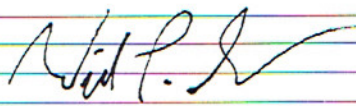


2003-123

# Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

CBRC FILE #: 2003-123		
RESULTS:		
Species: (Common Name) Costa's Hummingbird		(Scientific Name) Calypte costae
Date(s) of occurrence: 11 July 03		
Number of birds seen: 1	Sex: ♂	Plumage: Adult ♂
Exact location: Pay Station, Mt. Evans Toll Road		
County: Clear Creek	Nearest town: Idaho Springs	Elevation: ~10,800'
Length of observation: About 2 minutes	Time(s) of observation: 12:35 pm	
Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Chris Wood		
Other observers who independently saw the bird(s): none known		
Light conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s) and observers position: Unfortunately, poor light. Bird was in shady part of pine tree, backlit against bright sky.		
Optical equipment used: Nikon D100 + 80-400 VR		
Distance to bird(s) (estimated, unless otherwise noted): About 5 meters		
Was (Were) bird(s) photographed? Yes	If so, are you submitting photos? Yes	
Who took the photograph(s)? Bill Schmoker		
Describe the general and specific habitats in which the bird(s) occurred: Sub-alpine spruce/fir forest. Toll booths at pay station had hummingbird feeders.		
Describe the bird's (birds') behaviors, particularly behaviors that were used in supporting the identification, e.g., flying, feeding, habits: I only saw the bird perching in the tree.		
<p><b>DESCRIPTION</b> – Chris Wood called me over to photograph a hummingbird with a purple gorget that had flown in and landed in a pine tree above him. Through my viewfinder (image-stabilized 12X equivalent), I could see a small hummingbird. I couldn't determine the gorget color very well as I photographed the bird, but some other important features came through in the photographs. The bird was only seen from below, showing a relatively short bill. A bit of bill curvature is seen in the bottom photo, but the angle of the photo makes it difficult to determine precisely how much the bill curves. A very small bit of white at the base of the bill is visible. The gorget appears completely dark in the photos, and the long, thin "tail" of the gorget can be seen extending down to about the "shoulder" of the bird. Foreshortening distorts the true shape and length of the gorget tail, but a "handlebar mustache" effect is still visible. The long tail of the gorget completely crosses the white sides of the neck, terminating in the green of the upper wing area. A white patch is visible behind the eye, but not much else is visible above that on the head. The underparts look pretty light, getting a little darker greenish towards the wings. No buffiness is visible in the underparts. The wings are dark, and project beyond the tail tip, which isn't visible in the photos (it is hidden by the longer wings.)</p>		
Describe the bird's (birds') call(s) and/or song(s), if noted: n/a		
<p><b>SIMILAR SPECIES</b> – The tiny size, long skinny bill, and flight style rule out all but the hummingbirds. Black-chinned Hummingbird males show purple gorgets, but a bit of tail should project beyond the wingtip. Additionally, the bill should look a little longer, and of course, there should be no long gorget tails crossing the white neck sides. Two of the other most expected hummingbirds in Colorado, Rufous and Broad-tailed, should show tails projecting beyond the wing tips. Additionally, these two don't have long tails on the gorget that cross the white sides of the neck. Calliope Hummingbird, the other "common" hummingbird in Colorado, has wings that project beyond the tail, but has a different gorget pattern (a red striped looking gorget, not having a solid-looking, long "handlebar mustache" tails.) Other N.A. hummingbirds that show purple gorgets (BBHU, WEHU) should show their tail projecting beyond the tail, would have lots of red in the bill, etc. The other North American hummingbird with extremely extended gorget tails is Lucifer Hummingbird, which has a longer, more curved bill, long, pointed tail extension, etc.</p>		
What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? I've seen several Costa's Hummingbirds in SE Arizona. I've got a lot of experience with Colorado's 4 "regular" hummingbird species, and I was able to study all of the other species mentioned above in two trips to SE Arizona in 2003.		
List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how these influenced your identification (during and after observation): The Sibley Guide to Birds, Hummingbirds of North America: The Photographic Guide, and my photo collection of N.A. Hummingbirds		
This report was made from: Photos made during observation and notes made after observation		
Date and time of written report: 16 Jan 04		
Reporting observer: William P Schmoker	Signature: 	
Reporting observer's address: 3381 Larkspur Dr. Longmont, CO 80503 email: bill@schmoker.org		



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