

DOCUMENTATION OF LATILONG PAPER BIRD SIGHTING
FOR
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

56-89-61

Species: Golden-crowned Sparrow
(Vernacular name)

Zonotrichia atricapilla
(Scientific name)

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students--those studying occurrences 50 years from now--must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Date (s): September 24, 1989 Time Bird Seen: 9:50 AM to 10 AM

Locality: Colorado City, Pueblo County, Colorado
This bird is not listed in Latilong #26 (Trinidad) in current
Nearest town, county and state: Latilong publication

Optical equipment: 10x40 Zeiss binoculars

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: Immature

Light conditions: Excellent

Distance from bird, and how measured: 15-20 yards estimated

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

This bird was with a flock of immature white-crowned sparrows; a Lincoln's Sparrow. It responded well to "pishing" sound made by observer & sat on top of a low shrub for 1-2 minutes. It foraged low to the ground in dense shrubbery but could easily be called out.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Dense shrubs; willows along dry creek bed. Elevation 6200 feet

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough.) Describe what you actually saw in the field. Bird appeared same size as nearby white

^{crowned}
A Sparrow. Dull yellowish crown but much brighter yellow when sunlight hit the crown. Crown had dark brown heavy line on each side becoming blacker toward beak. Black extended over bridge of beak. Face was solid light gray beige, except for dull thin brown malar stripe. Throat was slightly lighter than face; was light gray. Breast was solid light gray; contained no streaks; no spots. Belly was slightly lighter. Back was light beige with dark streaks. Wings were dark brownish black slightly lighter toward upper wing coverts. Two whitish wing bars were on each wing. Tail was long brownish black; appeared rounded. Beak was dark brownish black especially upper mandible. Lower mandible was slightly lighter especially at base of lower mandible.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

This bird made no sound

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

White crowned sparrow including immatures have light often pink beaks. Immature white crowns have rufous striped crown - not the blackish brown stripes of the bird I saw. Immature white crowns; adults lack broad yellowish crown stripe of Golden-crowned Sparrow.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I have observed Golden-crowned Sparrows many times in Washington state where I lived for 7 years. I have seen white-crowned Sparrows many times in many states.

This report was written from notes made during ☒ after ☐ observation; from memory ☐.

NAME (print): David Silverman

Mailing address: P.O. Box 362 Rye, Colorado 81069

Signature: David Silverman

Return Form To: CFO Records Committee
c/o Curator - Dept. of Zoological Collections
Denver Museum of Natural History
City Park
Denver, CO 80205

xc Hugh Kingery