



Mid-Elevation Species Advanced Practice Week 3

Goal: Familiarize yourself with the **auditory** characteristics of the following **five** species:

- Song Sparrow
- Fox Sparrow
- Lincoln’s Sparrow
- House Sparrow
- European Starling

Auditory ID: Below you will find recordings of some typical calls and songs for this week’s species. Listen through the tracks and pay attention to the characteristic tone, patterns, call notes and phrasing that I have noted. Groups or pairs of these species can be easy to confuse with one another. I will describe some ways to help yourself differentiate between these similar-sounding species.

After getting familiar with the recordings, go outside and see if you can hear any of these songs or calls. Remember- bird songs vary between individuals, and even within individual birds- try to listen to as many different songs as possible for each species to help you learn the songs!

Track #	Species	Code	Characteristics to listen for
1	Song Sparrow	SOSP	SOSP often have ~3 very bouncy introductory syllables which are followed by a complex series of notes and trills. The call note is a warm, rounded “Chimp!”
2	Fox Sparrow	FOSP	The FOSP sings a sequence of rich, whistled, and burry notes. They can be thought of as sounding like “drunk” song sparrows, because their song is more haphazard and varied. To differentiate from a SOSP song, note that the FOSP song is lacking the ~3 bouncy intro notes of the SOSP song. Instead, the notes swoop in and seem to go all over the place.
3	Lincoln’s Sparrow	LISP	The LISP song is a rich, warbling, continuous jumble of chirping trills with several pitch changes. As you can hear on the track, the complex phrases often start at lower pitches and then burst into higher pitches, and then drop back into lower pitches at the end.
4	House Sparrow	HOSP	The HOSP sings a series of nearly identical chirps, demonstrated in this track. Listen to the toneless quality, and the downward inflection of these chirps. They also rattle and chatter.
5	European Starling	EUST	EUST can make all sorts of different noises, and they often imitate other birds. Be careful when you are out in the field to make sure the bird you are hearing isn’t a just a EUST doing some mimicry! Their song is mainly harsh rattling and high, thin, slurred whistles. Listen especially for the, high, squeaky or wheezy notes, and the characteristic “wolf whistle”.