

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus caudatus*) How many? 1 adultLocation? North side of lake near dam at Cardinal Marsh,Type of habitat? Edging between grass 6" to 10" tall and cattail marshWhen? date(s): May 29, 1978 time: 9:25 a.m. to 9:27 a.m.Who? your name and address: Francis L. Moore, 336 Fairfield St., Waterloo, IA 50703others with you: None that saw the birdothers before or after you: None

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.

The bird flew up in front of me on the North side of Cardinal Marsh on the East side of the dam. It flew about 15 feet and went down into the cattail and grass mixed. After tromping around the grass for awhile the bird flew up in front of me and sat on some of the grass for about one or two minutes. I immediately noticed that the bird had a very brightly colored orange stripe through and above its eye. I at first thought it was a LeConte's Sparrow but noticed that it had a dark crown like the Sharp-tailed I had seen on the East coast in Virginia. The top of the head had a gray colored stripe running down the middle of its head and I also noticed that the bird had a gray area on the side ~~of its~~ of its ~~neck~~ <sup>neck</sup> blending into the back of its neck above its shoulder. The bird had white strips on its back. The bird was also a darker brown color than a LeConte's would have been. The bird's throat and neck and breast were a bright buffy color. There were a few dark stripes down the bird's sides. This bird did not have a dark ear patch behind its eye like the Sharp-tailed I had seen in Virginia along the coast. The bird did not sing. The bird had light colored legs and a dark bill. The tail was a dark gray to blackish color.

Similar species and how eliminated: LeConte's Sparrow does not have a dark stripe down the top of its head. It had a light colored head stripe (crown stripe). The orange colored eye stripe eliminates all other species except LeConte's which is eliminated by the dark crown stripe on this bird.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Sunny, excellent viewing conditions. approx. 20 feet at closest using 7x50 Pentax binoculars.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen several LeConte's and Sharp-tailed Sparrows before.

References and persons consulted before writing description: Robbins, Birds of North America; Peterson's, Birds East of the Rockies.

How long before field notes made? at sighting this form completed? 5 years 10 months

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