

Eastern Meadowlark -

Location - John Deere Testing Area; Coal Valley, IL.

Five birds were seen first sitting on an embankment that was totally snow covered with a few blades of grass sticking up through the snow. The area is actually a pasture used by  "Deere" to test their tractors. The observed time while they were sitting was about 2 minutes; then the birds were observed flying approximately for about 100 yards or 5 seconds. (By the way originally the birds were about 15 yards away.) The light was good and at ~~too~~ our backs ~~plus~~ there were no clouds in the sky.

Time - 2:30 PM afternoon

Observing equipment - Binoculars 7X35

8X40's with zoom

Observers - Brian Blevins

Corey Blevins

Lewis Blevins

Wind - 5-15 mph
(over)

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The major markings that lead us to believe that they were indeed eastern meadow-larks and not westerns were: first of all the location they were being found in, and second that the birds showed an excessive amount of dark coloration on the back.

The ~~birds~~ gave a reconciling? amount of color, unlike that of the western in which the color is so lite that it gives a grey effect overall. From ~~numerous~~ numerous observations yearly it has become quite easy to recognize the difference here in the eastern portion of Iowa and western sections of Illinois.

There was no doubt in all three observers minds that the species was eastern and identification was rapid and all in favor of eastern.