

SUMMER RECORD OF THE TREE SPARROW IN CALIFORNIA

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The Tree Sparrow (*Spizella arborea*) has generally been considered a rare winter visitant in California, most frequently found in the northeastern portion of the state (Grinnell and Miller, Pac. Coast Avif. no. 27, 1944). McCaskie (West. Birds 4:65-70, 1973) summarized all California records and demonstrated that the Tree Sparrow was somewhat more abundant and wide-ranging than previously realized, listing five spring records (May and June) from the Farallon Islands and one on board a ship farther south. He suggested that a record for 14 June might be the latest south of the Canadian border. More recent spring records from the Farallon Islands (Am. Birds 29:906, 1975; 31:1045, 1977; 31:1187, 1977) extend the latest date to 26 June.

On 20 July 1979 I found a dead Tree Sparrow at the side of an unpaved and seldom used road through low but dense chaparral at an elevation of about 120 m, 2.7 km northeast of Piedras Blancas Point, San Luis Obispo County, California. I had traveled along the road twice in the previous 24 hours and had not seen the bird, although it may have been there. The fully adult female sparrow was emaciated (weight 11.7 g) and slightly dried, but in good enough condition to be prepared as a museum specimen (USNM 576101). The cloaca and under tail coverts were caked with dry droppings. The specimen is of the subspecies *S. a. ochracea*, as are all California examples (McCaskie op. cit.).

This apparently constitutes the first summer record of a Tree Sparrow anywhere south of Canada. McCaskie (op. cit.) listed three winter records farther south in western California. This individual must have been a winter visitor that for some reason failed to return north.

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