

House Finch

27 Jul 1982

Perry, Dallas Co., IA

\*E. Armstrong, \*#Kent, \*Silcock, \*Cummins + +

Record Number: 82-26

Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATIONS

Eugene Armstrong, 27 July

Thomas H. Kent, 31 July

W. Ross Silcock, 31 July

Raymond L. Cummins, 31 July

Francis L. Moore, 1 Aug

Joe Schaufenbuel, 2 Aug

Peter C. Petersen, 4 Aug

PHOTOGRAPHS

Thomas H. Kent, 31 July, P-0402

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 52:94, 125

Records Committee: IBL IBL 52:36

VOTE: 7-I-P

I-P, good photos.

I-P, doc. illegible.

I-P, good photos.

What species? Zonotrichia querula How many? one - ~~five~~Location? Perry, IowaType of habitat? urban dwelling, niger feederWhen? date(s): July 27, 1982 time: 9:00 am to 10:00 amWho? your name and address: Eugene Armstrong Booneville, Iaothers with you: Eloise Armstrong, Dick + Pally Mooreyothers before or after you: Gene Brown

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

overall size of an English sparrow  
~~long~~ heavy bill, not as heavy body as purple finch  
 bluish red coloring on back of head + lower back  
 brownish overall body

behavior similar to house sparrow

Similar species and how eliminated:

purple finch - smaller bodied, less coloring

house sparrow - no bluish coloring

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? none

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

bright light, 40 ft estimate binoculars + spotting scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones: house finches observed in Arizona + Indiana + Massachusetts

References and persons consulted before writing description:

How long before field notes made? immediately this form completed? week

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? House Finch How many? 1 maleLocation? 209 Warford St., Perry, Dallas Co., IowaType of habitat? residential with Niger seed feederWhen? date(s): 31 July 1982 time: 7:25 to 8:00 AMWho? your name and address: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City IA 52240others with you: W. Ross Silcock, Ray Cummins, Wallace Jardineothers before or after you: several, none talked to first hand

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

"House Finch male. Size of House Sparrow. Triangular-shaped bill with slight convexity to upper mandible. Head rounded to somewhat flat, not as high as a Purple Finch. Eye dark. Upper breast and most of head orangish red. Back, wings and underparts dirty gray-brown, about color of House Sparrow. No wing bars. Flanks streaked -- fairly bold and confined to flanks. Tail about like a House Sparrow, maybe longer. I forgot to note the rump color. Leg color not observed.

Behavior -- sat on roof, gutter, and Niger seed feeder. Chased House Sparrows from feeder."

Not heard.

Similar species and how eliminated: Purple Finch: color more orange, color more confined to head and upper breast, low head shape, presence of streaks on flanks. Also, Purple Finch does not occur in Iowa in July.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:  
75 ft (est), sunny with side light while on roof, partly shadows on feeder.  
8 x binoculars, 750 mm Celestron lens (photos taken).

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen several times in west.

References and persons consulted before writing description: Petersen and Robbins guides used before viewing bird.

How long before field notes made? 10 min this form completed? 2 days

MAIL TO: T H Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

Species: HOUSE FINCH  
Location: 209 (west) Warford, Perry, Iowa  
Habitat: Residential; thistle feeder (niger?) in apple tree beside house.  
When: July, 31, 1982; apparently present some time prior to this.  
Observers: W. Ross Silcock  
Others: Tom Kent, Ray Cummins, and Wallace Jardine.  
Description: Taken from field notes made immediately (within 30 minutes):

Male bird; head small-appearing, flat-crowned, no hint of "crested" appearance as in Purple Finch. Brick-red coloration on crown, ~~and~~ nape (mixed with brown feathers), and face (almost absent in auricular area). Breast area brickred, biblike, approximate extent of pink in Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Back relatively plain, as were wings and tail. Rump was not seen. Only streaks seen were on the flanks below the wings and were rather fine, directed along body axis. Bill was conical, culmen slightly convex, not greatly obvious but apparent. Eye dark. Size about House Sparrow. The bird did not sing, but yawned twice.

Any disagreement on ID? No,

Viewing conditions: Distance estimated at 20-30 yards. Bird seen intermittently for about 5 minutes between 7.30 and 8 am. Light excellent: sun was shining through the tree, illuminating the feeder, as well as the roof of the house and the gutter where the bird perched part of the time.

Previous experience: Seen in western U.S. and in North Carolina.

References: None consulted before writing field notes. Peterson checked later.

This summary typed Aug 4 from notes made just after sighting.

*W. Ross Silcock*  
Aug 4, 1982

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

82-26

1. Species House Finch 2. Number 1
3. Location Perry, Iowa 209 Warford st Dallas Co.
4. Date: 7-31-82 5. Time Bird Seen: 7:20AM to 8:00AM
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field): Size and shape of house sparrow - with larger more conical white-gray bill and more flatten forehead. Color was overall brownish-gray except for the brick red areas of the upper head - rump - and ~~top~~ breast. The red was particularly pure and bright on the breast. The dark stripes were quite heavy on the lower sides and fairly long.
7. Description of voice, if heard: NOT HEARD
8. Description of behavior: House Sparrow like
9. Habitat - general: Residential  
specific: Feeding station under large shade tree
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7, & 8. Explain: The flat head - color of red - striped lower sides and slim slightly elongated body. Eliminate Purple and Cassin's Finch
11. Distance (how measured)? 20yds EST. 12. Optical equipment:  
10X50 binoculars  
20X Spotting Scope
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):  
Clear sky with bird in good light
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:  
See many Times on West Coast
15. Other observers:  
Wallace Jardine - Tom Kent - Ross Silcock
16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?  
1 hour - Brief descriptive Notes
- Signature: Raymond L. Lummins Address: 814 B. Drake St.
- Date: 8-6-82 -82 City, State: Centerville, Iowa 52544

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

82-26

What species? House Finch How many? 1Location? 209 Warford St. Perry IA.Type of habitat? ResidentialWhen? date(s): Aug. 4 time: 7:32 to 7:46Who? your name and address: Peter C. Petersen, 235 McClellan Blvd. Dav. IA.others with you: Marylou Petersen, Larry Binderothers before or after you: before - T.H. Kent, Ross Silcock, Ray Cummins, W. Jardine, F. Moore

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Size of House Sparrow (with bird), and similar shape. Red (slightly orange-red) on fore crown, throat & upper chest grading to orange on back & chest. Pale grey below, wings & tail brown, rump reddish orange. Bill gray to horn color, legs dark. No call heard. With House Sparrows, on this (le) Feeder & gravel drive, & lawn. Bird hopped.

Similar species and how eliminated: P. Finch - shade of red wrong, not streaked on sides, just a bit on the flanks.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: bright O.C. 12-40', est. 10x40 + 7x35 binocs.Previous experience with species and similar ones: All obs. familiar with bird in nest.References and persons consulted before writing description: noneHow long before field notes made? during obs. this form completed? same

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? House Finch (Carpodacus mexicanus) How many? 1 ♂

Location? 209 Warford St., Perry, Dallas County, Iowa

Type of habitat? Yard of a residence; at feeder

When? date(s): August 1, 1982 time: 9:26 to 9:27

Who? your name and address: Francis L. Moore, 264 Western Ave., Waterloo, IA

others with you: No

others before or after you: Tom Kent, et al

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

I got to see the bird for less than one minute as it sat on a sunflower feeder in the side yard of a residence. Lighting was mottled on the bird as it sat in the shade of a tree with the feeder hanging from a branch of the tree. The bird was mixed in with a flock of House Sparrows but did not seem to be afraid of them for the short time that I view the bird. Direct comparison with the House Sparrows around it, the bird appeared to be the same size as a House Sparrow but appeared slimmer and a bit more flat headed than the House Sparrows. The bird had a light colored bill and was not very heavy looking. The birds lower back, back wings and tail were a medium brown color with slight wing bars on the wings. The rump head and breast was a bright red color. the birds sides had streaking on them (brown streaking.)

Similar species and how eliminated: Purple Finch ♂ is more rosy red than this bird and has a lot more extensive red color on the back and belly and sides than this bird. Purple Finch also does not have streaking on the sides and has a heavier bodied, larger-headed look than this bird did.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No, not that I know of

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Sunny, viewed from approx. 50 to 70 feet using 7x35 mm B + L Roof Prism binoculars.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen 2 other House Finches in Virginia, lots of experience with Purple Finch.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None

How long before field notes made? 4 hours this form completed? 26 hours

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

What species? House Sparrow How many? 1Location? Perry, IAType of habitat? Thistle-feeding station in farming townWhen? date(s): Aug. 2, 1982 time: 9:00 to 9:45 amWho? your name and address: Joe Schaufers, 924 Spruce St.others with you: Joe Schaufers, Ames IA 50010others before or after you: Mary, Tom Kent, Cole Peterson

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

House sparrow-sized bird, but ~~slightly~~ with a slightly larger bill. Sunlight on head. Eye color ~~not~~ dark. Bill dark. Forehead to nape dull red. As was lower cheek, throat and upper belly. A dull greyish line extended from bill to neck. Back grey-brown and streaked. Wings dark brownish-grey, with two distinct wingbars. Rump red. Upper tail coverts dark. Tail brown, ~~not~~ dark in color. Two defused streaks on grayish belly were much less distinct than field guide illustrations illustrate. No call heard.

Similar species and how eliminated: Purple finch has not been recorded in mid-summer and has pinkish color on back, neck, wings, and side. Also lacks side streaks.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

Excellent. The bird was observed first in shade with 7X35 binoculars at 25 yds. Later at 20 yds in bright

Previous experience with species and similar ones: sunlight with 30x telescope. Experienced with ~~not~~ *Empidonax*.

References and persons consulted before writing description: Peterson's Field guides.

How long before field notes made? 1/2 this form completed? end of sighting

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240

Joe Schaufers