

814-03-1991

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW
Spizella pallida

152

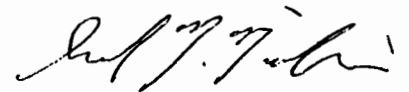
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On May 6, 1991 at beach 11 parking lot on Presque Isle State Park at 6:40 PM, I discovered a Clay-colored Sparrow. It was feeding among a flock of about 30 Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*) and 8 or 10 Field Sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*) and it appeared to be the same size. The birds were feeding on the ground in a grassy strip. I was in my car, so I approached the flock to within 75 feet and remained in the car at which time the following characteristics were noted. The head of the Clay-colored Sparrow was the most prominent feature of the bird. The crown was brown with a narrow buffy median stripe. The supercillium was white. A dark buffy patch on the face just covered the eye and extended over the ear coverts to a broad gray area on the side of the neck. The Clay-colored had a dark brown eyestripe and moustachial stripe. A narrow, but distinctive dark brown malar stripe separated the white submoustachial stripe from the pale gray throat. The mantle was heavily streaked dark brown on light brown. The wings were brown with 2 narrow wing bars formed by white edges to the median and greater coverts. The tail was brown and deeply forked. The entire underside was buffy-gray, buffiest on the breast.

I was able to get excellent views of the bird at this close range using a 10 X 40 Zeiss Binocular. Even more stunning views of the bird were made by looking through a 25X Bushnell Spacemaster Spotting Scope mounted on my window. The bird was studied for about 15 minutes before a passing car flushed the flock. When the flock returned to the parking lot, the Clay-colored could not be found again.

The sky was heavily overcast with stratus clouds and the wind was from the west-southwest to about 25 mph. I have seen 5 out of the 11 Clay-colored Sparrows found in Erie County. I have also seen several in Texas.

Gerald M. McWilliams



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # of

Species: **Clay-colored sparrow**

Date of Sighting: **6 May 1991**

Observer(s): **Jerry McWilliams**

Date of Submission: **1991 Erie**

Submitted by: **Jerry McWilliams**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater			X				
B. Haas			X				
F. Haas			X				
R. Leberman			X				
G. McWilliams			X				
S. Santner			X				
P. Schwalbe			X				
TOTALS			7				
DECISION			X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

B. Haas

Date:

3/7/92