

This is the first record for the Lazuli Bunting in the Carolinas. It has not been recorded in Virginia or Georgia, and there appear to be very few records anywhere east of the Mississippi River.

Clay-colored Sparrows in Fall in Mountains of North Carolina

FREDERICK H. TEST
247 Country Club Road
Asheville, N.C. 28804

In the early afternoon of 17 October 1982, two Clay-colored Sparrows (*Spizella pallida*) were feeding in north Asheville, N.C., on ground with sparse, low clumps of grass where I regularly scatter chick feed. Also feeding there were a White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) and six to eight House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*). They were in an area about 10 x 11 feet, sometimes with a foot or less separating individuals. I watched them for several minutes with binoculars, through a window, at about 25 feet. About 30 minutes later I saw a single Clay-colored Sparrow in the same place.

LeGrand (Chat 45:84) lists three recent winter records for the North Carolina coastal area, and Potter, Parnell, and Teulings, in *Birds of the Carolinas* (UNC Press, 1980) say this species is a rare transient along the coast, but they mention no records for the mountains. This Asheville sighting indicates that at least some of the birds seen along the coast may migrate there through the mountains of this region rather than coming down the coast from a crossing farther north.

BACKYARD BIRDING (Continued from Page 46)

A Fair Trade-off?

Our suburban backyard is a far cry from what is normally considered good habitat for the Fox Sparrow. We do not see them very often, and then only during migration or on a snowy winter day. However, we have been most delighted during the winter of 1983-1984 to have had a Fox Sparrow feeding here daily. It appeared on 17 December, just in time to get in on the Wake Audubon Christmas Count. Perhaps the bird is a bird-of-the-year and had no previous experience in picking a winter territory. Perhaps it chose to stay as long as there were plenty of food, a supply of water, and a few evergreen shrubs for cover. The bird is very shy and prefers to feed at first light in the mornings and in late afternoons. It is also very quiet. I have never heard it utter a sound—not a scold note nor a call note of any kind. It has developed a taste for my hand-out food of cornmeal and peanut butter, and occasionally darts out from cover to grab a piece. Mostly it feeds on wild-bird seed and sunflower seed that fall on the ground while the House Finches are scrapping on the hanging feeder. The bird is a beautiful rich red-brown color, similar to that of a Brown Thrasher. This is the first winter in many years that we did not have a thrasher, so maybe it was a fair trade-off for both of us; a Fox Sparrow for a Brown Thrasher for me, food and water versus the solitude of a thicket for the bird.—GAIL T. WHITEHURST, 1505 Brooks Avenue, Raleigh, N.C. 27607