

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTING

52-91-66

Species: Hermit Warbler

Date(s): May 6, 1991

Time seen: 1:05 - 1:25; 2:00-2:10

Locality: Front yard of the Corliss family, about 15 miles northwest of Burlington, Kit Carson County.

Latilong: 14 Atlas Block # & Name: Tuttle Atlas block (39102 D5)

Optical equipment: 8 x 42 Bausch & Lomb binoculars

Number of birds seen: One Sex: Female Plumage: adult

Light conditions: Excellent, off and on.

Distance from bird, how measured: five to 20 feet

Weather at time of observation: Clear, warm.

Habitat: Between the house and the county road are about five rows of four Chinese elms, well spaced. The bird stuck to these for the most part, although on the north side is a mature shelter belt of junipers, pines, Chinese elms, Russian olives, wild plum, and other trees and bushes.

Behavior of bird: I first saw it when I went to the door to ask permission to survey the shelter belt for the Atlas. It flew from a small, round, 2-foot tall ornamental juniper beside the door. It fed actively, though not frantically, in the Chinese elms, 5-15 feet up, and occasionally on the ground. It went higher in the trees a few times.

Detailed description of bird: Most noticeable was the yellow face--the first thing I saw when it flew from beside the door.

Size and shape: Size and shape of *Dendroica* Warbler; thin warbler-type bill.

Head: Bright yellow head and crown, no face patch; black eye; very faint line from bill halfway to eye. A gray-black patch on the nape diffusing into the yellow of the crown; and black throat, diffused at the sides, sharply cut off at throat.

Back: gray with faint blackish stripes.

Rump: paler gray, to buffy gray, contrasting with darker back and tail.

Wings: two white wing bars, upper one wider.

Breast, chest and belly: white, without streaks.

Tail: It showed white sides in the tail in flight. Underside of tail was white, I think.

The head seemed demarcated from the back and breast by a distinct line all the way around.

Field marks not seen: I did not see the tail spots or stripes well.

Bird's calls or song: She was silent.

Similar species: The only other warblers with yellow faces are Golden-cheeked, Black-throated Green, Blue-winged (lacks black on head), and Prothonotary and Yellow (which lack wing bars).

Golden-cheeked has streaks on breast and an eye stripe of sorts; male has black crown, black back and black chest; female has yellow throat and black chest band.

Black-throated Green: Has greenish crown and nape rather than black, and has streaking on the side, which this bird lacked. Also has greenish back instead of gray back.

Townsend's: Has face patch and streaking on sides, as well as greenish back. Male has black crown and yellow on breast below black throat; female lacks black throat and black nape, has yellow breast, and streaks on side.

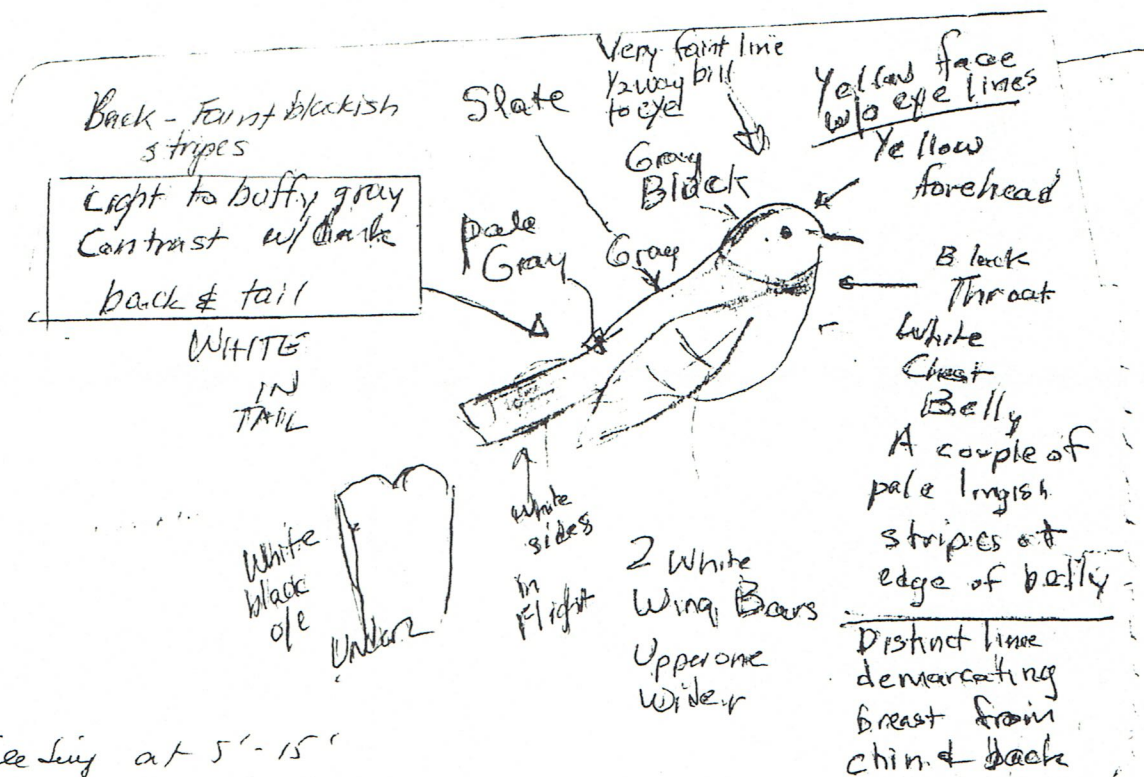
Cape May: Has breast streaks, almost a wing patch instead of wing bars and a yellow rump. Male has rusty cheek patch, female has yellow shoulder patch

Prior experience: I saw Hermits in California years ago. I've seen the Golden-cheeked only once, and the others frequently either here or in New York.

Description from notes made at time of sighting and transcribed here. A copy of my not too legible field notes is attached.

No Photo available.

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Feeding at 5'-15'
occ on ground

Dj57 - 5-20'

Active feeding, not frantic

105-105