

NOTES

FIRST RECORD OF FIELD SPARROW IN CALIFORNIA

At approximately 13:00 hours on 17 June 1969 I saw a Field Sparrow *Spizella pusilla* clinging to the poultry wire of one of the wings at the entrance of the Heligoland trap on Southeast Farallon Island, San Francisco County, California. This bird was easily driven into the catching-box and secured. At that time the weight of this individual was 12.5 grams, with only a trace of fat visible beneath the skin. Ossification of the cranium was complete. The enlarged cloacal protuberance indicated that it was a male in breeding condition. After banding the sparrow I photographed it and released it. It was recaptured on 2 July and again on 5 July. On 5 July the weight was 13.2 grams, with a slight increase in visible fat. The bird was last seen on the island on 9 July 1969. Color photographs of this individual are on file at the Point Reyes Bird Observatory and the San Diego Natural History Museum. These photographs show the bright pink bill, rusty crown, gray face, and other plumage characters which identify this species. This Field Sparrow was also seen by Malcolm Coulter and David Manuwal. This is the first record of this species in California.

The Field Sparrow has been reported as casual in migration as far west as Los Alamos, New Mexico, and these records are referable to the western race *arenacea* (Bent, Life Histories of North American Cardinals, Grosbeaks, Buntings, Towhees, Finches, Sparrows, and Allies, 1968). *Henry Robert, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Mesa Road, Bolinas, California 94924.*



FIGURE 1. A Field Sparrow *Spizella pusilla* caught on Southeast Farallon Island off San Francisco, California, on 17 June 1969. The color slide, from which this print was made, shows the sides of crown and nape rusty-brown with small amount of gray flecking on nape; side of face gray; pale buff-gray eye-ring; back and scapulars chestnut-brown with fine black streakings; underparts grayish-white, whitest on chin and malar region, and tinged buff on breast and side; wings dark brown to blackish, primaries and secondaries conspicuously edged with chestnut-brown, coverts showing much chestnut-brown and greater coverts tipped with white. Bill pinkish; eye black.

Photo by Henry Robert

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