

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2016-10-26 18:01:06
Observer's Name	Zachary Millen
E-mail	zjmillen@gmail.com
Phone	717-723-1279
Observer's Address	239 Miller Rd Apt 10 Akron PA 17501 United States
Names of additional observers	Eric Witmer, Tom Garner, Bruce Carl, Mike Epler, Ted Nichols II
Species (Common Name)	Le Conte's Sparrow
Species (Scientific Name)	<i>Ammodrammus leconteii</i>
Number of individuals	2
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Juvenile, sex unknown
Observation Date and Time	10-16-2016 11:30 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S32073154
County	Lancaster
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Bainbridge
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Bainbridge Islands
GPS coordinates of sighting	40.079270, -76.669131
Habitat	Grasses/Reeds
Viewing conditions	Partly cloudy
Optical equipment used	Nikon Monarch 7 10x42
Description	Song and Swamp Sparrows also present. First seen by me in flight, and smaller shape, shorter-tail, and pale plumage pointed to Ammodramus. Then able to obtain excellent views, at one point under 10 ft from one bird. Overall light tan/buff with some fine black streaking on breast, sides, and flanks. Brown nape with light streaking, white crown stripe eliminates Nelson's/Saltmarsh which is best visible in Eric Witmer's photos. Gave calls notes identical to playback, high-pitched "tsee."

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

Spent most of their time tucked away down in reeds, but would come up at times in response to light pishing or call playback.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

Brown napes with light streaking, white crown stripe eliminates Nelson's/Saltmarsh, Henslow's. Grasshopper shows this but streaks on back much bolder. Gave call notes identical to playback, high-pitched "tsee."

Discussion – anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

This type of birding is tough, particularly with this genus of sparrows as they are such specialists in this type of habitat, and can easily take to the ground running to avoid birders. At one point, in the thick patch where one of the Le Conte's was first found, we were all watching a single bird as it dropped down into the reeds. While Ted played a few call notes to pop it back up, another Le Conte's appeared from my left, again showing white median stripe and brown, streaked nape. The interval between actually seeing both birds was no more than 15 seconds. For this to have been the same bird, it would have had to work down the reeds, run the 15-20 ft to my left, and been replaced by another bird shaking the same stems the first had just left in that interval. Mike and Eric had a similar experience earlier on which hopefully they will elaborate. Comparing our best photos, I could not pick out any plumage differences that would necessarily point to two separate birds.

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

Yes

During

None

After

Sibley/Stokes

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph



[IMG_5968 2.jpg](#)



[IMG_5971 2.jpg](#)

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2016-11-20 11:57:30
Observer's Name	J. Eric Witmer
E-mail	flatbirder@gmail.com
Phone	7173140623
Observer's Address	230 Mason Drive Ephrata PA 17522 United States
Names of additional observers	Tom Garner, Mike Epler and I. Zach Millen, Bruce Carl and Ted Nichols later in AM
Species (Common Name)	LeContes Sparrow
Species (Scientific Name)	<i>Ammodramus leconteii</i>
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Juvenile
Observation Date and Time	10-16-2016 8:30 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	S32074570
County	Lancaster
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Bainbridge
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Bainbridge Islands of Susquehanna River
Habitat	Grassy, wet river island
Distance to bird	15-50 feet
Viewing conditions	Partly cloudy, calm
Optical equipment used	10x44 Leica Binoculars
Description	A small <i>Ammodramus</i> Sparrow with light thin median stripe, small bill, short tail, conspicuous pale stripes on back.
Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)	Occasionally perched near tops of grass stalks or deeper in thick grasses

Discussion – anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

There was some discussion among the observers that there was two birds present. Several times there appeared to be sightings in the grassy thicket at different locations at the same time. There was to my knowledge no sightings of two birds seen together.

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

Yes

During

Sibley

After

Sibley

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings



[IMG_0026.JPG](#)



[IMG_0027.JPG](#)





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