

...more birds common to the area: similar Curlew and White-Faced Ibis

Our own amateur 'birder' of Hungry Hollow, Jim Hiatt, shared these pictures, information and stories, too:

"The Curlew in these photos are feeding on bugs that come out of our barley ground as it is being irrigated. [See page 222 of *Birds of North America*; the scientific name is *Numenius americanus*]. They are pretty much year-round here, and especially during farming season will follow the irrigation cycles of alfalfa and whatever else is being irrigated. From the air, since they fly high enough to see the 'blue-ness' and 'shimmery-ness' of distant fields under water, they go there until irrigation is done, then go on to the next field. Another species much like them, except for a completely brown and iridescent blackish color, is the 'White-Faced Ibis' [*Plegadis chihi*, page 128 of *Birds of North America*]. They are frequently found together feeding in the same field and are entirely tolerant of each other. The Curlew is a brownish bird that, like the Ibises, has a 'decurved' bill, meaning curving downward, and are pretty much the same size.

Three generations back, Grandpa Chet used to shoot these for the family table. These birds feed very close to each other, and you might be able to 'ground-sluice' them, as the old-timers put it, and harvest 10-15 birds with one shot, thus economizing on shotgun shell cost. This was especially during Depression times. Whatever 'dunderhead' ever thought up the term 'White Faced Ibis' should have had his eyes tested again. There just ain't no white FACE [tongue in cheek], just a small white ring around the eye."



White-faced Ibis: "This species breeds colonially in marshes, usually nesting in bushes or low trees. Its breeding range extends from the western USA south through Mexico," and parts of South America. Its winter range extends from southern California and Louisiana south to include the rest of its breeding range.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White-faced_Ibis

White-faced ibis *Plegadis chihi*

Identification Tips:

Length: 19 inches Wingspan: 37 inches

Sexes similar

Medium-sized long-legged long-necked wader

Bill long, dark gray, and decurved

Holds neck extended in flight

<http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/id/framlst/i1870id.html>



Photos here are from herein listed on-line sites: above is non-breeding plumage and to right breeding plumage.