

**In this issue:** The American sparrows in the family Emberizidae are notable for their subtle and beautiful plumages and for their striking songs, as well as for their ecological, behavioral, and taxonomic complexity. In this issue, we take a closer look at several "model systems" for understanding diversity and complexity in the Emberizidae. *Cover photograph: Brewer's Sparrow in Mono County, California, July 2004, by © Allan Murphy.*

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Field-recognizable variation in the Seaside Sparrow is extensive, and several species may be involved. See article, p. 490.  
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