

### Clay-colored Sparrow *Spizella pallida*

Even though it nests in eastern British Columbia and winters in Baja California Sur, the Clay-colored Sparrow is rare in San Diego County. It occurs mainly as a fall migrant, flocking with its close relative the Chipping Sparrow and seen most frequently at Point Loma.

**Migration:** Four or five per fall is an average number of sightings of the Clay-colored Sparrow in San Diego County. The species occurs mainly from mid September to mid November; 28 August (1968, one in the Tijuana River valley, AFN 23:112, 1969) is the earliest date. All reports are from the coastal lowland, overwhelmingly from Point Loma (S7) and the Tijuana River valley.

There are only three records of spring migrants, all from Point Loma: 19 May 1980 (AB 34:817, 1980), 29 April–1 May 2001 (J. Abernathy, P. A. Ginsburg, NAB 55:358, 2001), and 5 May 2002 (J. C. Worley).



Photo by Anthony Mercieca

**Winter:** The seven winter records, all from the coastal lowland, include five listed by Unitt (1984), one at Point Loma 10 January–10 April 1992 (G. McCaskie, AB 46:316, 1992), and one that returned for two years to Oak Hill Cemetery, Escondido (I12), 20–22 February 2001 and 16–24 February 2002 (M. B. Mulrooney, NAB 55:229, 2001).