

## PA Rare Bird Report

<b>Submission Date</b>	2018-03-20 19:11:23
<b>Observer's Name</b>	MIKE FIALKOVICH
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<b>Phone</b>	4127313581
<b>Observer's Address</b>	805 BEULAH RD PITTSBURGH PA 15235-4209 United States
<b>Names of additional observers</b>	MICHAEL P. FIALKOVICH
<b>Species (Common Name)</b>	Lark Sparrow
<b>Species (Scientific Name)</b>	Chondestes grammacus
<b>Number of individuals</b>	1
<b>Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)</b>	Immature I believe.
<b>Observation Date and Time</b>	09-08-2017 5:30 PM
<b>Did you submit this sighting to eBird?</b>	Yes
<b>Link to eBird checklist</b>	<a href="https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S39607501">https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S39607501</a>
<b>County</b>	Westmoreland
<b>Location (City, Borough, Township)</b>	Donegal Lake
<b>Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)</b>	Boat Launch Parking Lot
<b>Habitat</b>	Brushy edge around gravel parking lot and lake shore. The lake is more of a pond at this time.
<b>Distance to bird</b>	20 yards or less.
<b>Viewing conditions</b>	Good. Late afternoon light.
<b>Optical equipment used</b>	Leica Ultravid 10X42 binoculars, Leica Spotting Scope with 20 - 60X zoom eyepiece.

**Description**

When I first saw it perched in a tree, I could see the clear breast with a central spot and the harlequin face pattern. The colors were subdued so it may be an immature bird. It flew off but was relocated a short time later feeding among the vegetation. White throat with black malar, Brown cap with tinge of rusty, buffy supercilium, brownish with tinge of rust in auriculars outlined in black, white arc below eye, two white wing bars, dull white underparts, gray-brown nape, black streaks on back. It flew across the parking lot to a tree and in flight the extensive white outer tail feathers were obvious. The size was large for a sparrow, larger than a Song Sparrow and much larger than the Chipping Sparrows it was associating with. Photos enclosed and in my ebird list.

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

The bird was discovered by another observer the prior day; I just relocated it. I initially saw it perched near the top of a tree and I could see the distinct facial pattern and the single spot on the unstreaked breast.

**Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)**

No other sparrow has such a distinctive facial pattern. Much larger than the Chipping Sparrows that were with it. They lack a strong facial pattern, long rounded tail with outer white retrices and of course the facial pattern as well as the black spot in the middle of the breast.

**Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)**

Yes, Very distinctive. I've seen Lark Sparrow in Pennsylvania once and in Ohio several times as well as in Colorado.

**After**

Sibley Guide to Birds, National Geographic Guide, A Guide to the Identification and Natural History of the Sparrows of the United States and Canada.

**Supporting evidence (check all that apply)**

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video  
or drawings



[Lark Sparrow, Donegal Lake 9-8-2017 \(2\) Crop.jpg](#)



[Lark Sparrow, Donegal Lake 9-8-2017 \(6\).jpg](#)

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