

Dear Mary,

My name is Bob, and I am a Chestnut-colored Longspur. Let me tell you about myself and my life. My favorite color is red, and I have a best friend named Larry. We live in the Northern Great Plains, migrating to the southwestern US during breeding season and flying to the Chihuahuan desert grasslands of North Mexico in winter. I usually feast on bugs from the ground, but in winter, I eat mostly what I have put away over adaptations. The extra-long claws on my hind legs for easy walking. Other birds around us are busy foraging and digging over holes for their eggs.

My scientific nickname is *Calcarius ornatus*. We build our homes on the ground since there are water in the prairie. Living on the ground has its risks, like wildfires that could destroy our homes. I belong to the Longspurs group, along with Lapland Longspurs, Smith's Longspurs, and Thick-billed Longspurs. My name comes from the chestnut-colored back I have. Oh, and our wingspan is typically 25-27 cm, our weight around 110-130 g, and we measure about 5.1-6.5 inches long.

When I feel lonely, I visit Larry in the hole next to mine, and we enjoy rag or hole and work. Our parents are getting competitive? Today is migration day, and I am nervous because it is my first time. My family flies alongside Larry whenever we are best friends, and I enjoy having company during the journey. Finally, we arrive in North Mexico after a rough 47-day journey. I'm exhausted, but we must forage our way here. I dig a hole and gather twigs and grass to make it cozy. Our nest is complete.

Something terrible happened today. I heard loud noises like heavy machines roaring. Looking around, I found an excavator digging up grasslands half a mile from our home. This wasn't the first time. Months ago, they built a huge, ugly grey building that sprays out smoke, making it hard for me to breathe while flying. They're demolishing large grasslands, making it hard for us to find food and places. I told my mate about the new excavator, and she started packing up. We moved far away from the destruction, and we did our best. I wish people would not destroy our home and leave us to starve.