

858-02-2001

Western Meadowlark

Sturnella neglecta

12 May 2001

by Mark A. McConaughy

The second western meadowlark was found during the NAMC on 12 May 2001 along SR 1022 just west of Crabtree at about 5:45 in the afternoon. It was singing from a telephone line just south of SR 1022. I was able to grab my videotape camera and made an attempt to record it using just the 10X lens on the camcorder while the camera was set up on my tripod. I thought I had taped a couple of minutes of the bird singing on the wire (and the view finder showed it was supposedly recording), but the taping failed. Fortunately, I decided to try and shoot the bird with the camcorder through my Leica Televid APO scope with its 32X wide angle objective. The 10X of the camcorder and the 32X of the scope yielded an effective magnification of 320X. A short tape of the bird calling through the scope (sorry for the hand-held jiggles) did take! That video is submitted as documentation for this bird and is on the videotape just after the recording of the Swainson's warbler.

The videotape clearly shows a singing meadowlark. This bird also has relatively "dirty" or blotchy V breast marking, the eyeline is indistinct and actually almost missing just behind the eye, and the lines on the top of the head are also not as distinct as eastern meadowlarks (note: the resolution of the videotape is not sufficient to show how splotchy it really is, it blurs markings together due to the low resolution -- the lines actually looked like someone spray painted them on the bird producing a speckled appearance to the lines). The belly, breast, "chin" and submalar area of the bird were all decidedly yellow. The flanks were white with brownish spots in a linear pattern. The cheek was a light mottled gray. The feathers on the back and wings were tan or light brown with some darker inner feather markings (i.e., somewhat darker centers), but not as dark as found on the eastern meadowlarks. The tail feathers also appeared to be a shade lighter than that of the Eastern Meadowlarks found nearby. Again, the song this bird was singing was not that of the eastern meadowlark, but was the western meadowlark song.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Tabulation Form - Round One

Species: Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*)

Date of Sighting: 12 May 2001 to 12 May 2001

Location: CRABTREE

County: WESTMORELAND

Observer(s): Mark McConaughy

Date of Submission: 2001

Submitted by: Mark McConaughy

Written Description: Yes

Photo:

Specimen: No

Recording: Video

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead	X							
D. Heathcote	X							
P. Hess	X							
J. Stanley	X							
E. Witmer	X							
R. Leberman	X							
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments: 7/0

Signature (Secretary):

Date:

6/3/03