

Identification Features of Short-billed versus Long-Billed Dowitcher – Dr Christian Artuso¹, August 2007

<i>Limnodromus</i> Measurements (mm)	<i>griseus</i> (Short-billed)		<i>scolopaceus</i> (Long-billed)	
	male	female	male	female
exposed culmen	52.6 - 61.2 (av 57.5)	58.2 - 65.9 (av 62.4)	av 62.1	av 72.4
wing	136 - 150 (av 143.4)	138 - 152 (145.7)	139 - 149	143 - 152
tarsus	33.8 - 39.3 (36.7)	35.3 - 41.3 (37.9)	37.3 - 38.4	40.3 - 41.4

Structural

primary projection	longest primary 2 or 3mm > tail length	longest primary = tail length
chest	slimmer	full
head	"squarer"	rounder
tibia	shorter	longer
bill trend	bill = 2 X head length (but much overlap)	bill = 1.5 X head length

Breeding plumage

belly	pale orange/ orange-whitish	reddish
breast sides	spotted (light - heavy)	barred
flanks	unbarred	barred
tail	dark bars narrower than light bars	dark bars broader than light bars

Non-breeding plumage

mantle	feather shafts only dark gives paler appearance	darker shading in feather centres gives darker appearance
breast	typical = mantle colour, smooth transition to belly	dark breast delineated from pale belly
breast pattern	spots typically more obvious	appearance even/unspotted
flanks	spots or chevrons	barred
underwing	spotting - paler appearance	more barring at base - darker
tertials	as juvenal into 1st winter	as juvenal into 1st winter

Juvenal plumage

tertials	orange patterned (barred or notched) centers	no pattern in centre (evenly dark centres), but may have orangish edges
scapulars + greater coverts	internal rufous cross bar + pale orangish edges	solidly dark-centred with pale edges
wing	usually contrasts with mantle colour	usually blends with mantle colour
breast	fairly bright - salmon colour	dull greyish rufous

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