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**Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form**  
(Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.)

2002-206  
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***Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!***

CBRC FILE #: **2002-206**

**RESULTS:**

Species: (Common Name) Winter Wren		(Scientific Name) Troglodytes troglodytes
Date(s) of occurrence: 11-15-2 and 12-28-2		
Number of birds seen: 1	Sex: unknown	Plumage: unsure; see description below. This bird could have been E. or W. or juvenile. It did not definitively fit any of the field guides' drawings or photos that I saw.
Exact location: both times on the ground at my house in front of a large picture window, foraging under native shrubs in my landscaping. Address: 1040 3448 Lane, Hotchkiss, Co.		
County: Delta	Nearest town: Hotchkiss	Elevation: 5100 +-
Length of observation: first time I watched the bird for approx. 3 minutes; the second time was shorter, probably a minute or a minute and a half	Time(s) of observation: both times I saw the bird shortly after dawn but before the sun had topped the mountain to the E., the direction in which I was looking.	
Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: none		
Other observers who independently saw the bird(s): none		
Light conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s) and observers position: bright early morning light with the sun still hidden behind the mountain towards which I was facing. I was standing inside my house looking out a floor to ceiling picture window towards the east. So... bright diffused light		
Optical equipment used: Swarovski EL 10 x 40 binoculars		
Distance to bird(s) (estimated, unless otherwise noted): 11-15-2: 6 to 7 ft.; 12-28-2: 3 feet		
Was (Were) bird(s) photographed? no	If so, are you submitting photos?	
Who took the photograph(s)?		
Describe the general and specific habitats in which the bird(s) occurred: the first morning the bird flew down to the ground below a Holodiscus shrub onto my crushed red rock landscaping border. My yard is landscaped using indigenous native plants with a hardwood woodlot and riparian area with stream and pond near-by. I live on an agricultural long-time irrigated mesa very close to downtown Hotchkiss. The second time I saw it under an artemisia sage which had snow-covered branches weighted to the ground and forming a canopy. The sage is next to the holodiscus, which no longer had leaves on it.		
Describe the bird's (birds') behaviors, particularly behaviors that were used in supporting the identification, e.g., flying, feeding, habits: The 1 <sup>st</sup> time the bird flew fast to the ground under the Holodiscus and scuttled immediately to a concrete stem wall where it systematically probed the pits in the concrete, producing a cocoon each time. Often the cocoon was almost as large as the bird which used its feet and beak to extract the insects. The 2 <sup>nd</sup> time I saw the bird it was foraging directly below my feet, with only a pane of glass between us. It kind of ran around on the ground going in and out under the snow-covered branch canopy. It darted around UNDER leaves on the ground, ran along a branch on the ground and probed some crushed red rock with its beak. The bird bobbed as it flitted around. Both times it abruptly shot off and out of sight.		
DESCRIPTION -- <b>This is the most important part of this report.</b> Include in these details the overall size and shape of the bird and give as many plumage details as possible, even including those that you feel might not have relevance to the specific identification. Please fill out this portion even if photos are accompanying your report. The bird was immediately identifiable by its tiny size, comparable to a broad-tailed hummingbird, and its tiny, stubby tail which it held aloft in typical wren posture. The first plumage detail I noticed was what appeared to be a black cap. None of the pictures I have looked at show as much contrast between the face and throat, and the cap as I saw. The face and throat were a distinctly lighter buffy color. In my notes I described the cheek as having a "somewhat barred pattern." Because of the light facial color I could not see a clear eye stripe or eyebrow, just the strong contrast between the cap and the face. The belly, vent and back were quite dark, more of a chocolate brown then the rufous color described in some guides. I noticed pale barring on the breast which darkened on the flanks. This bird seemed to be a composite of both Eastern and Western populations...Western on the top and Eastern on the bottom.		
Describe the bird's (birds') call(s) and/or song(s), if noted: none		

**SIMILAR SPECIES – This is another critical part of your report.** Please discuss how you eliminated similar species from consideration: The winter wren was the only American wren species I had never seen. I am familiar with all the others. House wrens nest in my yard and Bewicks wrens feed at my sunflower feeder on my porch in the winter. The tiny size of this bird and its stubby tail were clinchers for me. The length of the tail proportionate to the body was about half as long as any other wren species' tail to body ratio. The fact that this bird scuttled around on the ground was diagnostic as well. Altogether I watched it for approx. 4-5 minutes and it never flew up to a branch. I never saw any wrens other than rock wrens stay exclusively on the ground and this was definitely not a rock wren, a bird I know very well from the near-by canyon country.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? This bird is a "lifer" for me but I am very familiar with all the other Western wrens. I know all the other wrens by their songs, although that didn't help because this bird was not vocalizing as it foraged and fed. Both Bewicks in the winter and House wrens in the breeding season are resident around my house.

List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how these influenced your identification (during and after observation): Sibley's Guide to the Birds, which did not help much with the i.d. as he describes a "distinct supercilium" which I did not observe. Also, I felt the bird I saw had a shorter tail than the ones drawn by David. The most helpful guides I used were the ones with photos... Audubon's Master Guide to Birding, Ken Kaufman's red field guide and the Stokes Guide. I also used the Golden Guide. The written descriptions were more helpful than the pictures.

This report was made from (check one) ☐ notes made during observation ☒ notes made after observation ☐ later from memory.

Date and time of written report: 3-23-3 to 3-26-3. Worked on at various times.

Reporting observer: Andrea Robinsong

Signature:

Reporting observer's address: P.O. Box 745

City: Hotchkiss

State: Co.

Zip: 81419

**Send report to:**  
**Colorado Bird Records Committee**  
**Tony Leukering**  
**PO Box 660**  
**Brighton, CO 80601**