

From: sunbittern@earthlink.net
Subject: RE: Possible White-winged Dark-eyed Junco
Date: December 31, 2012 11:12:34 AM MST
To: rtbirds@gmail.com
Cc: mulchman@cybermesa.com

Hi Robert: Thanks for the message and the photos. Looks like a White-winged Junco to me. There have been an unusual number of reports of this distinctive subspecies in northern NM this winter, including several west to the Zuni Mts. What was the date of the Dixon CBC? If you could copy me on any count summary you compile, it would be appreciated. Thanks again. --Sandy

From: Robert Templeton [<mailto:rtbirds@gmail.com>] **Sent:** Wednesday, December 26, 2012 11:08 AM **To:** Sandy Williams **Cc:** Dan & Barbara Pollock **Subject:** Possible White-winged Dark-eyed Junco

Hi Sandy,
During CW of the Dixon CBC, two feeder watchers (Dan & Barbara Pollock, copied on this email) reported a White-winged DEJU. I have no experience with this sub-species in its breeding range and if I have seen one here, I did not know it. Consequently, I am seeking your expertise.

The bird was observed and photographed at the couple's home in Apodaca, part of Dixon, NM.

Obviously, the consideration is between the White-winged and Slate-colored groups.

The observers report noticing an unusually large amount of white on the birds tail feathers in flight.

Here are the three photos sent to me. They have been very minimally sharpened, but no change in lighting or contrast was done:

DEJU-8238-SlightlySharpened.jpg

DEJU-8218-SlightlySharpened.jpg

DEJU-8222-SlightlySharpened.jpg

I have also cut/pasted entries from Birds of NA online which I found interesting. Especially that the winter range of the White-winged Junco extends into N. NM and that only about 3% of Slate-colored Juncos have the white wing bars.

What do you think?

Thanks for your time,
Robert

Information from Birds of N.A. ONline:

White-Winged Junco (Aikeni Group).

Small area in central U.S. (Black Hills region and nearby mountains in western plains, wintering as far south as n.-central New Mexico); large body size with relatively large bill and long tail. Plumage pattern as in Slate-colored Juncos, but gray is paler, usually with bluish-gray cast; 2 narrow white wing-bars, occasionally absent (up to 22% of females lack wing-bars, according to Miller [1941]). Extensive white in outer rectrices (R4 largely white); some individuals show contrastingly darker gray lores and chin. Slate-colored Junco rarely acquires white wing-bars (about 3% of individuals), as do Oregon and Gray-headed juncos even more rarely.

Slate-Colored Junco (Hyemalis Group)

.....dark breast and flanks meet white of belly in smooth concave (inverted U) shape.....

Wing-coverts rarely white tipped (about 3% of individuals): such birds distinguished from White-winged Junco (*J. h. aikeni*) by darker color of *J. h. hyemalis* body (not paler with bluish-gray cast), smaller size (including relatively shorter bill and tail), and less white in outer tail-feathers.





