



837-01-1952

1672 Deer Run Road
Catawba SC 29704
September 27, 1992

Barbara M. Haas, Secretary
Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

From: Albert E. Conway

Re: Golden-crowned Sparrow

In response to your letter of 26 December 1990, I sent you a postal card saying that I would send you a print in support of this record when I could find my slide. At last, this has happened! The transparency, from which the print was copied, was taken by Dr. George A. Clark, Jr., now a professor of biology at the University of Connecticut. George, then a 15-year-old boy, credits my wife, June, and me for ^{his encouraging} interest in birds which led to his becoming a professional ornithologist.

The following is quoted from my report of the banding of the bird to the Bird Banding Laboratory:

"21-122216 A [Adult] M [Male] June 3, 1952, captured at Easton, Pa., in Middleton thrush trap. Released on June 16, 1952, same place, repeating five times thereafter, with the last repeat on June 18. First record for Pennsylvania, and about the fifth east of the Rockies."

During the period that the bird was in captivity, nearly two hundred people came to see the bird from as far as New York City, southern New Jersey, and Philadelphia.

Roger Peterson received an honorary degree from Franklin and Marshall College at Lancaster, and a dinner was held in his honor at Lititz. The sparrow, which we took, attracted more attention than did Peterson! When I saw him four years ago, he said he still remembers the bird.

Other ornithologists present at the dinner were Alexander Wetmore, Maurice Broun, Earl L. Poole, Charles K. Nichols, and Herbert A. Beck.

This is somewhat lengthy, but the bird did create quite a stir, and I thought you should have the full story.

Enclosure: print of Golden-crowned Sparrow

P.S.: You mention that there are other species for which you do not have substantiating data. I spent the summer of 1937 at ANSP going through the collection. I also have notes on some rarities at W.C.S.T.C.'s Anderson Hall which subsequently were apparently destroyed. Perhaps I can help. - *Albert E. Conway*

sent list

CASSINIA

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COVER: A Possible Canada × Pink-footed Goose Hybrid. Photographed at Allentown, Pa., February 27, 1965, by George W. Leck with a 350mm lens.

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higher than three feet up for the full time I observed it from distances varying from six to eighteen feet. The bird was an adult male in winter plumage. Stone (*Bird Studies at Old Cape May*, 1937: 830) mentions only six October records for this species, the latest on the 16th. It normally winters from southern Florida southward. — Edward J. Reimann, 2145 Old Welsh Road, Abington, Pa. 19001

[Editor's Note: Late fall and early winter records of various species of Wood Warblers (*Parulidae*) attract the interest of bird watchers, and it is likely that, over a sufficient period of time, individuals of most or even all the species regularly occurring in the Delaware Valley Region would be recorded in late fall or early winter. Some hardy individuals, under favorable conditions, may linger later into the winter than the Christmas Count period, although most such stragglers perish during the mid-winter period. Myrtle Warblers (*Dendroica coronata*) and Yellowthroats (*Geothlypis trichas*) winter regularly and are able to survive through the entire winter, the former in considerable numbers, especially in coastal locations.]

Audubon's Warbler in Pennsylvania: An Audubon's Warbler (*Dendroica auduboni*) was banded at Washington Crossing State Park, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, on October 22, 1966. This bird had a yellow throat, white in all of its tail feathers, and broad white wing patches. Because I have not handled this species before, I hesitate to state its age or sex, so these items will go into banding records as "unknown."

This bird was seen by three visitors at the Nature Center. It was caught in a trap with dripping water. It was not seen after October 22. It was in the company of a small flight of Myrtle Warblers (*Dendroica coronata*). After its release, I watched it for a short time, and its flight seemed to be stronger and more direct than the Myrtle's. Its voice, as it left my hand, seemed to be stronger than the call of the Myrtle.

Don Bleitz, California bird photographer and bander, saw an Audubon's Warbler here when he visited us in October 1957. He predicted that we would eventually catch one — and said he thought these birds were more common than we thought. — John L. Evans, 504 Anne Street, Huntingdon Valley, Pa. 19006

[Editor's Note: Although of considerable interest, the above record would not constitute a first for Pennsylvania even if adequate supporting data such as photographs were produced, for three specimens have previously been taken in this State (Poole, *Pennsylvania Birds*, 1964: 55). The only other specimen of this western species taken in the East was in Massachusetts (Forbush, *Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States*, 1929: III, 242). Forbush cautions against sight records, especially in autumn. Although the Audubon's Warbler probably does occur in this area more frequently than commonly suspected, it does seem that identifying characteristics should be recorded carefully at the time of observation.]

The First Record of the Golden-crowned Sparrow in Pennsylvania: On June 4, 1952, near Easton, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, my wife, June R. Conway, and I trapped and banded an adult Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*). Because of the interest which this straggler from the far West attracted, it was kept in captivity for a period of time. Some two hundred persons came to see it, many from as far as New York or Philadelphia.

Shortly after its capture, the bird was taken to a testimonial dinner for Roger Tory Peterson who had earlier in the day received an honorary doctoral degree from Franklin and Marshall College. The Golden-crowned Sparrow seemed to attract more attention than Peterson! Other prominent ornithologists who confirmed its identity included Maurice Broun, Earl L. Poole, Ludlow Griscom, and Alexander Wetmore. I told the latter that I thought this bird should be considered an addition to the Pennsylvania State list without being taken as a specimen. Dr. Wetmore said that he felt that this was a justifiable exception because of its identification being confirmed by so many experts and because of the many photographs taken of it. I subsequently noted with satisfaction the notation in the A.O.U. "Check-list" under this species that it is accidental in "Pennsylvania (Easton)." (*Check-list of North American Birds*, 5th edition, 1957: 621).

The present record is but the second for the Eastern Coastal States and among a half dozen or so east of the Rocky Mountains. Its occurrence so far from its normal range is purely fortuitous. — Albert E. Conway, 713 Woodsdale Road, Wilmington, Delaware 19809

PORC

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22 January 1991

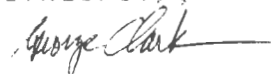
Barbara M. Haas
Secretary, Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee
2459 Hammertown Road
Narvon, PA 17555-9726

Dear Ms. Haas:

I am writing in reply to your letter of 11 January concerning the Golden-crowned Sparrow banded in Pennsylvania by Albert Conway in June 1952. In my bird lists and comments for that period, I noted having seen the bird (in captivity) on June 3, 8, 12, and 14, at the Conway residence (close to the Delaware River south of Easton) and that on 8 June 1952 I took photographs of the Golden-crowned Sparrow, a Chipping Sparrow, and a Song Sparrow. Regrettably, my notes do not contain a description of that Golden-crowned Sparrow. I am confident that the identification made at that time was correct and that the record is a valid one for Pennsylvania, but such confidence does not constitute a particularly strong form of evidence for documentation of the record.

Unfortunately I do not now recall either whether those photographs were successful or where any resulting pictures might have been placed. Those photographs are not with me here in Connecticut, although I do have here others which I took around that time. There is a possibility that such photographs might be among a large quantity of materials stored in a family house in southern New Jersey. Some years ago I removed a number of my older photographs of birds from that residence but did not at that time come across any pictures of the Golden-crowned Sparrow. Nevertheless, it would be worthwhile to search further, and I intend to do that, but do not anticipate being able to do so before mid March of this year. If I can find a photograph of that Golden-crowned Sparrow, I intend to supply your Committee with a copy and to include one in the museum research collection of bird photographs here.

Sincerely,



George A. Clark, Jr.
Professor, and Curator
in Ornithology
(currently also Chair of the
Connecticut Rare Records
Committee)

Copy & send to FORE number

1672 Deer Run Road
Catawba SC 29704
July 13, 1994

To: Barbara Haas

From: Albert Conway

Re: Golden-crowned Sparrow

When I recently ordered a copy of "Annotated list of the Birds of Pennsylvania" (1992), I didn't remember that I already had a copy. No problem. I am giving it to my son, Charlie.

Also, I had forgotten that I had sent you George Clark's photo of the Golden-crowned Sparrow for your Records Committee. Parenthetically, it should be noted that on p. 621 of the 5th A.O.U. Check-list there appears for the Golden-crowned Sparrow: "Accidental in... Pennsylvania (Easton).." Obviously, this record was overlooked by the authors of the 1992 list.

The 1992 list gives the first date for the House Finch in Pennsylvania as 12/1/55 at Norristown. I believe that it first appeared at Glenolden (John and Mabel Gillespie) in 1952. June and I were living near Easton at the time, and we both recall making a special trip to Glenolden to add this species to our life lists. When I find the record, I'll send the info to you.

Enclosure: Xerox copy from "EBBA News" re the Golden-crowned Sparrow.

Addendum: Since the Golden-crowned Sparrow was accepted for the A.O.U. Check-list, it would seem that this would be sufficient for its inclusion in the official Pennsylvania list. If it hasn't been done, a note to this effect should be put in "Pennsylvania Birds."

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Golden-crowned Sparrow**Date of Sighting: **4 June 1952 to 18 June 1952**Observer(s): **Albert Conway**Date of Submission: **1992 Northampton**Submitted by: **Albert Conway**

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

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

Date: 7/2/93