

Dolphin interferes with loon.—On 6 December 1985, my group was watching a Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) fishing close to shore off the northwest point of Mullet Key, Florida. A bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) appeared and began to play with or tease the loon. When the loon dove, the dolphin would push it to the surface with its nose, sometimes lifting the loon clear of the water. Several episodes took place over a period of about four minutes. Suddenly the loon raised its body to a vertical position, flapped its wings, and called loudly, an unusual occurrence in Florida. The dolphin departed, and the loon continued fishing.—**Oliver H. Hewitt**, 24437 Harbor View Road, Charlotte Harbor, Florida 33950.

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Florida Grasshopper Sparrow breeding distribution and abundance in 1984.—Early reports, although vague, indicate a relatively large and widespread population of Florida Grasshopper Sparrows (*Ammodramus savannarum floridanus*) existed in central peninsular Florida (sources cited in Delany et al. 1985). A review of information on Florida Grasshopper Sparrow egg data slips in museum collections revealed additional locations (McNair 1986). More recent searches have failed to locate Grasshopper Sparrows or revealed only isolated pairs or individuals (Stevenson 1968, 1978; Ogden 1971). Because of an apparent population decline, the subspecies was classified as endangered by the State of Florida (Kale 1978). Extensive surveys between 1980-82 located only 93 Florida Grasshopper Sparrows at seven sites (Delany et al. 1985). The sparrow was found at only one of its former locations, suggesting further reduction in both abundance and occupied range. Because of a decline in abundance, contraction of range, and loss of habitat, the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow is being considered for Federal listing as endangered (Federal Register Vol. 50, No. 243). As part of a status survey, additional searches were conducted in 1984 to gather more information on the sparrow's distribution and abundance. This paper reports 1984 survey results.

Surveys were conducted in the dry prairie region of south-central Florida within the known range of the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow. Eight unsearched areas identified as potential Grasshopper Sparrow habitat in 1982 and six previously searched areas (Delany et al. 1985) were surveyed between 30 April and 30 June 1984. Surveys were conducted between sunrise and 1300, by one to three individuals who walked transects at 50-m intervals, stopping frequently to make visual and auditory observations. Eighty-six man-hours were spent walking transects in potential Grasshopper Sparrow habitat. Where sparrows were found, information was obtained on population size and current land management practices. We watched singing males in order to detect the presence of non-singing birds, probably females, and juveniles nearby. Information pertaining to recent and planned activities at other occupied areas also was obtained.

The survey in 1984 located 109 Florida Grasshopper Sparrows at six former locations and one new site (Figure 1, Table 1). At all sites except for Avon Park (site 7), the sampling effort was similar to previous surveys. Our lower count for the United States Air Force (USAF) bombing range at Avon Park was caused by reduced sampling effort. This site was intensively searched in 1982.

Thirty-two sparrows (site 8) were found at a former location 24 km northwest of Basinger, Okeechobee County (Howell 1932), that was unoccupied in 1982 (Delany et al. 1985). The new site (4) may be the location where W. H. Nicholson collected eggs on 13 May 1947, near Highway 60 in Osceola County (McNair 1986). Present land use trends at some sites

Table 1. Bird numbers at all known locations occupied by Florida Grasshopper Sparrows, 1984. Numbers found during previous surveys (1980-82) are in parentheses.

Site	Location	Adults ♂	Adults ♀	Juvenile	Unknown
1	Osceola County, 21.1 km southwest of Kenansville (T31S, R32E, Sec. 14).	5(1)	3		
2 ¹	Osceola County, 13 km southwest of Kenansville (T31S, R33E, Sec. 21).	(3)			(1)
3	Osceola County, Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area (WMA), 16.7 km west of Kenansville (T30S, R32E, Sec. 19).	26(2)	9(2)	(3)	2
4 ²	Osceola County, east of Peavine Trail at SR 60 (T31S, R33E, Sec. 34).	4			
5	Glades County, Lykes Brothers Ranch, 11 km west of Palmdale (T40S, R29E, Sec. 33).	4	1		1(2)
6	Glades County, Lykes Brothers Ranch, 16 km west of Palmdale (T41S, R28E, Sec. 3).	1(1)			
7	Highlands and Polk counties, Avon Park Bombing Range (USAF), 22 km east of Avon Park (T33S, R30E, Sec. 3).	14(42)	5(18)	2(9)	
8 ³	Okeechobee County, 26 km south of SR 60, along the Peavine Trail (T33S, R33E, Sec. 29).	22	5		5
9 ¹	Okeechobee County, 13.5 km northwest of Bassinger (T34S, R32E, Sec. 33).	(5)	(3)	(1)	

¹Not searched in 1984

²New location

³Former location (Howell 1932) unoccupied in 1982 (Delany et al. 1985)

indicate continued loss of habitat for *floridanus*, as dry prairie is converted to improved pasture and farmland (Table 2). Habitat in search areas where Grasshopper Sparrows were not found in 1984 appeared similar to occupied areas described by Delany et al. (1985).

When survey results for 1984 are combined (avoiding duplication of sites) with data from previous surveys (Delany et al. 1985), 182 Florida Grasshopper Sparrows were located during four breeding seasons (1980-84). Of the 172 adults found, 119 were males. If each singing male was mated to a single female, the total population would be 238 adults, which probably represents a minimum estimate of the total population size. All occupied sites are indicated to provide specific locations for breeding Grasshopper Sparrows. It is possible

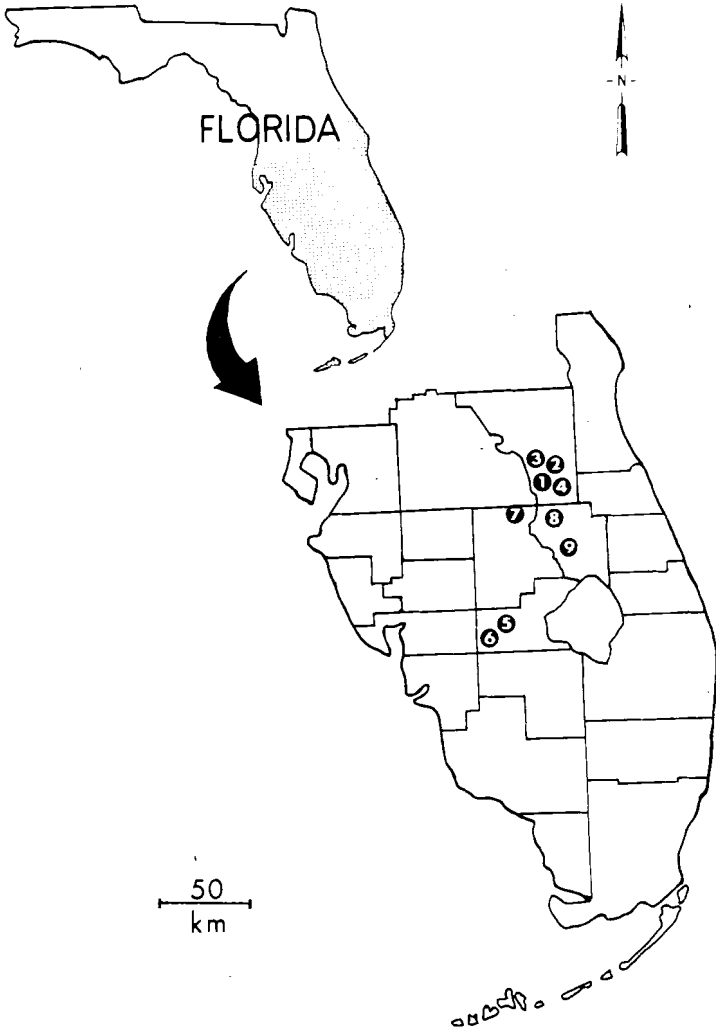


Figure 1. Florida Grasshopper Sparrow locations, 1980-82 (from Delany et al. 1985) and 1984. Site number (from Table 1) is indicated.

Table 2. Land management activities at locations occupied by Florida Grasshopper Sparrows, 1984.

Site	Recent and planned activities	effect on sparrow
1	Controlled burning every 2-3 years. Light grazing, one animal unit per 2 ha.	Habitat will probably be maintained.
2	Same as in #1.	Habitat will probably be maintained.
3	Grazing lease until 1986. From 450-600 animal units on 5,400 ha. Prescribed burning Nov.-Feb., maximum area 121 ha.	Habitat will probably be maintained.
4	Unknown. Recently chopped.	Unknown.
5	Chopped in 1984. Plan to plant non-native grasses. Converting site to improved pasture.	May become unsuitable.
6	Farming planned.	May become unsuitable.
7	Prescribed fire every 3 years. Lightly grazed.	Habitat will probably be maintained.
8	Prescribed fire every 3 years. Lightly grazed. No changes planned.	Habitat will probably be maintained.
9	Grazed, 1 animal unit per 8 ha. Pasture not burned since 1979.	May become unsuitable.

that sites 1-4 are indeed a single site, and the location southwest of Kenansville (Osceola County) described by Howell (1932) and Nicholson (1936). Movement patterns of Florida Grasshopper Sparrows are not known. No surveys were conducted in 1985.

Many of the nine localities found since 1980 are managed as cattle pasture by prescribed burning. Burning generally improves Grasshopper Sparrow habitat by maintaining vegetation in a structurally simple, early successional stage (see Delany et al. 1985). Florida Grasshopper Sparrow densities appeared to be lower in areas not burned within 2.5 years. Grasshopper Sparrows were found in two pastures (sites 4 and 5) in 1984 that were roller chopped, i.e., mechanically cleared, within the previous three months. Chopping also greatly reduces vegetative cover and, in some cases, may be an alternative to burning when managing sparrow habitat. Florida Grasshopper Sparrows probably move from pasture to pasture within a locality in response to management activities as habitat improves or deteriorates.

Current information indicates the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow qualifies for Federal endangered status, and effective 2 September 1986, the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow was classified as endangered by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. No critical habitat was designated, and such designation may be difficult because suitable areas appear to be ephemeral because of plant succession. It appears that burning every 2-3 years is beneficial in maintaining suitable habitat for Florida Grasshopper Sparrows. However, additional information is needed on habitat correlates of abundance and the effect of prescribed fire relative to pine (*Pinus* sp.) invasion. Additional surveys are needed to determine distribution more thoroughly. Considerable information on Florida Grasshopper Sparrow breeding biology, survival, dispersal, and winter habitat use also is needed before the effects of land management activities can be fully assessed.

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Eurasian Collared-Doves collected in Florida.—In November 1985, while vacationing at Islamorada, Monroe Co., Florida, the senior author stopped to watch a group of about 80 "ring-necked" doves (as they are widely known among aviculturalists) *Streptopelia* sp. which were visiting a groundfeeder off U. S. 1 in the neighborhood where one was first reported on 30 December 1980 (W. B. Robertson in Sprunt 1981). Prompted in part by a recently published note by Yank and Aubry (1985) as well as by his own experience in Europe, Smith studied these birds at length and concluded that they appeared to satisfy the size and plumage characteristics of the Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*. About the shape but slightly larger than a White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* and much larger, paler, and more square-tailed than a Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*, these birds possessed such subtleties of plumage that it was difficult to describe them adequately. They were pale grayish sandy brown, somewhat lighter and more pinkish gray on the head, neck, and underparts than on the back and mantle with a black half-ring on the hindneck, which in many individuals seemed to be superimposed on a wider white ring. Significantly, the pinkish gray color of the underparts was essentially uniform to and including the undertail coverts. From below, the basal half of the tail was brownish black, with the remainder a shade of grayish white. However, when the birds were at rest, the tail appeared to be nearly uniform in color with the back, often showing little or no white. The