

2/8/02

Lark Sparrow

- Benjamin Rush SP, Philadelphia

I went to see the Lark Sparrow that had been found at Ben Rush SP about a week ago

Within a few minutes of arriving at the park, the sparrow was located feeding with Song & White-throated Sparrows on some wild bird seed that had been scattered next to a hedgerow

I was able to observe the bird at leisure for about 45 minutes from approximately 40ft through 7x42 binoculars.

The bird was in the open, with the sun shining down onto the bird from over my left shoulder.

Upperparts: the head and face were striking and distinctive, the median crown stripe was pale white-brown. The two lateral crown stripes were a deep rusty-brown. The supercilium was pale gray-white. The malar area was white bordered above & below with a black stripe. The ear coverts were a deep rusty brown. The area below the eye was white.

- The back, wings and tail were a general buffy-brown, there was a pale white wingbar

Underparts- the throat, breast and belly were pale white with a dark central breast spot.

- The tail was brown and the outer tail feathers were white, this was most noticeable when the bird flew

Beakparts- bill was brown. Eye dark. Legs brown

Voice - none heard.

LARK SPARROW

820-01-2002

On Sunday, Feb. 2, 2002, I found an adult Lark Sparrow at Benjamin Rush State Park, Philadelphia, PA, in the weedy border of a mowed field. It was 2:00 p.m. on a clear, sunny day and I was using Zeiss 7x42 binoculars. My husband Pat and I watched the bird in several positions for one half hour in full sunlight. I have been birding for 20 years, am a licensed bander and this was not my first Lark Sparrow.

The bird was with Song and White-throated Sparrows and Carolina Chickadees. The bird was similar in length to the White-throats, but seemed plumper, possibly because it was puffed up against the cold and because the white breast seemed to glow in the sun. I first noticed the bird scoot around a corner and the white outer edge and tips of the rectrices caught my eye. The bright chestnut crown stripes and cheek, the arrows of black in the moustache region, and the round black spot in a clear white breast screamed Lark Sparrow.

The median head stripe was white/off-white.

The side-crown stripes were bright chestnut or brick red.

The supercilium was off-white to yellowish, just a slight wash.

The cheek from lores to over the ear was bright chestnut or brick red.

The white eye ring was a little uneven, larger at the bottom, but not "teardrop" in shape.

The bill was dark, i.e., not yellow.

Legs were fleshy pink.

Median and primary coverts had big buff tips and gave a scalloped appearance.

When I first saw the bird, one nictitating membrane was down over the left eye and I thought it had conjunctivitis, but after a few minutes the membrane went up and both eyes seemed normal. The sparrow came within 8' of us, perched on tops of weeds and fed along the ground. It was dive bombed by a Mocker, but was not jumpy. I never heard any call note or song.

See the attached very crude drawings I made as we drove home.

Thank you for your consideration.

Doris McGovern

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PROBABLY A LARK, BUT I - HAD IT SEEN THROUGH YET

820-01-2002

Side Crown stripe - brick, bright

Median stripe - white - ~~subventral~~
bill to ear level

check (ear patch) - brick, bright

eye ring - ~~brilliant~~ ~~brilliant~~
but not tear drops

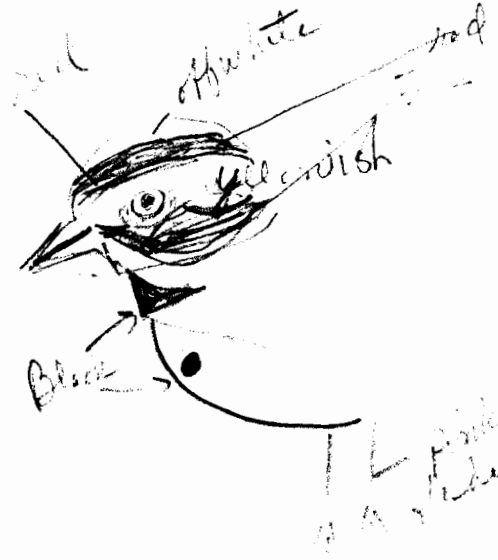
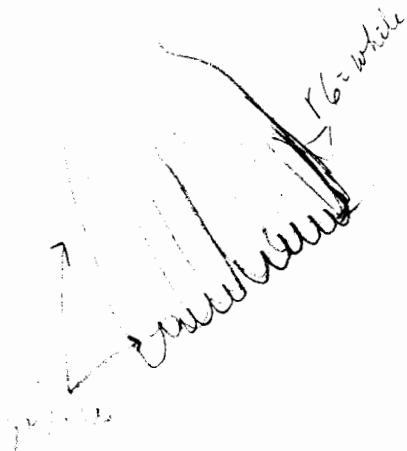
Mustach ~~black~~

legs fleshy, sand pink

bill - horn colored



white



medium ear
singing 7/20
PC-high

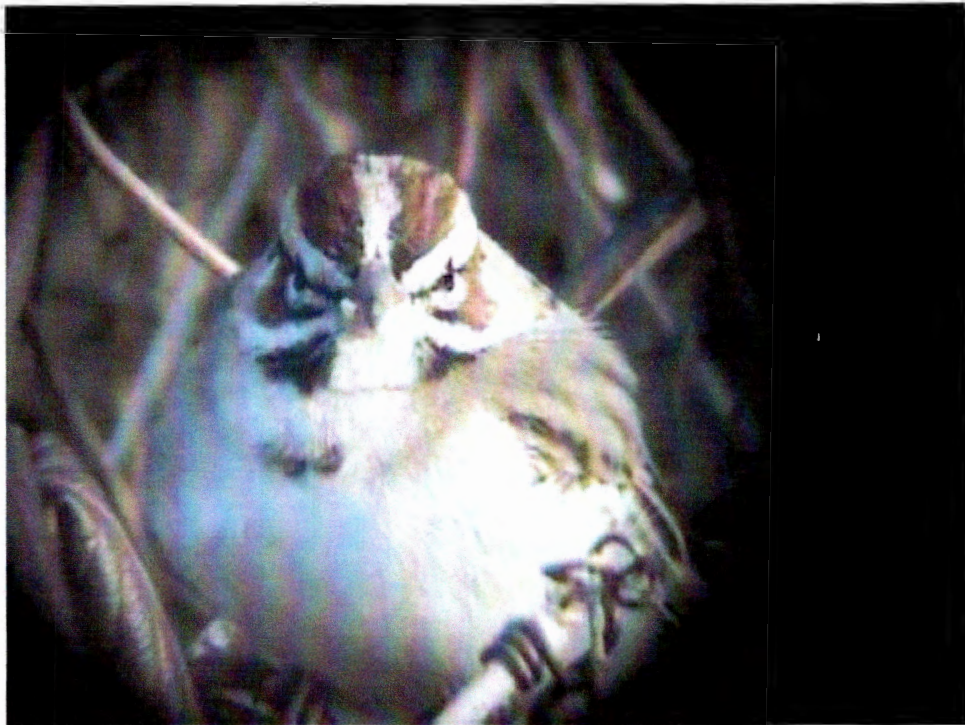
NOT
parallel



Grain







Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Tabulation Form - Round One

Species: Lark Sparrow (Chondestes grammacus)

Date of Sighting: 2 February 2002 to 6 March 2002

Location: BENJAMIN RUSH STATE PARK

County: PHILADELPHIA

Observer(s): Doris McGovern and multiple observers

Date of Submission: 2002

Submitted by: Doris McGovern, Nick Pulcinella, John D'Amico, Devich Farbotnik

Written Description: Yes

Photo: Yes

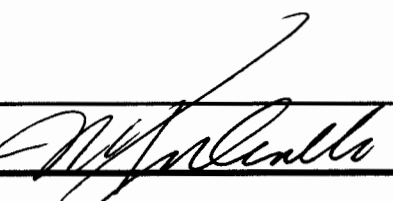
Specimen: No

Recording: Video

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead	X							
D. Heathcote	X							
P. Hess	X							
J. Stanley	X							
E. Witmer	X							
R. Leberman	X							
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments: 76

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 1/18/03