

## WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW SHIFTS WINTER HOME RANGE NORTH

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**Abstract.**—A White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*) was recaptured overwintering 145 km NW of where it was banded as an immature, 2 yr earlier. It is believed that this is the first time that a latitudinal shift in winter home range has been documented for this species. It is likely that fixation to a winter home range may be reversible, at least occasionally, in some White-crowned Sparrows.

### INDIVIDUO DE ZONOTRICHIA LEUCOPHRYS CAMBIA DE LUGAR PARA PASAR EL INVIERNO

**Sinopsis.**—Un individuo de *Zonotrichia leucophrys* fue recapturado 145 km del noreste del lugar en donde pasó el invierno dos años antes y en donde fue anillado como inmaduro. Se cree que ésta es la primera ocasión en que se documenta un cambio tan drástico en la especie. Es muy posible que la fijación al lugar en donde pasan el invierno estas aves es reversible, al menos ocasionalmente.

An immature White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) was banded (band no. 1361-92890) on 29 Dec. 1989 at Camarillo (Ventura Co.), California (34°13'N, 119°02'W, 55 m elevation). It was not recaptured during the 1989-1990 or 1990-1991 seasons. In 1991-1992, this bird was mist-netted twice, on 14 Dec. 1991 and 17 Jan. 1992, at a communal roost on the Carrizo Plain, 9.6 km SSE of Simmler (San Luis Obispo Co.), California (35°20'N, 119°53'W, 640 m elevation), and was identified as *Z. l. gambelii*. The sex of this bird was not identified, but based on its adult wing length (79 mm, unflattened chord), it was probably a male (Fugle and Rothstein 1985, Mewaldt and King 1986).

White-crowned Sparrows exhibit remarkable fidelity to a winter locality (Barrentine 1990, Mewaldt 1976, Ralph and Mewaldt 1976). Home ranges for wintering flocks are approximately 20 ha (Ralph and Mewaldt 1975), and daily movements of individuals seldom exceed 0.9 km (Blanchard and Erickson 1949). Overwintering birds are rarely recaptured outside the 10 minute (latitude-longitude) block where originally banded (Cortopassi and Mewaldt 1965).

Immature White-crowned Sparrows establish a winter home range by midwinter, and fixation to this site is likely to be irreversible (Ralph and Mewaldt 1975). The extent to which immatures may wander on the wintering grounds prior to (or after) the time of fixation remains unstudied. Intraseasonal winter mobility among some individuals has been

inferred (DeWolfe 1968, McClure 1962, Mewaldt 1964, Michener and Michener 1943), but to our knowledge has been clearly documented only once in the published literature (DeWolfe 1968:1336). In this instance, a bird (*Z. l. gambelii*, age unknown) banded on 24 Jan. 1960 at Glenn, California was recovered on 1 Mar. 1960 at Chico, California, approximately 40 km NE of Glenn.

The significance of our observation is that we document the occurrence of a White-crowned Sparrow wintering 145 km NW (or 67°N, 51°W) of where it presumably had overwintered as an immature 2 yr earlier. Heretofore, a latitudinal shift in winter home range has not been documented for this species. At least one other temperate-zone migrant, the Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*), is known to shift its winter home range (Ketterson and Nolan 1982). Immature juncos overwintering at northern latitudes shift their winter home range south after the first season.

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