

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD

UNUSUAL RECORD

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Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: Baird's Sparrow | Ammodramus bairdii
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)

Date: October 14, 1989

Number of birds seen: 3 Sex: Unknown Plumage: 1 adult, 1 immature

Locality: Northeasternmost Colo. Rd 30 Elevation: 3700' ±
1.5 miles

Nearest town: 8 1/2 miles ESE of Julesburg * sec. below County: Sedgwick
4 1/2 miles SSW from NE corner of Colorado

Time observed: 8:30 AM (I found the Sprague's Pipit 200 yards south of here on Sept. 30, 1989)
Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 5 minutes

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):
None

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):
None

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

Good morning sun was at my back - Excellent light conditions

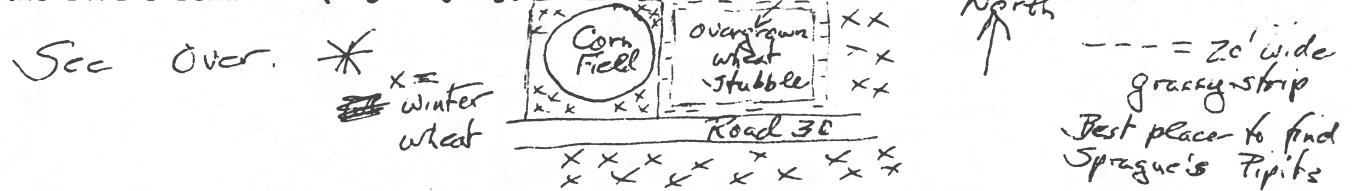
Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): Mostly 20X telescope - some 8X binoculars

Distance, and how measured: 100 feet - estimated

If photographed, type of equipment and film: No

Who else photographed the bird? fallow field in David Martin's Vocabulary

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):



Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern. Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observe in the field:

A fairly small sparrow with a short tail. These were neat, tidy birds with light chestnut colored backs with quite a bit of white markings (National Geographic uses the word scaly. I did not get that impression) The adult's crown had a large deep buff central stripe. The immature's crown was finely streaked. Both had buffy faces. Both had large white throat areas with black whiskers on either side of the throat. Both had prominent streaked necklaces, (over)

Description (continued):

but I did not see any buff in the necklaces as shown in National Geographic. My birds looked more like the Baird's Sparrow illustrations in the Golden Guide. The birds did not have eye rings and did not have white outer tail feathers when they flew.

I was looking for Sharp-tailed or LeConte's Sparrows and was not expecting Baird's Sparrows. I thought it was too late for Baird's; but I see Holt & Lane give Oct. 14 as the end of fall migration in Colorado.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

No sounds at all.

Is it possible that Baird's Sparrows hide in corn fields in Colorado and that is the reason we see so few?

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

Flat open farmland. I flushed the birds from a 20' wide strip of low green grass. They flew to the edge of a corn field and fed for 7 minutes then one disappeared into the corn patch but the other 2 flew to the top of the corn stalks. How did you eliminate similarly appearing species? and sat for 2 minutes before diving into the corn field.

Savannah Sparrows do not have a buff-colored central stripe on their heads, their backs are various shades of brown but never chestnut. They don't have any white on their backs. Their throats have much less white than their tails are longer. Most adults have yellow eyes and they generally are drab, dirty brownish black in color. This was not a Grasshopper Sparrow because it didn't have a squatty neck. These were not vesper Sparrows because they did not have white eye rings or white tail feathers.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? I have seen Baird's Sparrows on their breeding grounds in North Dakota.

These were not Henslow's Sparrows because there was no greenish tint on their heads or backs.

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification: LeConte's Sparrows have a white central crown stripe. Lincoln's Sparrows don't have white on their backs.

a) at time of observation: None

b) after observation: I walked back to the car, which was 7 minutes away, and studied both the National Geographic and Golden Guide Birds of North America.

This report was written from reports made during _____, after observation _____ from memory X
Date and time report was written: October 16, 1989 10 AM

Reporting observer: L. W. Dan Bridges Signature: L. W. Dan Bridges

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All reports will be maintained permanently at the address below:
Return to: CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS
DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
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