

From: Birds Queensland Rarities Appraisal Committee (BQ RAC)

Memorandum to Terry Reis

c.c. Birds Queensland president

Birds Queensland sightings officer

Date: 1st June 2023

Submission No 223 Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanous* submitted by Terry Reis

This case involves 20+ Eurasian Tree Sparrows, *Passer montanous*, observed between the 13th and 16th November 2022 on Boigu Island (09° 13' 54"S 142 142° 13' 05"), Torres Strait. This submission was supported with a single photograph of the Eurasian Tree Sparrow which clearly shows the distinctive chestnut crown and the combination of dark patch on a larger white check patch.

Eurasian Tree Sparrows are known to occur throughout most of Europe and Asia south to the Philippines and eastern Indonesian (Menkhorst *et. al.* 2017), Pratt and Belcher (2015) stated that Eurasian Tree Sparrows became established from ship assisted birds in New Guineas only in the last few years. Although known from southeastern Australia for many decades, this species has only recently been reported in northern Australian in the last few years. Most of these reports have been in town with large port and the sparrows are thought to have been ship assisted (Higgins *et. al.* 2006). Although these Eurasian Tree Sparrows in Torres Strait may be ship assisted, it is not possible to rule out that these birds have arrived through natural dispersal.

Even though it has not been possible to determine how the Eurasian Tree Sparrows arrived on Boigu Island, there is nothing in the current rules of Guidelines of the Birds Queensland Records Appraisal Committee that would preclude a ship assisted record from being assessed under the Committee's usual processes.

Record accepted

This is the sixth record of Eurasian Tree Sparrow to be assessed by the BQ RAC.

References

Higgins, P.J., Peter, J.M. and Cowling, S.J. (Eds) 2006. *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds. Volume 7: Boatbill to Starlings*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Menkhorst, P., Rogers, D., Clarke, R., Davies, J., Marsack, P. and Franklin, K. 2017. *The Australian Bird Guide*. CSIRO Publishing, Clayton South.

Pratt, T.K. and B.M.Belcher. 2015. Birds of New Guinea. Princetown Field Guides

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