump, Bermuda, October 22, 1981. Photos/ David B. Wingate.

lar but leaving a whitish shoulder spot suggestive of Spotted Sandpiper, *Actitis macularia*. Wings and back dark greyish brown, with white speckling, intermediate in shade and speckling between Solitary Sandpiper and Lesser Yellowlegs.

In flight wings all dark above—with no white line, and uniform lighter greyish brown below. Rump white, the demarcation between dark back and white rump beginning abruptly in line with rear edge of wing. Five distinct black tail bands on outer half of tail. In behaviour the bird fed by walking and

pecking at the water surface like a Lesser Yellowlegs but it teetered occasionally like a Spotted Sandpiper. It also tended to feed in among the vegetation bordering the pond more than the other shorebirds. The flight was strong with bursts of jerky wing beats and closed-wing plummets when it returned to the rain pool. A habit of holding the wings raised briefly before take-off made it possible to see the underwing pattern clearly. The flight call was exactly as described in European field guides: a very distinctive high pitched *pit-it-it*. When flying with Pectoral

Sandpipers, *Calidris melanotos*, it was similar in length but slightly smaller in bulk.

THE WOOD SANDPIPER is an Old World species breeding from Norway to Kamchatka and the Kuriles in the Palearctic and parts of the temperate zone, and wintering from Africa and South Asia to Australia. There are only three previously published records from the New World east of the Rocky Mountains. Dziadoz (1980) reported on a museum specimen collected on October 10, 1907 at Gaines in Orleans County, N. Y.; Bond (1959, 1962), reported on a specimen collected on Barbados West Indies on October 16, 1955; and Kennedy (1977) reported the sighting of a possible Wood Sandpiper near Leesville, Lafourche County, Louisiana on September 22, 1976. The sight record described here is the first from Bermuda and fits the general pattern of late September/October occurrences.

We are grateful to Sgt. Paul Farrell of the Bermuda Police Force for the loan of a telephoto lens.

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—'Corncrake', Ord Road, Warwick Parish, Bermuda (Amos), and Bermuda Government Aquarium and Museum, P.O. Box 145, Flatts 3, Bermuda (Wingate).

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