

IOWA BREEDING BIRD ATLAS DOCUMENTATION FORM

What species? Clay colored Sparrow How many? 1Location: County Lyon Block 60Location in detail Northwest edge of Doon - East yard on west side of N-S highway through Doon bordering Alfalfa field.Habitat? Spruce trees, Honey suckle hedge, Weeds, Alfalfa field.When? date? June 16, 1986 Time: 10:15 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.Observer? Name: Marie V. ZanggerAddress: RR 2 Box 86 Larchwood, Iowa 51241Telephone: 712-477-2256

Description of bird(s): include size, shape, detailed description of all parts including bill, eye, head, neck, back, wings, tail, throat, breast, belly, undertail, legs, feet; also voice and behavior. Use additional sheets if necessary.

About the size of a chipping sparrow with quite a long, slim, deeply notched tail. Plain light colored breast and belly with a whiter throat, eyebrow and whisker stripe. Brown crown with buffy, grayish central stripe and brown cheek patch outlined in darker brown. Two whitish wing bars, gray nape, buffy brown back with dark streaks. Beak darker at very tip - legs longer than House Sparrow. Bird's general appearance is slimmer and smaller than House Sparrow. It has a dark eye.

I was first aware of its presence when I heard its familiar, unmistakable song. It sang persistently from the same location over a period of 18 days - usually from the low honeysuckle hedges. I stopped on the 18th day to make positive identification.

Similar species and how eliminated: Brewer's is similar but we are not in its range - chipping sparrow - song is entirely different and it does not have the central crown stripe - I used Peterson's Tape of Songs to verify the song

Did anyone have reservations about identification? If so, explain:
None whatsoever!

Viewing conditions: lighting, distance and how measured, optical equipment used. Bright sun behind me. I viewed it with Bushnell 7x50 Binoculars - field of view 376'. I was standing at base of Spruce tree - bird perched on top - approx. 20' AGL.

Previous experience with this species and other similar ones:
I am very familiar with the Clay Colored Sparrow and its unmistakable song as I see and hear many during migration.

BREEDING BEHAVIOR: Give all details observed that indicate that the species breeds on the block. If nest, eggs, young, or courtship display were observed, describe in detail.

I heard the male sing on ~~three~~ separate visits over a period of 18 days, always from the same sight. It would appear that the female was already on a nest. I was not able to take time to attempt to locate the nest the day I identified the male and was not able to locate it several weeks later when I returned as the Honeysuckle hedge was densely tangled with brush and weeds. I did not see or hear it again.

I am certain of identifying the bird but can not positively verify that it nested in the area.

If books or other birders were consulted before writing up the documentation, please list them here:

Roger Tory Peterson's tapes of "Bird Calls"

confirmed identification with:

National Geographic Field Guide

Golden Field Guide "Birds of North America"

How long after observation were field notes made?

immediately, at the sight

How long after observation was this form completed?

Same day - with exception of information on trying to locate the nest which was two weeks later.