

THE MONTCLAIR BIRD CLUB

YOUR WEEKLY BIRD 38

May 26, 2024

by Rick Wright

Harris Sparrow

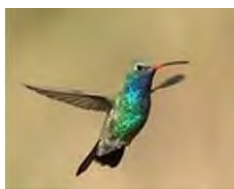


Most New World sparrows undergo a partial prealternate molt each spring. In some species, such as the song sparrow, the bird's appearance is hardly altered to human eyes; in others, such as the chipping and white-throated sparrows, the resultant plumage is readily distinguished from the basic.



In few species is that new plumage more obvious than in the Harris sparrow. In April, virtually all of the head feathers are replaced, making these otherwise very dapper birds look downright scruffy. But the results are worth the brief dishevelment. The crown becomes solid black, and the pale buffy cheeks of winter are replaced by a beautiful bluish silver. At the same time, the birds begin to sing almost incessantly, a querulous whistle that is *the* sound of prairie shelterbelts in spring.

If you would like to see your photographs highlighted here, send one or two pictures with a short paragraph to [Sandy Sorkin & Rick Wright at MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com](mailto:MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com).



Southwest Wings

