

He spent hours playing with his waterwheels, changing their shapes and sizes, the number of paddles, and the position of the wheel in the waterfall.

He would leave the wheel spinning in the evening, and would run down the next morning before leaving for school. He was always delighted to find the wheel still going, and would marvel that the little wheel had been turning all night long when he had been asleep!

He soon grew out of his play with the waterwheel, and the spring became overgrown and forgotten; but all his life, whenever he came across a new spring, he would imagine just how a mud dam could be built, with a flat stone to form a waterfall, with the little wheel placed beneath it to spin the hours away, throwing off a spray of shining drops and singing its pattering song.

UNUSUAL REDPOLL

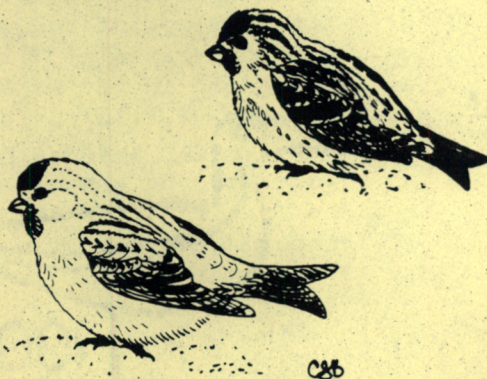
by Ray Cooke

On February 10, 1992 just outside the Brackley entrance to the P.E.I. National park, four Common Redpolls were seen feeding on alder cones. Within a few minutes, they were joined by three other birds from a flock passing by. One of these birds was noticeably more pale than the birds with it.

The pale bird was studied for several minutes from a variety of angles as it moved through the alders. The pale colour of the bird was first noted when the bird joined the feeding group. Using 7 X 35 binoculars and a 25 X spotting scope, the bird was studied from a distance of 35 to 40 feet at 11:00 a.m. on a sunny day. Field notes were made during the observation period and shortly afterwards.

The bird had a much brighter appearance than that of the birds it was with, which appeared more dusky. The brown streaks along the nape and mantle were finer when compared to those of the other birds and, between the stripes, the birds had a much cleaner white. The redpoll in question had much less streaking on its sides and the pair of streaks it did have were fine and extended down the flanks to the level of the primary coverts. The other birds had heavier streaking which extended the full length of their flanks. The rump of the pale bird was seen very well as the bird used its tail to help keep balanced as it fed. At times, the bird was upside down with its tail toward me and the rump was well exposed. The manner of feeding from the alder cones gave several good looks at the rump of this bird and those of the birds with it. The pale bird was noted to have a white rump where the others had brown obviously streaked rumps. The ear coverts were noted to be a more even tawny colour while the other birds had uneven, more brownish ear coverts. The pale bird also appeared to have a very faint eye-ring when compared to those of the other birds. Red colouration was confined to the forehead and crown and was not noted to be less extensive than found on the other six redpolls. The yellow bill appeared small and stubby but did not seem to be much smaller than that of the others. Undertail coverts were not noted at the time.

This pale redpoll seems to be a Hoary Redpoll. Unfortunately, pictures were not obtained at the time.



Editor's Note: Ray's excellent description of this sighting provides the necessary information for species documentation. The Society has blank forms available on request or utilize the list on the newest Checklist's inner cover. These completed documentation forms are used to update the check list.