

CFO Replied 4/6

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RARE BIRD DOCUMENTATION FORM

CBC NAME: Denver (urban) Christmas Count

2001-17
ACCEPTED

Documentation form for unusual bird sightings: submitted as documentation of (check all that apply):

☒ Unusual species ☐ Unusual date ☐ Unusual breeding record ☐ Unusual Habitat

1. Species Golden-crowned Sparrow Age ? see description Sex ? # 1

2. Date (s) of Observation 1-1-01 Time 8:15a to 8:25a

Earlier/Later dates by others, if known Seen by MOB, between Dec. 26 + Dec. 31, 2000
Posted on RBA and COBIRDS - this was a stakeout,

3. Place Cherry Creek State Park

Nearest town Aurora, CO County Arapahoe

4. Observer J B Hayes + MOB

Address 1517 W. Briarwood Ave., Littleton, CO 80120

Telephone/fax/E-Mail 303-798-9683

5. Observation Details:

Other Observers Field party of 12, including Bob Brown, who originally found the bird on 12-26-00

Optics Leica 77 mm APO scope, Nikon Venturer 10X42

Distance from bird 100 ft. Viewing Conditions front lighting, sun low in winter sky

Weather, sky cover Calm, dry, sunny to partly cloudy

Photo taken? ☒ Video? ☒ Sound Recording? ☒ Specimen? ☒

Are these available to the CBC Regional Editor? ☐ Where are they? ☐

6. Past Experience: With this or similar species? I have seen wintering Golden-crowned Sparrows many times in California. I have seen them several times on the breeding grounds in Alaska; I have seen three previous occurrences in Colorado in winter.

7. References or advice consulted: Sibley; Natl Geographic (3rd); Rising + Beadle; Byers, Curson + Olsson;
8. Was this report done from notes made during or after observation, or from memory? all consulted before observation

9. On the back of this form give complete details of this observation. Use additional sheets as needed. Include information on the bird's plumage, shape, size, vocalizations, habitat, behavior, etc. Describe exactly what you saw; include photocopies of your original notes and sketches. Name the species that you considered ID contenders; explain how you eliminated them.

Signature J B Hayes

Date 1-1-01

Submit to your Compiler, Regional Editor, or:

Christmas Bird Count
National Audubon Society
PO Box 689
Lahaska PA 18931

Bob Brown first found the bird on 12-26-00. It was feeding on the ground at the edge of a small cattail-filled swale next to a paved footpath at Cherry Creek State Park. On count day, 1-1-01, two members of our party saw the bird feeding at that spot about 7:15 am (sunrise). At about 8:15 am, our entire party of 12 was positioned about 100 ft. from the spot, with the sun to our backs. About six Song Sparrows and one American Tree Sparrow were feeding at the spot. In a few minutes, the Golden-crowned was found in the dense branches of a small tree, partially obscured; but all party members observed it w/ binoculars. I trained my scope on the bird, but only & saw it through the scope, before it ducked into the cattails. Moments later, the bird began feeding in the open for a good view, no scope required. All observers identified it as Golden-crowned Sparrow.

We saw a large sparrow, clean gray-breasted, with a pale golden crown containing fine black streaks. The gold color was most apparent and quite pronounced when struck by full sunlight. The patch of streaked gold had longitudinal charcoal borders, suggesting an adult. The bird was larger than the Song Sparrow, but of similar shape and structure. The wings were rufous and black w/ two faint white wingbars. The back was brownish with darker streaks. The bill was grayish.

The golden crown is sufficient to distinguish the bird from the three other Zonotrichia species which occur in Colorado in the winter. I and many of my party have considerable experience w/ Zonotrichia Sparrows, and express no doubt about our ID.

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD X**Species:** Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*)**Date:** 1 January 2001 **Number seen:** one **Sex:** unknown **Plumage:** adult**Locality:** Cherry Creek State Park **Elevation:** 5350 feet**Nearest town:** Denver **County:** Arapahoe**Time observed:** late morning**Duration of observation:** about 5 minutes total**Description:**

A Golden-crowned Sparrow had been reported since Dec 26, 2001 in the same patch of woods along the bike path near a parking lot on the SW corner of the lake. I went there with several others to look for this bird. After waiting for it to appear for several minutes, I finally spotted it coming out to feed on some bird seed that someone had placed along the bike path. It was a large sparrow, notably a *Zonotrichia* by size. It was predominantly brownish on the upperparts with faint streaking on the wings and whitish on the underparts, although the unstreaked breast had a dingy brown tone to it. The most distinctive feature was the deep yellow crown patch bordered by black feathering along the sides of the crown. After seeing the crown patch I didn't bother looking at the rest of the bird for plumage details.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration): none heard

What is your prior experience with this and similarly-appearing species? I have seen 100's of this species while living in Alaska and California. This is the third GCSP I have seen in Colorado in two years.

Light conditions: I don't recall

Optical equipment used: Zeiss 7x42 binoculars

Distance, and how estimated: about 8 meters

Other observers who saw the bird with you: Elena Thomas, Ann Thomas, and Max Thomas

Other observers who saw the bird independently: dozens, this bird was reported from 26 Dec 2001 to 9 Jan 2002 that I know of.

If photographed, type of equipment and film: none

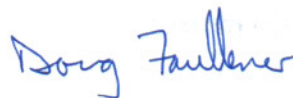
List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: none

b) after observation: none

Reporting observer: Doug Faulkner

Signature:



Address: Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, 14500 Lark Bunting Lane, Brighton, CO 80601

Date report was written: 23 May 2002 from memory