



## UNUSUAL SIGHTING DOCUMENTATION

**Species (common & scientific)** Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*

**Number of Individuals:** 1      **Sex(es):** ?

**Age(s) & Plumage(s):** Adult

**Date Seen:** 3/7-3/8 (probably wintered as I thought I had one earlier but never followed up).

**Time: Approx.** Morning

**Where Seen** (Town/County: New Britain Twp., Bucks Co.

**Exact Location** (Park, Road, Lake): Peace Valley Park

### Observer Reporting:

**Name:** August Mirabella

**Address:** 1443 Wheaton Lane  
North Wales, PA 19454

**E-mail:** [augustmirabella@aol.com](mailto:augustmirabella@aol.com)

**Telephone (optional):** 215-368-0594

**Other Observers** (Only those who saw & identified the bird with you): PVNC Bird Walk Group saw it on 3/8.

**Distance to Bird:** 20 Feet

**Viewing Conditions** (Sky, weather, position of sun relative to you): Sun at my back

**Optical Equipment Used:** 7X42 Zeiss Bins & Leica Scope

**Habitat:** Bird feeder located in mixed Multiflora, etc. thickets. Feeder is in a 30' x 25' clearing that has mixed low weeds and a very small man made pond. Approx. 50' from feeder are ag. fields of several acres, with the closest being left not mowed in grasses, etc.

**Description** (only what you observed; size relative to other species present; posture, body shape & proportions; colors & patterns of plumage: The bird looked like our normally occurring White-crowned Sparrow, with the primary exception being the clean pale white/gray lores, lacking any black spotting or tones, and appearing to blend in with other nearby pale gray face area. The bill was orange-yellow. The crown stripe was white. I didn't notice if there was any differences in flank or back color from the other birds present. From the photo, the lower flanks only appear to be buffy. More and better pictures would have been helpful, but the bird didn't cooperate.

**Behavior** (Be as specific as possible about what the bird was doing): Feeding and sitting.

**Vocalizations:** None

**Supporting Evidence if Any** (include with report): Photo taken by Howard B. Eskin 3/7/2008 submitted with this report.

**Separation from Similar Species** (How you eliminated others): The pale lore was the key and it was in direct comparison to our normal black lored birds.

**Discussion** (Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it): With the movement of the birds, the scope was often on the wrong bird,

and there was no confusion knowing that we were looking at the wrong bird. The people on the bird walk would look puzzled when they were on the wrong bird until I would move the scope to the correct bird.

**Previous Experience with this and/or Similar Species:** Have seen many times.

**Are you positive of your ID?** (Why or why not): Although the difference was obvious, and I saw it well multiple times, I suppose an intergrade between subspecies is possible. As unlikely as their appearance here may be, I guess the two western most subspecies would also be similar. They are supposed to have extensive brown wash on the sides and flanks, which this bird does not appear to have in the photo. They also should have a more yellow bill. DNA field kit needed, I guess!!

**References:**

During Observation: None

After Observation: Photo, Sibley Guide, BNA Online, VIREO

**Date of report:** 6/26/2008

**Signature of Observer:** August Mirabella

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Tabulation – Round One**

Species: White-crowned (Gambel's) Sparrow      *Zonotrichia leucophrys*

Date of Sighting: 7 March 2008 to 8 March 2008

County : BUCKS

Location : PEACE VALLEY PARK

Observer(s): August Mirabella, et al

Date of Submission: 2008

Submitted by: August Mirabella, Howard Eskin

Written Description: Yes

Photo: Yes

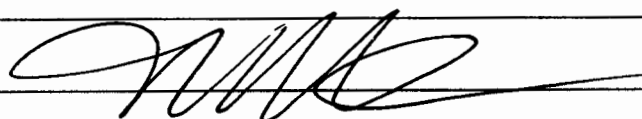
Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut	X							
A. Guarente	X							
T. Johnson				X				
B. Coulter	X							
C. Rutt	X							
J. Heller	X							
G. Malosh	X							
TOTALS	6			1				
DECISION	X							

Comments: 6/1

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

10/30/08