

Lark Bunting at Belmont Nov 30-April: On 30 November 1966 at about 3:15 p.m., in our yard in Belmont we noticed a strange bird with the Tree Sparrows and House Sparrows feeding on the spillage from a small feeder containing fine bird seed. In size the bird was between House Sparrow and cowbird. In general appearance it was medium brown above with darker streaks and buffy feather tips and edgings, lighter below with dark streaks from a heavily blotched area on the breast to the vent. The bill was large and conical, the head appeared puffy. A large, buffy wingpatch about $1\frac{1}{2}$ " long and $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide was very distinctive when the bird flew, and was visible when it was at rest. Other markings noted were: chin dark; throat with heavy dark blotches; distinct buffy eye ring and line from bill through eye and beyond; tail dark brown with fine white edging on the outside and white patch in center near tail tip; wings black, underneath in flight.

Ed Olmstead was called over and we made a sketch of the bird. On December 1 he photographed it. Pictures were sent to Stephen Eaton and Richard Rosche. Following a clue given us by Richard Rosche, we tentatively identified the bird as a Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*). Stephen Eaton on Dec. 14 and Richard Rosche on Dec. 15 both confirmed this identification. A complete verification report by Ed Olmstead and us, and additional reports by Stephen Eaton and Richard Rosche are on file with the Buffalo Ornithological Society.

The bird was an aggressive individual. For the first few days it appeared with the Cardinals and Tree Sparrows and was not at all timid. Then it began coming with the flocks of House Sparrows and flushed with them into a multiflora rose thicket. Usually the head feathers were raised like a crest, giving the head a puffy appearance like a Purple Finch. When perched, it pumped its tail as the Phoebe does, but not as frequently.

The bird continued to come to the feeder, somewhat irregularly depending on the amount of snow cover. Many members of the B.O.S. observed it, and Harold Mitchell also photographed it. By late February the bird had developed a distinct dark bib and necklace, and on the right side only a dark area extending upward from the leg and to the fore and rear of this area.

At the beginning of March the bird had developed large, dark blotched areas over the underparts. The tail was largely black with the patch and web edgings white. As the days progressed the blotched areas came together on the underparts and the general appearance became that of a black bird with prominent white wing strips. The crest, nape and back, when viewed from above, were more gray than brown. The buffy eye stripe and the patch below the auriculars remained distinctive. The bunting was still coming to the feeder in early April.

Lou L. and Doris Burton, John Street, Belmont, N.Y. 14813

Ed. Note: This appears to be the first upstate record, although there have been at least seven records from Long Island.

Gull with Dark Slate-colored Mantle at Oswego: On January 2, 1967 at about 2:30 P.M. while censusing Great Black-backed, Herring, and Ring-billed Gulls on the west breakwater in Oswego harbor, I noted an unusual gull among the others. The gull, side-lighted by a hazy sun, was studied through a 30x scope at about 300 yards for twenty minutes. The following was noted: mantle solid slate-colored, not quite as black as a Great Black-backed's but very much darker than a Herring Gull's; size the same as the Herring Gulls; the head and ventral parts white (i.e. typical adult plumage); bill yellow (and I thought I could see a red spot near the tip); eye color not really discernable at that distance but appearing the same as that of the other species on the breakwater; feet pink, the color of a Great Black-backed's or Herring Gull's; pattern of primaries with some white posterior edging, but not well seen as the bird was only observed perched.

It was not the Ithaca Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus* — cf *Kingbird* Winter season Region 3 reports, 1964-67) as that individual (which I had seen