

830A - 01-2001

## UNUSUAL SIGHTING DOCUMENTATION

Person Submitting: August Mirabella  
Species: Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow  
Observers: Found by: August Mirabella  
Seen By: No one else.

Date Seen: September 16, 2001

Where Observed: Peace Valley Park, near Doylestown, Bucks Co.

Conditions: Seen with Zeiss 7X42 bins at approximately 15 to 30 feet.

**Behavior & Habitat:** The bird was at the edge of a large field with about foot high weeds of various types. The edge had taller goldenrod mixed with clumps of multiflora and other thickets. Also, patches of wetland rushes and sedges were within 15 feet. As I walked the edge, about five sparrows flushed up into a multiflora rose. It only stayed up for a few seconds and went down. I was able to get it in view one more time for another few seconds before it went down and stayed down.

**Description:** The first view was its back, which I noticed to be brightly patterned with white, chestnut, and black. It was very sharply marked and I knew it was not a regularly occurring species. I then noticed that as it turned its head toward me, it had small bright orange spots irregularly located on the lores, supercilium, and malar area. The crown was dark with a center gray median stripe. The second view was a direct front view. I was startled by the pale to medium orange breast that had a very sharply defined break with the clean white belly. The breast had dull parallel streaking against the orange breast. Each streak was fairly continuous from the top to bottom of the breast. I don't remember the flanks possibly because I never got a side view. The spotty nature of the orange on the face was surprising and I can not explain it other than the bird may have still been molting. I originally thought the bird was an "Atlantic" form as shown in Sibley because of the dull streaking but the brightness of the face spots and back now leads me to believe it may have been the "Interior" form or an intergrade between the two.

**Similar Species Comparison:** Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow would not have the sharp break between the breast and belly and have more sharply defined breast streaks.

**Other Documentation:** None. Copy of this documentation will be sent to N. Pulcinella.

*4th County Report*

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Tabulation Form - Round One**

Species: Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (Ammodramus nelsoni)

Date of Sighting: 16 September 2001 to 16 September 2001

Location: PEACE VALLEY PARK

County: BUCKS

Observer(s): August Mirabella

Date of Submission: 2001

Submitted by: August Mirabella

Written Description: Yes

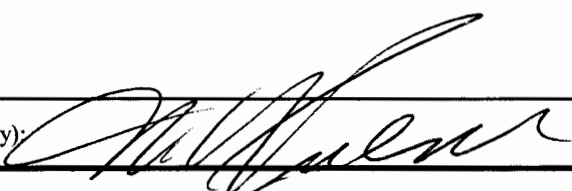
Photo: No

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead			X					
D. <del>Couchman</del> <sup>Heathcote</sup>			X					
P. Hess			X					
J. Stanley			X					
B. Reid			X					
R. Leberman				X				
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			6	1				
DECISION			X					

Comments: 6/1

Signature (Secretary): 

Date: 8/28/02