



Clwyd Bird Recording Group Rare bird reporting form

Species: Short-toed Lark

Number of birds (with age and sex where known): One

Location: Towyn beach fields (SH9780)

Date(s) of observation(s): 31 May 2005

Times seen and total duration: 11.45 to 12.30 approx for 20 – 30 minutes

Earlier/later dates by others, if known: Visited site on 28 May and 1 & 2 June and bird not seen then

First and last dates, if known: 31 May 2005

Observer name (please print): Susan Morris

Contact details: (Withheld)

Email:

Phone no.: (Withheld)

Other observer(s) and contact details (if known):

Who found it? Susan Morris

Who first identified it? Susan Morris

Previous experience of this species: One seen at Towyn previously and one seen at Conwy reserve

Previous experience of similar species:

Optical aids used: Optolyth Alpin 12x 50

Distance from bird: 10 – 50 metres approx.

Weather conditions: Sunny, warm (wind mostly westerly)

Photograph available? Yes/No (Delete as applicable).

Photograph enclosed? Yes/No

Detailed description, with sketches where possible:

About 11.45 checking out the beach fields at Towyn for breeding Skylarks, I noticed a small very pale, sandy looking bird feeding along the stony rutted track near the edge of the east end field. Suspected Short-toed Lark as opposed to Skylark.

Small, rounded head not showing a crest. Pale / clean front and long tertials all briefly seen. The bird flew a little way off, not very high and slightly undulating. I picked out the lack of whitish trailing edge to wings. Its overall paleness and its smaller more compact shape. Not a Skylark confirmed. The bird landed in an open area on tarmac and I got a very good views. Clean breast (no streaking) and long tertials showed well. Bird extended neck showing the, at first not very prominent, dark neck / breast edge markings more clearly. Bill stout, with pointed tip, yellowish / grey, not tapered as Skylark.

Saw bird in flight again, it landed further into field briefly then further away to another stony track. I observed it for a few more minutes as it continued to feed along the edge of vegetation and into vegetation. Confirmed Short-toed Lark. Phoned it into Birdline and continued to watch it for a few more minutes but it spent more time in the vegetation and I didn't want to disturb it here as it was less prone to disturbance in this area. I left about 12.30.

4-5 pairs of Skylark breeding in the field often seen including at least two juveniles providing direct comparison with that species.