

Harris' Sparrow *Zonotrichia querula*

Breeding in the central Arctic of Canada, Harris' Sparrow winters mainly on the southern Great Plains of the United States. In California it is a rare winter visitor, and in San Diego County, through 2003, there are 24 records. When Harris' Sparrow shows up in the county, it often flocks with the abundant White-crowned Sparrow.

Winter: Records of Harris' Sparrow in San Diego County are well scattered through the coastal lowland from Fallbrook (D15; one from 16 December 1984 to 8 January 1985, L. Bevier, AB 39:211, 1985) to the Tijuana River valley (four records). Although the species commonly winters in regions with a climate far harsher than any San Diego County has to offer, only one Harris' Sparrow has been seen in the county above 1500 feet elevation: at about 2500 feet in Dameron Valley (C15; 6 February 1999, K. L. Weaver). It was also the only one reported 1997–2001. Other recent sightings are from Guajome Lake (G7) 29 December 1996 (K. L. Weaver, Oceanside Christmas bird count), San Elijo Lagoon (L7) 28 November–13 December 2003 (J. Benton), and the Sweetwater County Park campground (T13) 14



Photo by Kenneth Z. Kurland

December 2002 (S. Walens, NAB 57:259, 2003). All reports are of single individuals, except for one of two birds in the Tijuana River valley 16 December 1972–20 January 1973 (G. McCaskie).

Migration: San Diego County's records of Harris' Sparrow extend from 22 November (1970, Tijuana River valley, AB 25:112, 1971) to 10 May (1976, Coronado Cays, T9, AB 30:893, 1976).