

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

A Large Whimbrel Flock at Derby Hill, New York: While watching waterbirds passing Derby Hill on 27 Aug 1986, at 17:12 EDT I noticed a long loose line of large shorebirds approaching from the northwest. An approximate count of the flock was 212 birds. A cold front passage had occurred earlier in the day. The sky was 50-70% cumulus clouds and mixed sun, the temperature 60°F, winds NW 20-25 mph. When initially noted, these birds were about ½ mile away and coming directly toward me. They were approximately 15 feet above the water. As they approached very rapidly, flying in a long loose wavy line, I noted the long decurved beak of a curlew. They continued to approach to within 100-200 yards and passed directly overhead. The heavily streaked crown and face pattern and buffy breast streaking became clearly visible. The distinctive *di di di du* call was heard on at least three occasions from birds in the flock. These birds were clearly recognizable as Whimbrels as they passed directly overhead at an altitude of 75-100 feet and moved rapidly southeast out of sight. Total viewing time was 1.5 to 2 minutes, initially through a 30X gunstock mounted spotting scope and later with 10X Bushnell Custom binoculars. This is the highest count ever reported from upstate New York, but groups of about 100 birds previously have been reported from western Lake Ontario in New York and Ontario, Canada.

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