

APPENDIX II

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTINGS
FOR
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS



Species: Snow Bunting ; Plectrophenax nivalis
(Vernacular name) (Scientific name)

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students -- those studying occurrences 50 years from now -- must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Dates (s): January 26, 1984 Time Bird Seen: 3:30 P.M. to 3:40 P.M.

Locality : Caribou Townsite Elevation - 10,000' T15 R73W Section 8
Nederland, Boulder County, Colorado
Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Minolta 9 power

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 10 Sex: _____ Plumage: winter

Light conditions: Open field, cloudy sky

Distance from bird, and how measured: 15' (estimate)

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

Ground Feeding, would fly short distances

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

abandoned, open townsite. Birds were in snowcleared tailings pile covered with weedy vegetation.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):

None

APPENDIX II Continued

A

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough). Describe what you actually saw in the field.

Size of large sparrow. Rusty/brown cap and rusty brown area around (behind) eyes. Rest of head white. Chest and undersides off-white with rust streaks coming across chest but not meeting (just two rust streaks-one from each side). Wings dark brown with large white wingbars. Back brown - sparrow like and tail dark brown.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.: Call was a "sputtering" sound and was given on the ground. Call was what first attracted me as I believed it was a species that I had not heard before.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

When looking at all the details, I don't feel there is a very similar species, except McKay's Bunting, which ~~is~~ is highly unlikely, though anything is possible. No white on tail - McKay's Longspur; Chest streak far white for Smith's Longspur; No white tail feathers and white-wing bars (lose) and no gray on throat distinguish it from Lapland Longspur.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

None with this species. Conduct most of my birding in montane to alpine habitats so am familiar with Pine Grosbeak, White-winged Crossbills (white-wing bars), Have not seen longspurs.

This report was written from notes made during and after observation; from memory _____.

Name (print) : Dave Hallock

Mailing address: Eldora Star Route, Nederland CO 80466

Signature: Dave H. Hallock

Return Form To:

CFO Records Committee
c/o Curator--Zoological Collections
Denver Museum of Natural History
City Park
Denver, CO 80205