

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Vesper Sparrow (early) 2. Number: one
3. Location near Colo (along old hi way 30) Story County, Iowa
4. Date: 7 March 1985 5. Time Bird seen: abt 11:30 to \_\_\_\_\_
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):  
Tail very dark in middle- when flying showed white strip on each side somewhat narrower than dark ~~at~~ middle; back gray-brown with coarse streaking; head with fine streaking on ~~top~~ top; indefinite markings on side of head; rustyish patch on inner part of forewing; white eye ring; never did see breast.
7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard
8. Description of behavior: sitting on side of road, back to me then flew off across roadside ditch & perched in dead weeds, but pretty well out of sight.
9. Habitat - general: pasture or weedy fields on either side of road.  
specific:
0. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:  
meadowlark is fat with short wide tail; Junco MA doesn't have stripes on back; Tree sparrow has narrow white edges on tail, but also has rusty cap; Smith's Longspur has similar tail pattern, but tail is shorter, back markings finer, doesn't have rusty patch on wing; Water Pipit doesn't have streaked back.
1. Distance (how measured)? closest 15 feet 12. Optical equipment:  
7 X 35 binoculars
3. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):  
facing east, bird on north edge of road; flew across ditch to north; was looking fairly much down on bird as it flew across ditch.
4. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:  
Seen many times. All other birds mentioned have seen several times.
5. Other observers:
6. Did the others agree with your identification?
7. Other observers who independently identified this bird:
8. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
9. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?  
immediately.

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Signature  
Date: 26 May 1985 City, State: Ames, Iowa 50010