

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Clay-colored Sparrow 2. Number 1  
3. Location Volga River Rec. Area  
4. Date: July 11, 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: 7:00 AM. to 7:15 AM

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):

1. Small sparrow - about like chipping sparrow
2. Breast + belly were very light gray <sup>(off white)</sup> - back + rump were brown - no spots or markings on breast
3. Crown had a whitish thin stripe thru center - crown was brown
4. A brown triangular cheek patch was easily seen just behind eye
5. Bill was pale



Bird was found by song - it sang continually the whole time I was there -

7. Description of voice, if heard: Four monotone buzzes the first being longer than last three - (somewhat nasal tone) - buzzzz - buzz buzz

8. Description of behavior: First sighted in a larger cedar tree, then moved to lower shrubs and continued calling. - acted very territorial

9. Habitat - general: a clearing in otherwise quite dense woods along old road  
specific: 1 cedar tree in opening and many sumacs and other short (10') trees

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:  
The only real probable problem is the imm. chipping sparrow but song + brown rump ruled this out

11. Distance (how measured)?

closest was about 20' by stepping off

12. Optical equipment:

Bth 7x35 roof prisms

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

Sky was bright overcast - sun was not a factor

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: I have seen clay-colored in western Iowa in migration but never in the east or in the summer.

15. Other observers: \_\_\_\_\_

16. Did the others agree with your identification? —

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: Francis Moore found bird again by song on July 26 in same place.

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

No books were needed for this one.

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 1 week

Signature: Robert K. Myers Address: 1236 Sylvio Ave.

Date: July 26, 1981 City, State: Waterloo, Iowa 50701