

APPENDIX II

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

Species: Field Sparrow; Spizella pusilla
(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): 13 Nov 1987 Time Bird Seen: approx 9:00 am Seen for < 1 min.

Locality: Sweitzer Lake St. Recr. Area

Delta CO

Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Nikon 9x30 binos

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: one Sex: - Plumage: ad.

Light conditions: Bright sun

Distance from bird, and how measured: 15-40 ft est.

Describe the bird's overall behavior: Shy and retiring. In weedy area along fence row. Perched briefly on barbed wire. Then flew to spruce planting, perching near top on outer edges. Then flying across plantings and diving into brushy hillside.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Fence row, brush, ornamental plantings - spruce, crab apple, ash, russian olive in park-like area.

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

None

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. About 4 1/2" long overall, a small slender pale sparrow — smaller than Song Sparrows — seemed about the size of a Brewer's Sparrow with a slender tail. Back striped brown; wings & tail plainer brownish. Had two distinct white wing bars. Reddish brown cap (presence of central crown stripe could not be seen — I saw bird from side). Gray face and undersides. On face there was a thin pinkish-brown line through the eye, contrasting w/ ~~gray~~ face. Distinct thin white eyering. Bill small, conical and bright pink. Leg color not observed.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery — i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

Have a single note "chip" call. A fairly loud, high, sharp note — distinct and different than nearby Song Sparrows & "Oreg" juncos.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Only White-crowned and Am. Tree Sparrows have white wing bars & unstreaked gray undersides. White-cr. Sparrow is larger, heavier-billed, lacks eyering, has black & white or brownish or tan cap. Am. Tree Sparrow usually has center spot on breast, has two-toned or dull (not pink) bill, lacks eyering, usually has reddish shoulder.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I've seen a few Field Sparrows in Colo. including one at a feeder last winter in Glenwood Springs. Also studied them summer 1986 in S. Wis. and observed them for a year in N. Ill. in 1979. Much experience w/ Am. Tree Sparrows including 2 seen same day as this Field Sparrow. This report was written from notes made during _____ after _____ observation; from memory _____.

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Signature: Mark Janos

Return Form To:

CFO Records Committee
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