

LARK BUNTING BANDED ON LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK

By LeRoy Wilcox

A male Lark Bunting, *Calamospiza melanocorys*, appeared at the feeding station of Henry Vail at Riverhead, N.Y., on 11 April 1972. This is a bird of the western prairies, mainly Kansas and Colorado.

Three specimens have been taken in New York State. The first at Montauk Point, N.Y., on 4 September 1888; the second, at Miller Place, N.Y., on 11 September 1896 and the third, at Easthampton, N.Y., on 31 August 1939. Another was observed on 27 November 1937 at Wainscott, N.Y. and one at Jamaica Bay Refuge on June 6, 1959. (Since 1964 there have been a number of sightings of this species on Long Island, *Ed.*)

Beginning on April 17, I attempted to trap the Riverhead bird and continued on April 19, 20, 26 and 27. On these five days the bird was feeding on the ground where Mr. Vail had been scattering his bird feed. I succeeded in trapping and banding 55 birds consisting of Mourning Doves, Grackles, Blue Jays, Redwing Blackbirds, Rusty Blackbirds, Cowbirds, Cardinal, White-throated Sparrows, Song Sparrows, Tree and Field Sparrows. The Bunting fed by itself, also kept to itself instead of flocking with the other birds. It was singing every day, about one-half the time I was there, in early morning as well as afternoons. The bird was easily frightened by all the other larger birds. By the afternoon of April 27, 1972, after five days of attempting to trap it with nine trip-doorstep traps, it became apparent that the bird was too trap-shy. Therefore I erected three mist nets and in one and a half hours the bird finally landed in one of the nets. It weighed 46.4 grams. The wing measured 86mm, tail 65mm and bill 12 mm. It remained there at least until May 5 giving an opportunity for many Long Island birders to add it to their life list.

I believe this may be the first Lark Bunting banded in New York State.

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