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First Documented Occurrence of the Ruff in South Carolina

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On 16 May 1986 at 1130, I photographed a Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) in Jasper County, S.C., about 14 km SSW of Hardeeville. The specific locality was a dredge-spoil site on the south side of US 17, just before it crosses the Savannah River.

The bird was in a small, shallow pool and was in a large mixed-species flock of shorebirds. The pond in which the Ruff was found is one of a group of temporary ponds associated with dredging operations of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This particular pool was sandy, with no vegetation.

The Ruff was slightly larger than a nearby Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*) and was easily identified by its "bottle shape": small head, small thin bill, and plump body. Its brown face, neck, and upper parts were also salient. The scapulars and tertials were large and floppy, and often were ruffled in the breeze.

When first seen, the Ruff was bathing in the middle of the pond. It then flew to the edge and began feeding actively. It walked about rapidly and pecked the surface constantly. Although it fed close to Lesser Yellowlegs, Stilt Sandpipers (*Calidris himantopus*), and White-rumped Sandpipers (*C. fuscicollis*), it did not interact with them. After about 20 minutes I left and telephoned Bob Tucker. We then returned to the spot and relocated the Ruff. We watched it for about an hour. Despite several searches over the next 2 days, the Ruff was not seen again. Most of the Lesser Yellowlegs were gone the next day.

This record is the first for South Carolina to be documented by a photograph or specimen. Seven color slides have been placed in the state collection (ChM 1986.46.1-1986.46.7).

I thank Pat Young of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for arranging access to the spoil area.