

RARE SPECIES DOCUMENTATION

Records of Vermont Birds

The following form has been prepared to encourage full documentation, when requested, of rare or unseasonal birds in the state of Vermont. These reports are put into a permanent file and should be as detailed as possible. New reports are reviewed annually by the Vermont Bird Records Committee, which evaluates records for their acceptability to future researchers and for inclusion in the state bird list.

Please print or type

SPECIES: White-crowned Sparrow

NUMBER OBSERVED: 1

OBSERVER MAKING REPORT: Kyle Jones **OTHER OBSERVERS** (and addresses if available) Tii McLane

LOCATION: (place, township, county) Newmont Farm, Fairlee, Orange County. Intersection Mallary Rd and Rt. 5

DATE: 01/03/2014

TIME AND LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: 11:45 AM, 15 minutes (off and on)

DISTANCES FROM BIRD: Maximum 60' Minimum 40'

WEATHER:

wind direction north wind speed 5-10mph

sky cover overcast light in relation to observer's position to the right, but overcast, even lighting
temperature 15F

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: (make, power, etc.) 8X Nikon Monarch

OBSERVER'S PREVIOUS ACQUAINTANCE WITH THIS SPECIES OR SIMILAR FORMS:
I've seen hundreds, including a couple of out of season ones in late fall and on CBCs.
I have also seen a few golden-crowned sparrows.

OTHER DOCUMENTATION: Photo _____ Tape Recording _____ Specimen _____

If yes to the above, where is this information deposited? _____

HABITAT: (be as detailed as possible, include associated bird species)

In annual weeds around a manure pit on a large dairy farm. Three song sparrows associated with this sparrow, often within a foot or two, but the WCSP often chased them off.

BIRD'S BEHAVIOR: (feeding actions, manner of flight, displays or interactions, reaction to observer)

Appeared to be feeding mostly on the ground, although occasionally higher in the weeds or hidden in thick cover. Mostly not attentive to observer but did pish a little closer near the end of observation.

VOCALIZATION: (song or calls) None heard.

DESCRIPTION: (Describe what you actually saw during the observation. We hope that observers will take field notes during the observation and before consulting field guides, etc. Additional pages with sketches and copies of field notes are encouraged.)

Relative size and shape:

Immediately appeared as a large, chunky sparrow with broad brown crown stripes. A song sparrow nearby (same binocular field) allowed confirmation of size (larger than song sparrow).

Head (crown, cheeks, eye, throat, nape):

Broad chestnut-brown streaks on each side of head, lighter between. Thin dark eyeline continued on lores. Otherwise a fairly pale gray face extending around to back of head and nape.

Feet and Bill (shape, color, length):

I did not think to observe the bill color well. I do not recall it standing out as a bright color the way some races of white-crowned sparrow do. Leg/feet color also not noted.

Upper back:

Streaked brown and dark brown/black

Lower back and rump:

Tan rump with no streaks

Wings (shape, length, markings):

Breast, belly, flanks, undertail coverts:

Gray breast with no conspicuous streaking

Tail (shape, length, markings):

Long-tailed appearance with no particular markings noted.

IMPORTANT: WHAT SIMILAR SPECIES WERE ELIMINATED WHEN MAKING THIS IDENTIFICATION AND HOW WAS THIS BIRD DIFFERENT?

Golden-crowned Sparrow was eliminated by lack of any yellow color in median crown stripe or on forecrown. This bird had broad chestnut-brown head stripes, immature golden-crowned sparrow stripes seem narrower in field guide illustrations.

COMMENTS: (was age or sex determined?, etc.)

Immature based on chestnut head stripe color and light crown stripe, as opposed to black and white pattern of adults.

This report was written from notes taken during _____ immediately after _____ the observation, or written from memory X (please attach copies of notes if available)

Comments from eBird checklist:

Immature, dark lores. Repeated quick looks at short distance. In weeds on edge of manure pit. Large sparrow. Big reddish crown stripes pale between, unstreaked gray breast, unstreaked brown rump. White wing bar. Compared with song sparrows.

NAME (print) Kyle Jones SIGNATURE (not req'd) _____

MAILING ADDRESS lkjones13@gmail.com

DATE 1/4/2015

Return electronically (preferred) to: vbrc@vtcostudies.org or mail to: Vermont Bird Records Committee, Vermont Center for Ecostudies, PO Box 420, Norwich, VT 05055