

1976

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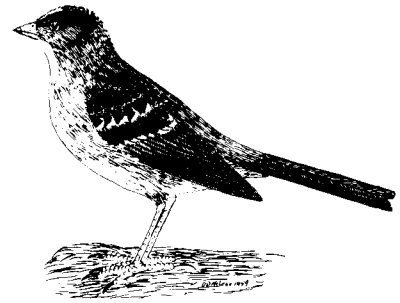
Balph, Martha H. (1976) "Golden-crowned Sparrows in Northern Utah," *North American Bird Bander*. Vol. 1 : Iss. 2 , Article 7.

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Golden-crowned Sparrows in northern Utah

Martha H. Balph



The Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) occurs primarily in the westernmost parts of North America, breeding from Alaska to northern Washington and east to southwestern Alberta and wintering from southern British Columbia to northern Baja California (American Ornithologists' Union, 1957:620-621). It appears casually during the winter as far east as Colorado and New Mexico (op. cit.). The species has been observed as a rare winter visitant in Utah between 4 October and 22 April (Behle and Perry, 1975:44). Most Utah records, however, are from the southwestern portion of the state. To my knowledge, except for a specimen collected in Box Elder County in October 1947 (Greenhalgh, 1948), the Golden-crowned Sparrow has not previously been reported from northern Utah. A single individual observed at Pocatello in May 1965 is apparently the only record for southeastern Idaho (Burleigh, 1972:430). This note reports on two Golden-crowned Sparrows that I observed or banded in Cache County, Utah in 1975 and 1976.

I observed but was unable to capture a Golden-crowned Sparrow in adult nuptial plumage which visited my feeding station in Logan daily between 25 April and 8 May 1975. These dates are later than previous records for the species in Utah, perhaps because mean temperatures in this region during the spring of 1975 were lower than normal. I believe that this individual probably was a spring migrant which was detained in Logan by inclement weather and which proceeded northward at the onset of a warm spell on 8 May. On 25 to 26 April of the same year, four Golden-crowned Sparrows "arriving with west winds" were seen at Zion National Park in southwestern Utah (Kingery, 1975:889).

On 27 March 1976, I trapped and banded a Golden-crowned Sparrow in winter plumage at the same location (U.S.F.W.S. band number 1191-29302). The crown type was P.R.B.O. 3, indicating that the bird probably was more than 1 year of age (Stewart,

1972). Measurements were as follows: wing, 81.5 mm; tail, 77.5 mm; tarsus, 26.5 mm; exposed culmen, 12.0 mm; body weight, 33.3 g. Subcutaneous fat deposits were light, and there was no evidence of molt. I saw what presumably was the same individual on several occasions during the week preceding 27 March. I also observed the bird in late April and early May, by which time it showed the crown pattern typical of the adult nuptial plumage. I last saw the bird on 3 May 1976. It seems possible that this individual wintered in Logan, since I observed it over a fairly extended period; and since the northward migration, at least from California, does not begin until April (Kelly, 1968).

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