

Denver (USA) CB

APPENDIX II

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

56-89-55

A

Species: Field Sparrow (Vernacular name); Spizella pusilla (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): 1/2/88 Time Bird Seen: several times between 9.45 and 10:45 AM to

Locality: Along Clear Creek on both sides of the river, approx 1/4 mile East of Washington, just south of 72nd Av., Adams County, Colorado

Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Bushnell Audubon Custom 10 x 40

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used:

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: Adult

Light conditions: sunny, viewed from many sun angles during period

Distance from bird, and how measured: Closest - 30'

Describe the bird's overall behavior: With juncus first found, foraging on south facing hillside, flew across creek, where it foraged on the ground. Briefly perched in 2 different trees.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird: Riparian, with a very good weed crop + mixed in, tall cottonwoods

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address): David Martin, 9330 W 30th Dr, Westminster, CO, 80220

Bob Hernbros, Colo Div of Wildlife, 6060 Broadway, Denver

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.

1. Size - smaller than the juncos it was with, and a bit smaller appearing than the similar tree sparrows we saw near it
2. Shape - small, long, slender, slimmer than a white-crowned sparrow (also much smaller)
3. Plumage - a sandy, pale brown color, much paler than a tree sparrow. 2 white wing bars, and a streaked back. Legs were pink, as was bill (both upper + lower mandible). Crown rusty, face gray, with auriculæ the same rusty color as crown. Inside area on auricular areas was gray. A very prominent white eyering visible at close range.

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

Only once, when perched - a single, high pitched tsee.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

1. Tree Sparrow - bi colored bill (dark upper mandible, yellowish lower mandible, brighter wings, dark legs, different call note (sometimes 2 syllables))
2. Clay Colored, Brewers, Chipping sparrows - none have pink bills, gray face with white eyering
3. White-crowned sparrow - has different size (larger), different face pattern.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

3 other times in Colorado, also in Illinois, Texas, all several times

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

Name (print) : Diana Nelson

Mailing address: 31428 Burke Rd, Golden, Co 80403

Signature: Diana T. Nelson

Return Form To:

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

FOR  
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

56-89-55

Species Field Sparrow Spizella pusilla  
(Vernacular name) (Scientific name)

Date (s): 1-2-69 Time Bird Seen: 9:30 AM to 10:00 AM  
Locality: 1/4 mile west of Washington Street along Clear Creek.  
Optical Equipment: Bushnell Audubon Binoculars 10 by 40.  
Photographed? No

Number of birds seen: One Sex: ? Plumage: Adult

Light conditions: Very good

Distance from bird, and how measured: as close as 25 feet, estimated

Describe the bird's overall behavior: Usually feeding on the ground with Juncos, but occasionally flew as high as 6' in a tree.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird: Riparian riverside habitat, intermingled with fields and marshes.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (please list name and address): Duane Nelson, 31428 Burke Road, Golden, CO 80403

Bob Hernbroda, Colorado DOW, 6060 Broadway, Denver CO

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 of shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. Describe what you actually saw in the field.

This was a small sparrow, especially in comparison with the Juncos it was feeding with. It had pink legs, and bill, and a clear gray face with a thin eye ring. The bill was small and short and it had a reddish brown cap, and a clear breast, with no streaks or breast spot.

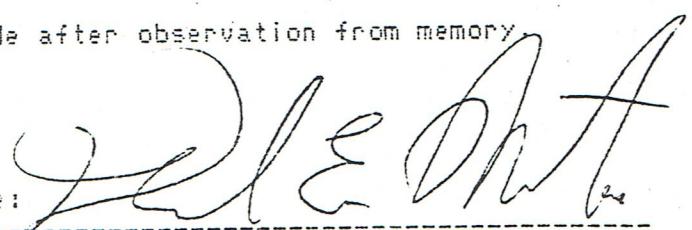
Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery -i.e., from a perch, in flight, etc.: I did not hear this bird call.

List similar species and how you eliminated them: I saw two American Tree Sparrows on the same day, which are similar except; Tree Sparrow has no pink bill or legs, and has a central spot on its breast. Both birds have the solid red-brown cap.

Prior experience with this and similar species: I've seen the Field Sparrow only twice before.

This Report was written from notes made after observation from memory.

David E. Martin  
9330 West 90th Drive  
Westminster, CO 80020

Signature: 

Send Form to:

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