

Documentation of uncommon (but not rare) winter visitor
Lincoln's Sparrow
I seen January 5, 1983
Wilson Farm, N.E. Mills County, Iowa

Description: A gray-brown sparrow-like bird, slightly smaller than a junco. Crown dark brown with black streaks. Grey line in center of crown. Face gray; broad gray area above eye, dark line through eye, cheek gray-brown. Eye black with very narrow white eye-ring. ~~Below~~ Below the cheek is a wide buffy moustache stripe. Below that, a dark brown line, wider than the fine breast streaks but not so ~~heavy~~ heavy as a Song Sparrow's moustache. Throat probably streaked brown on white or tan. Breast streaked with brown + has a dark central spot. Flanks gray or tan with brown streaks. Back finely streaked with gray-brown + black. Secondaries brown. Tail brown. Feet flesh color.

Behavior: Feeds like other sparrows, picking at the ground + often jumping forward + back to disturb ~~the~~ the seeds.

Similar species: Distinguished from adult Song Sparrow by buffy breast + fine breast streaks, from young one by eye ring + general face pattern.

Viewing conditions: bird was 15 feet away at my bird feeder. No optical equipment or books used. 4:00-4:23 pm. Feeder is west of the window.

This description written Feb. 27 from the extensive notes taken Jan. 5 while I watched the bird.

→ Note: I have documented this bird as well as I can because the last one wintering at my feeder was considered an "uncorroborated report" in American Birds. However, they show up on Christmas bird counts here from time to time. Several good birders in Omaha have them at feeders from time to time. One has them every year. They certainly aren't common at all, but they're here.

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