

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTINGS  
FOR  
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDSSpecies: Worm-eating Warbler ; Helminthophila vermicivora  
(Vernacular name) (Scientific name)

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students -- those studying occurrences 50 years from now -- must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Dates (s): May 10, 11 1988 Time Bird Seen: a.m. both to dayLocality: La Junta City ParkLa Junta; Otero County

Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Nikon 9x30 binos.If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: —Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: — Plumage: adult, breedingLight conditions: Good sun; all angles. Bright sun on the 11<sup>th</sup>.Distance from bird, and how measured: 20 ft - 100 ft.Describe the bird's overall behavior: Gleaned insects from trunks or larger limbs, or worked close to trunk. Usually searches for insects on bark or in crevices with bill. Hangs upside down & sideways as it feeds. Sometimes perches in clumps or twigs.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Open park. Lawn with large green trees.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):

None



APPENDIX 11 Continued

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough). Describe what you actually saw in the field. *Largish warbler, but still a small bird; about 4 1/2-5" long. Bill largish, pointed, flattened laterally; pink-colored on sides but dusky-colored on top. Eyes black. Legs & feet pink. Overall plumage plain with no wing bars. Uppersides grayish olive-brown (back, wings and tail). Undersides lighter: pale golden-yellow ground color on head, throat, chin & breast. Belly more cream-colored, less yellow. Undersides unmarked except for blotchy-mottled undertail coverts. Tail grayish-olive, lighter below. Head distinctly marked w/ 4 flat-blackish stripes; one each through eye & one each on crown i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.*

Call: Distinctive & makes bird findable. Is a quick buzzy "bzzzt" note given in flight & while on the move. Sounds like Lazuli Bunting note.

Song: Heard often on May 11; singing from perch in small tree on lawn. Song is a dry trill given 12 times/minute. Sounds like fast Chip Sparrow song.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Such close, clear views leave little doubt:

Swainson's Warbler brown crown, no black head-stripes, not yellow below. Waterthrushes, Ovenbird streaked below.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I saw quite a few Worm-eating Warblers in Texas in 1994.

This report was written from notes made during ☒ after observation; from memory ☐.

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Return Form To:

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worm eating & appearance