

CFO-RC-FILE
1998-139

ACCEPTED (7-6)

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS SIGHT RECORD FORM

rec'd 8-9-98

Results: _____

Species: Connecticut Warbler
(Common Name)

Oporornis agilis
(Scientific Name)

Date(s) of occurrence: May 16, 1997.

Number of birds seen: one.

Sex: male.

Plumage: adult.

Exact location: Lamar Community College grove, south side.

County: Prowers.

Nearest town: Lamar.

Elevation: 3,622.

Length of Observation: eight minutes.

Time(s) of Observation: afternoon.

Other observers who saw the bird with you: none.

Other observers who independently saw the bird(s): none.

Light conditions [quality; direction relative to bird(s) position]: sunny, excellent.

Optical equipment used: 10X40 Bausch & Lomb Binoculars.

Distance from bird (estimated unless otherwise noted): 15 feet.

Was the bird photographed: no.

If so, have you submitted photos? no.

Who took the photographs? n/a.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: The bird was observed near the water edge on the south side of the Lamar Community College grove. The area in the riparian woodland with russian olives and cottonwoods.

Describe the bird's behavior (flying; feeding; habits; behaviors used in identifying the species or in supporting the identification): The bird was first found along the water edge then went to my left into the russian olives. It stayed on or low to the ground. A male MacGillivray's Warbler was also present in this area. After the bird went into the russian olives, I moved to my left and was able to get good views of the bird as it was walking on log, which was on the ground.

Describe the bird in detail: This is the most important part of this report. Include overall size and shape, and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, under sides, nape, back, wings, and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the (bird(s). Describe other details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, etc. That were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted: you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches, or copy of field notes): The size of the bird was a little bigger than the nearby male MacGillivray's Warbler. The bird seemed like a large warbler. The shape was of a smallish songbird. The bird was a warbler because of small size, song bird shape, thin bill, the colors, and the behavior of staying low to the ground. The plumage of the bird was an adult male in breeding plumage, because it had a light to medium gray head and throat (not brown and white like females). The color of the forehead was all light to medium gray. The nape color was greenish with some gray. The ear patches were also a light to medium gray color. Both eyes had a bold white eye ring going around each eye. The eye ring seemed a little bolder around the front and back of each eye. The eye rings were complete however, which eliminates both MacGillivray's and Mourning Warblers. The throat was light to medium gray, which was a little darker gray on the breast. The underparts were all lemon yellow in color. The flanks were all lemon yellow as well. The under tail coverts were yellow and were longer than that of the nearby MacGillivray's Warbler. The back was dark greenish. The wings were also dark greenish without any different colors on the wing bars. The rump and tail were dark greenish. The legs and feet were pinkish/flesh colored. The bill was this same pinkish/flesh color, not as bright as the feet and legs though. It might have had some dark color on the upper mandible. The tail was short compared to the nearby MacGillivray's Warbler. The bill was fairly thin and pointed and short. When I saw the bird I knew it was one of the oporornis warbler, because of the lemon yellow underparts and grayish head. The head color and face pattern eliminated Kentucky. Also the throat color and size of the bird eliminated Nashville (not an oporornis). So I was down to MacGillivray's, Mourning, or Connecticut. The bird was a male, because it had a grayish color head. The bird had an eye ring around each eye, so that eliminated Mourning (adult males never show an eyering). The eye rings were complete, so it could not have been a MacGillivray's. Also, as there was also a male MacGillivray's Warbler in the same area, I could easily tell that the two birds were different. The bigger bird had to be a male Connecticut Warbler because of its bigger size (compared directly to the MacGillivray's Warbler), the longer under tail coverts and short tail (compared directly to the MacGillivray's Warbler), and by its behavior of walking (instead of hopping) on the log which was on the ground. The bird acted more like an Ovenbird (that is the warbler species that I see the most, that walks). I got good views of this bird and I could easily identify it as a male Connecticut Warbler. I have seen lots of MacGillivray's and several Mournings and this bird was not either of those two species. I do know that this species is very rare in Colorado, so I took complete details of the bird for the Colorado Bird Records Committee.

Describe the bird's song and calls if heard: none heard.

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them:

MacGillivray's Warbler: This species never shows a complete eye ring. This species always has eye crescents. This species is smaller and has shorter under tail coverts.

Mourning Warbler: The male of this species never shows a complete eye ring. This species is smaller and has shorter under tail coverts.

Nashville Warbler: This species does have a complete eye ring. This species has a yellow throat, not gray. This species is not normally seen on the ground or low to the ground. This species is smaller and has shorter under tail coverts.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

Connecticut Warbler: This is my first one.

MacGillivray's Warbler: I have seen lots of this species in Colorado in all plumages. I even saw an adult male of this species about the time as the Connecticut Warbler.

Mourning Warbler: I have seen several adult Mourning Warblers in North Dakota in June 1994. Also, I have seen one adult male Mourning Warbler at Last Chance rest stop, Colorado in May 1995.

Nashville Warbler: I have seen about 20 of this species in Colorado.

List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how this influenced you identification (during and after observation): National Geographic Society's Birds of North American. I looked at the book after the sighting to be sure of what I had seen. The NGS guide made me completely convinced that I had just seen a male Connecticut Warbler.

This report was made from notes taken during X , or after X observation, or later from memory .

Reporting observer: Brandon K. Percival. Signature: Brandon K. Percival

Address: 835 Harmony Drive, Pueblo West, Colorado 81007-2632 (719)-547-3722.