

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*) 2. Number 3 (at least maybe more)
 3. Location Hayden Prairie (Howard County) State Preserve
 4. Date: 5-30-81 5. Time Bird Seen: 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.
 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):
 Light colored bill and legs, with "flat looking" head and two dark stripes on each side of its ~~head~~^{crowns} with a lighter colored median stripe. Back and wings have a bright rufous color to them. Tail looks short and reddish colored. Sides and ~~breast~~ breast streaked with dark brown to black. Lower breast and belly clear buffish color. Throat clear buffish color also. This species is so easy to find when present and singing that I don't quite understand why a documentation during its breeding season is needed. Easily distinguishable because of its coloration also. This species seems to be very selective of its habitat and are very easy to find at Hayden Prairie, which is probably the only reliable place in Iowa to find them.
 7. Description of voice, if heard: Short and unmusical 2 syllable note "tse-slick" type of call
 8. Description of behavior: Sang from low perch and flew unsteadily and wobbly to a new perch in short weeds or trees at approach. Very shy acting, hard to approach very closely.
 9. Habitat - general: low lying, wet, prairie
 specific: along side of slope facing South east wet ~~type~~ type of prairie with scattered shrubs, trees and weeds
 10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:
 Grasshopper sparrow does not have streaked breast and olive-green on the hind neck. Olive-green hind neck also is good field mark as compared to LeConte's and Sharp-tailed which do not have this coloration on their necks and they also have orange on faces, this species does not.
 11. Distance (how measured)? 40-50 feet at closest point 12. Optical equipment: 7x35 mm B+L Binoculars
 13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): Sun at my back, as I watched bird, facing West and North West. Sun bright and fully on bird as I watched him sing and fly.
 14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: I have seen this species the past three years at Hayden Prairie and once at Big Marsh. Have also seen many Grasshopper, LeConte's and Sharp-tailed (in Virginia) Sparrows and know them quite well.
 15. Other observers: Bob Myers
 16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes
 17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: Bob Myers
 18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
 No field guide or book needed since I knew this species and its song quite well from previous experience with this species.
 19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 8 Hours
- Signature: James S. Moore Address: 264 Western Avenue
 Date: 5/30/81 City, State: Waterloo, IA 50701