

Notes for the separation of
Eremophila alpestris strigata
from *E. a. merrilli*



Which subspecies is this?



merrelli

- Face often very yellow, but supercilium usually fades to white-yellow or whitish.
- Face sometimes yellow but washed out, unlike any winter *strigata*. Be wary of viewing conditions.
 - Females can be without yellow
 - Uncommonly with yellow below black bib.



Main points- *Strigata* is the warbler of the horned lark world; if it isn't saturated with yellow, it almost certainly isn't *strigata*. If it is saturated, it isn't necessarily *strigata*. If it's *extensively* yellow below the black bib, then it almost certainly is *strigata*. Lack of yellow below bib is not diagnostic in any way. Very important: the effect of late summer feather wear has not been evaluated and might negate some of these differences.



female

strigata

- Face saturated with bright yellow to rear of supercilium, irrespective of gender.
- Commonly with obvious and extensive yellow below black bib, most often in males.



male

male



merrelli

- Cool gray or gray-brown feather edgings to dark centered dorsal feathers, giving a lighter dorsal appearance. Females are often especially pale.
- “Pinkish-brick” color to nape when red is present. Female *merrelli* mostly without noticeable red.

male



Main points- *Strigata* darker dorsally, although both have equally dark feather centers. *Strigata* females especially are much warmer brown than *merrelli* females, and usually have much more red on red parts. There is a subtle but consistent difference in coloration of red parts.

strigata

- Warm cinnamon brown feather edgings, resulting in darker dorsal look. Nape edgings good character for separating females.
- “Red-brick” color to nape, coverts, and rump when red is present here.



male

female

