

ABSTRACTS FOR *CONDOR* 103(2) MAY 2001

COMMENTARIES

IS *SPIZELLA TAVERNERI* A SPECIES OR A SUBSPECIES?¹

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Abstract. Based on distributional, ecologic, morphologic, and vocal data, Klicka et al. (1999) argued in favor of species status for the form *taverneri*, long regarded as a subspecies of the Brewer's Sparrow (*Spizella breweri*). For several reasons we disagree with their conclusion: lack of evidence for the reproductive isolation of *taverneri* from *breweri*, loss of information on the close relationship and allopatric distribution of the two taxa that would accompany their elevation to species, and violation of the principle of taxonomic balance. Until the demonstration of vocal or display differences relevant to pair formation and maintenance, *taverneri* and *breweri* are best regarded as reproductively compatible subspecies.

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