

## **IORC EVALUATION FORM**

**Record #:** 1989-151T

**Name of bird form:** Baird's Sparrow

**Committee member name:** Josh Engel

**Date of review:** 21 August 2016

**Circulation number:** 1st

**Vote:** U-I

**Comments:** [required since this is a potential first state record]

The lack of mention of the most similar species, Nelson's (at that time, Sharp-tailed) and Le Conte's Sparrow, is a real concern. Although that date is well past the peak of Le Conte's Sparrow migration, the description of the central crown stripe, ochre color of the face, spot behind the eye, neatness of the plumage, and the white stripes on the back, are all marks shown by Le Conte's Sparrow. Baird's Sparrow appears to have little or no pattern of vagrancy, and in the ensuing years there have been no other reports in the state. To accept a record of Baird's Sparrow would take more evidence than a written description.

## **IORC EVALUATION FORM**

**Record #:** 1989-151T

**Name of bird form:** Baird's Sparrow

**Committee member name:** Fraker

**Date of review:** 8/28/16

**Circulation number:** 1st

**Vote:** U-I

**Comments:** [required since this is a potential first state record]

A first state record Baird's Sparrow would probably almost require a photograph. This record was well documented but I'm not sure it is a lockdown for a Baird's — "overall grayish with no brown on wings"; "white stripe on back". For example, I think a confusing Vesper Sparrow could possibly fit this description if the white in the description was misplaced?

## **IORC EVALUATION FORM**

**Record #:** 1989-151T

**Name of bird form:** Baird's Sparrow

**Committee member name:** Greg Lambeth

**Date of review:** August 31, 2016

**Circulation number:** 1st

**Vote:** U - I

**Comments:** [required since this is a potential first state record]

This is a record being submitted almost 20 years after the original sighting, although the documentation was written at the time.

I do not believe IORC can vote to accept a first state record based on a sight record by a single observer.

My take on this record is that the description is generally as consistent with Henslow's Sparrow as it is with Baird's Sparrow. These species are relatively similar as the illustrations in the most recent Sibley make clear. I think the chances of misidentification, especially by an observer who has never seen a Baird's Sparrow before, is high.

## **IORC EVALUATION FORM**

**Record #:** 1989-151T

**Name of bird form:** Baird's Sparrow

**Committee member name:** McMullen

**Date of review:** 9-1-16

**Circulation number:** 1st

**Vote:** U-I

**Comments:** [required since this is a potential first state record]

Description is good, however, observer admits seeing bird 3 times before referring to book. Doesn't say how much time he actually watched the bird and the exactness of some of his description bothers me in that it sounds like it's taken directly from Peterson's guide. Also, he mentions the amount of yellow which points me to a LeConte's, the expected species. I won't vote yes for this.

## **IORC EVALUATION FORM**

**Record #:** 1989-151T

**Name of bird form:** Baird's Sparrow

**Committee member name:** Douglas Stotz

**Date of review:** 11 Sep 2016

**Circulation number:** 1st

**Vote:** U-I

**Comments:** [required since this is a potential first state record]

I am not convinced that this is a Baird's Sparrow. The description of the crown stripe as yellowish with "ochre" treated as a synonym is a little puzzling. To me the thing about Baird's is that the head stripes are "orange" What makes it stand out is that. The other characteristics that the observer mentions are consistent with Baird's, but are also consistent with Savannah and LeConte's. Savannah Sparrow is eliminated by lacking "yellow line" above the eye, but this should be ochre in a Baird's, and is undescribed here. Also, the bird is described as sitting in a bush, which in my experience, just is not what a Baird's Sparrow does. Essentially, I feel like the only field mark we have to go on to accept this as a Baird's is the description of the central head stripe as "yellowish," and that seems insufficient to accept this as a Baird's.

## **IORC EVALUATION FORM**

**Record #:** 1989-151T

**Name of bird form:** Baird's Sparrow

**Committee member name:** Paul Sweet

**Date of review:** 8/28/16

**Circulation number:** 1st

**Vote:** U-I

**Comments:** [required since this is a potential first state record] The documentation was quite clear, and fairly thorough. (It sounds as if the observer included everything he saw.) However, there are three points to make: 1) This was a single-person sighting, of a species admittedly unfamiliar to the observer. The observer even points out that he wouldn't "approve it's acceptance." 2) There seems to be no attempt to rule out a young Grasshopper Sparrow. The color of the crown stripe might be sufficient, but the discussion of the dark spot on the cheek actually seems to fit Grasshopper better. 3) At least one of the useful marks on Baird's, the strong dark lateral throat stripe, isn't mentioned at all, and the discussion of strong white stripes on the back seems better for several of our other Ammodramus.

## **IORC EVALUATION FORM**

**Record #:** 1989-151T

**Name of bird form:** Baird's Sparrow

**Committee member name:** Geoffrey A. Williamson

**Date of review:** 18 August 2016

**Circulation number:** 1st

**Vote:** U-I

**Comments:** [required since this is a potential first state record]

This observation is intriguing; however, there is insufficient detail to consider it for a first state record. Nothing is noted about its size or structure, and the extent of description of the plumage features is relatively limited.

Elimination of Henslow's Sparrow is not undertaken in any depth, and the only part of the description that seems potentially problematic for that species is the statement that it had "no brown on the wings." The statement that there was "a very distinct yellowish tone to the front half of the bird" would seem to favor Henslow's over Baird's in considering just those two species. The only point explicitly used by the documenter to exclude Henslow's is the remark of "no flattish head," but the shape and structural similarity between Henslow's and Baird's makes me dismiss this as being unreliable.