

Submission Date	2012-12-27 16:24:12
Observer's Name	August Mirabella
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Observer's Address	Street Address: 1443 Wheaton Lane City: North State / Province: Wales Postal / Zip Code: 19454 Country: United States
Names of additional observers	Note: I didn't observe it other than photos taken by photographer Stan Lupo and then Howard Eskin.
Species (Common Name)	White-crowned Sparrow
Species (Scientific Name)	Zonotrichia leucophrys
Subspecies (if known)	leucophrys x gambelii
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Adult
Observation Date and Time	10-16-2012 1: 0 PM
County	Bucks
Location (City, Borough, Township)	New Britain Twp.
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Peace Valley Park
GPS coordinates of sighting	
Habitat	Bird feeders at blind
Distance to bird	10-15 feet
Viewing conditions	Good
Optical equipment used	Nikon Camera for photos attached
Description	I am submitting this even though I didn't see it. Others reported the bird from at least 10/14 but without comment about its subspecies. The two who submitted photos are photographers. Stan Lupo first sent pictures on 10/15. He was unaware of the possible subspecies issue. Howard Eskin took pictures 10/16 due to Stan bringing it to our

attention and my telling Howard that it was a possible Gambel's. Since I am using Eskin's pictures, I entered 10/16 for the date. I don't know if PORC wants to review this. Just sending it in case. From researching this bird, I now wonder if any pure Gambel's can be claimed with certainty. Based on the replies I got below from experts, I was rather disappointed that more details weren't provided, and wonder if there is any way to know for sure what this thing is. However, I am submitting it as an intermediate bird between the two subspecies, which is the best I can conclude and supported by the comments below. More comments follow:

From August Mirabella

Photos taken by Stan Lupo were sent to our local Yahoo! Group 10/15/12 of an adult White-crowned Sparrow. I noticed it did not have dark lores as in the leucophrys but maybe were too dark for a gambelli. The bill was probably not as yellow as a gambelli and seemed too pink like a leucophrys. Therefore, I suspected that it was an intermediate bird between leucophrys and gambelli. Howard Eskin took more pictures on 10/16/12. We then sent pictures to various people to review. I don't have access to the Lupo photos at this time but Eskin's photos are included. Here are some of the replies.

From Dave Sibley

I agree this must be an intergrade, but on intergrades I usually just see variation in the position of the border between black and gray, not a blending of dark gray like this. Interesting.

From James Rising

Well, hard to be certain. Would prefer the bill to be yellowish and to have more white in the lores to be typical, but there is a lot of variation. I have seen birds that were "leucophrys" on one side and "gambelli" on the other, and I think that there is a lot of variation. No reason for birds that are "gambelli in PA. They breed east to north-central Ont. Thanks for sharing the photo with me. Cheers.

From Paul Lehman

Yes, it could be an intergrade. Clearly has white lores, but the bill also looks to be the same color as typical eastern leucophrys, rather than the more candycorn, paler color of typical Gambel's.

From Cameron Rutt

I don't think it's a Gambel's (the bill color looks mostly dusky pink to me, lacking the yellowy/orange hues). The white eyebrow looks nearly pinched off at the front corner of its eye - like our normal WCSPs - so I'd guess it to be a more intermediate appearing (or variant) eastern WCSP. Interesting, though, nonetheless. I don't know anything about intergrades between these populations.

I also received comments from Michael O'Brien who also felt that it was likely an intermediate bird rather than pure Gambel's. I don't remember his exact comments. I apparently deleted his e-mail.

Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what

Feeding

the bird was doing)

After

Sibley

**Supporting evidence
(check all that apply)**

Photograph

**Upload images, audio,
video or drawings**

[White_crowned_Sp._Intermediate_\(HBEskin_10_16_12\)_2.jpg](#)
[White_crowned_Sp._Intermediate_\(HBEskin_10_16_12\).jpg](#)

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