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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor:

The article on distinguishing green-morph Pine Siskins (*Carduelis pinus*) from female Eurasian Siskins (*C. spinus*) was very informative (Vol. 43, #5). In addition to the plumage details noted by the authors, it is worthwhile noting that the two species also differ in their vocalizations.

The differences are difficult to transcribe as both species essentially do a lot of "twittering". Eurasian Siskins give a clear "tsee" and a hoarser "tsooet" that are freely interspersed in a hard, rapid chatter that is quite distinctive of this species. These calls will readily identify birds flying overhead and in mixed flocks of Eurasian Siskins and Common Redpolls (*C. flammea*) for example. North American observers will be familiar with the peevish "skeez" flight note and the nasal, rising "zlee" which are characteristic of Pine Siskins, and their conversational chatter is more liquid than that of Eurasian Siskin. (Note that

male Eurasian Siskins will also give a nasal "zee" as a final note of the song but it is not as drawn out and wheezy as that of Pine Siskin).

Perhaps it is sufficient for American observers to note that a genuine Eurasian Siskin should sound "different" from its North American counterparts. The real challenge is in distinguishing the calls of one individual bird from the general hubbub emanating from a group of twittering Siskins!

—Terry Walsh
 Midland, Michigan

American Birds appreciates and encourages the comments of its readers. Please send your letter, along with your name and address to: *American Birds*, Letters to the Editor, 950 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. Letters may be edited for clarity and space.

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