

820-02-2005

TERR? ABOUT LATENEIS
TOW SHEPARD HAVE REC'D RECESS FRM.
CRILLEY 2 GRINNARD BY NEW

George

Lark Sparrow Monday Sep 19, 2005

On a Sunday morning tip of a birder acquaintance of mine that he had what he thought was a Lark Sparrow, Kevin Crilley and I decided to take a look.

Time: 9:00 AM to 11:20 AM

Location: Limerick Township, Montgomery County; intersection of Heffner Rd and Sunset Rd.

Description of location: SE corner of intersection of above two roads, Approximately 4 acre disturbed building lot on which one completed home and one foundation was erected. Site appeared not to have been actively worked for some short period of time as it was well overgrown with such vegetation as asstd. Goldenrod sp and Queen Anns Lace. Center of plot looked to be a drainage basin with some standing water.

The looks: at about 9:20, as we were walking SE-bound on Heffner across from a residence #215 a brown bird showing much white on the tail flew across the road in front of us (25 ft.) to a dying 14-ft tall Norway Spruce which was part of a small row of spruces which line the driveway of #215. The white in the tail was extensive around the edges and onto the tail-tip (towhee-like, but more extensive). The tree was 60-ft from our viewing spot.

The bird apparently remained in this or below this tree without giving us another look until, some thirty-five minutes later, it flew NW approx 70-yds to a rather large deciduous tree near the corner of Heffner and Sunset, where I could now make out a rather bold facial pattern. Bird did not present any breast-on views to afford us a look at either the "stickpin" or streaking to resolve imm vs adult status. Also unable to determine color of dark facial markings... whether cool brown or a more foxy brown.

A minute later, the bird flew NE back across Heffner to land in another deciduous tree near a Sunset Rd residence. The bird was now 100 yds distant but dark facial markings still visible.

Kevin went to fetch a scope but by that time, the bird had dropped to the ground and was not refound.

Lark Sparrow has an affinity for trees and this was evident in its behavior. The four acre plot well populated with grasshoppers a favored item for the bird in its more normal range.

George Franchois Oct 15, 2005

911 Lake Lane

Pennsburg PA 18073

215-679-6619

PENNSYLVANIA RARE BIRD REPORT FORM

This form is presented as a convenience and guide. It can be used if desired, but is not necessary for submitting a report. Species requiring documentation are those on the Review List or not on the Official List of Birds of Pennsylvania. Send documentation to:

Nick Pulcinella, Secretary
Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee
613 Howard Ave.
West Chester, PA 19380
nickpulcinella@comcast.net

820-02-2005

SPECIES (common and scientific name) LARK SPARROW (Chondestes grammacus)
Subspecies, if known _____

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 1 SEX(ES) UNKNOWN

AGE(S) AND PLUMAGE(S) (e.g. immature; adult in breeding plumage; year for gulls; basic or alternate if you prefer those terms; state of molt if applicable): UNKNOWN

DATE OF OBSERVATION SEPT 19, 2005 TIME 9 TO 11:20 AM EDT

LOCATION (city, borough, township) LIMERICK TWP - MONTGOMERY COUNTY

EXACT SITE (e.g. name of park, lake, road) INTERSECTION HEEFNER RD & SUNSET ROAD

OBSERVER REPORTING:

Name GEORGE FRANKHOIS
Address 911 LAKE LANE
City PENNSBURG State PA ZIP 18073
e-mail (optional) _____ phone (optional) _____

W3576.1141@netcarrier.com

OTHER OBSERVERS (only those who saw and identified the bird with you): KEVIN CRILLET

HABITAT (e.g. mowed field, woodland edge, any other details) 4 ACRES CONSTRUCTION DISTURBED WOODED FIELD; SUBURBAN YARDS W. CONIFERS

DISTANCE TO BIRD 60 FT (CLOSEST); AGAIN @ 70 YDS

VIEWING CONDITIONS (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you) WEATHER WAS SUNNY; SUN TO MY LEFT AND BEHIND DURING THE VERY BRIEF LOOKS

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED BOVICH & LOMB 'ELITE' 5x14 BINOCULARS

DESCRIPTION (Include as much detail as you observed - size relative to other species present; "jizz"= e.g. posture, body shape, and proportions; colors and patterns of plumage; bill, eye, and leg characteristics; other features relevant to this individual): LUNKISH EXTENSIVELY WHITE-TIPPED TAIL HEAVILY PATTERNED FACIAL MARKINGS

(Please use an additional page if necessary.)

BEHAVIOR (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)

KEEPING ITSELF WELL HIDDEN IN EVERGREENS
NOT MUCH BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS SHOWN W. BIRDS (GUMPTRE)

VOCALIZATIONS None

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IF ANY:

Photograph _____ Video recording _____ Audio recording _____ Drawing _____

Photographer/recorder/illustrator:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

e-mail (optional) _____ phone (optional) _____

Please include a copy of the photograph or recording with your report, and accompany it with a complete written documentation if the identification is obvious to you. If you made a drawing, please include it.

IF THIS IS A DEAD BIRD:

General condition _____

If collected (by permit), location of specimen if known _____

SEPARATION FROM SIMILAR SPECIES (how you eliminated others) WHITE ON TAIL
FROM VESPER - BOLD HAZE & FACIAL PATTERN

DISCUSSION - Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

OBVIOUSLY A SPARROW - NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT

GRAND TOTAL OF ABOUT 70 SECONDS OF VIEWING TIME
IN OVER TWO HRS OF EFFORTS

(Please use an additional page if necessary)

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND/OR SIMILAR SPECIES

TEXAS

ARE YOU POSITIVE OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION? (why or why not)

REFERENCES CONSULTED:

During observation SIBLEY GUIDE

After observation SPARROWS OF U.S. AND CANADA - RISING

DATE OF THIS REPORT: JAN 17, 2006

SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER George A. Fouché

Species Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*)^{1st} winter

Date/Time 9/18/05 8:30 AM (numerous sighting dates + times since)
 The bird was seen off and on from 9/18/05 till mid October. Then rediscovered in the area 01/22/06 and seen almost daily since. Still being seen as of this date.

Location Limerick, PA Montgomery County
 site Heffner Rd near Sunset Rd (fall)
 94 Heffner Rd and horse pasture (winter)

Observer: Steven Grunwald 92 Heffner Rd
 Limerick, PA 19468
 (610) 489-4871

Other Observers: Initial observers (above and Krista Elton)
 Joan and Carl Grunwald (1/28/06)
 Bill Murphy + Naomi Murphy (02/04/06)

Distance 9/18/05 sighting was from about 16ft.
 The bird flew and landed on sidewalk in front of observers. Without binoculars I was able to see head pattern, pale chest, and long rounded tail with white outer edge. I returned to area half hour later and

viewed the bird from about 12 yards with binoculars. Many distances since 9/18/05

viewing Conditions

9/18/05 sighting: Sky was clear, sunlight was at observers back. The bird has since been seen under various conditions.

Equipment

Swift Condor 10x42 binoculars

Description: Large sparrow, with a bold head pattern, long rounded tail.

- white on outer tail feathers going completely around the tail, (very noticeable in flight)
- light buffy color eye stripe and median line.
- brown chestnut colored head pattern with black whisker on each side of bill.
- Pale chest with black central breast spot. (Sept-Oct had light streaking on side of chest and a lighter, not as pronounced breast spot) (Jan. breast spot more apparent, sides of chest clean, a more pronounced head pattern with still buffy colored eye stripe, but median line is now white.)

behavior. Bird is often seen on ground eating seeds. When flushed or spooked, flies to small trees or into brush. It has been observed making vocalizations from perch in small tree.

Vocalizations: long series of trills, a few clear notes and buzzes mixed in.

previous experience with species: 1 adult Lark sparrow Benjamin Rush State Park, Philadelphia

Evidence: Video recording of the bird from 01/28/06. (Submitted by Jason Miller)

Seperation from similar species: The tail of this bird is different from Vesper sparrow, due to the rounded end and the white on both the sides and end of tail. The head pattern and breast spot also rule out Vesper.

I am 100% sure of the identification.

I am familiar with the eastern sparrows, and familiar with many western sparrows.

I also am positive with this identification because I have had many good long looks at the bird.

The bird first appeared 9/18/06. It was seen irregularly in the same location for about a month. It was seen by two observers on 9/19/06. I saw it sporadically during daily morning walks. Most days it was not seen. It seemed to be spending of the time somewhere else.

In mid October the weedy field, where the bird was seen much of the time, was bulldozed over for development. The bird was not seen for months after construction began.

In January bird was rediscovered two properties down from original location. It is staying in a brushy hedgerow between a new home and a horse pasture. The bird is being seen regularly from this location.

If you have questions you can call 610 489-4871.

Steven Grunwald

Steven Grunwald 02/04/06

Record No: ~~794-01-2006~~

820-02-2005

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Lark Sparrow (Chondestes grammacus)

Date of Sighting: 19 September 2005 to 4 February 2006

Location: LIMERICK TOWNSHIP

County : MONTGOMERY

Observer(s): George Francois, Kevin Crilley, Jason Miller, Steve Grunwald

Date of Submission: 2006

Submitted by: Jason Miller, Steve Grunwald

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

Recording: Video

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut	X							
A. Guarente	X							
T. Johnson	X							
J. Stanley	X							
E. Witmer	X							
J. Heller	X							
G. Malosh	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments: Originally submitted in 2005 with by Crilley and Francois with only written documentation. Voting was 3/4 with a Class IV-A decision. Resubmitted in 2006 by Miller and Grunwald with video. The video accompanying this report is only a snippet of the full video that was submitted. The Secretary has the full video.

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

11/16/06

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

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County : MONTGOMERY

Observer(s): George Franchois, Kevin Crilley

Date of Submission: 2006

Submitted by: George Franchois

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

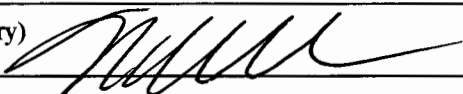
Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut			X					
A. Guarente					X			
P. Guris				X				
J. Stanley				X				
E. Witmer			X					
J. Heller			X					
M. Sharp				X				
TOTALS			3	3	1			
DECISION				X				

Comments: 314

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

7/24/06