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ACCEPTED 7-0

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER

Vermivora chrysoptera

Location: Lake Henry; Ordway; Crowley County, Colorado

Date: May 11-12, 1997

Setting:

I birded the grove on the north side of Lake Henry late on the afternoon on the 11th and on the morning of the 12th. There was a male and female Golden-winged Warbler seen (along with the many other eastern strays) both days. Other birders who observed these birds were Bob Dickson and Brandon Percival. The birds were seen off and on both days and we found them and observed them on several occasions during each day. They usually stayed together. They foraged at medium to high heights in the heavy, younger, wooded area along and near the canal on the north side. They were quite active, feeding in small branches and twigs, sometimes hanging like a chickadee. I observed them with my B & L 10x42 binoculars from about 25' away. The conditions were good and the light was overcast on the 11th and sunny on the 12th.

Description:

The birds were a breeding plumaged male and female. Both were small, slim, slender birds about 5" long. They had very slim, sharply pointed black bills. The male was pale gray above and white below. The forecrown was golden-yellow. The rear crown, sides of the head, nape, back, wings and tail were gray. There was a large yellow wing panel and the edgings to the flight feathers in the folded wing were yellow. It had a black auricular patch and a black bib (chin and throat). The tail was medium long. The female was a shadow of the male. It was slightly paler, more washed out in its gray. It was also white below. It had pale yellow wingbars rather than a yellow panel on the wing coverts. The face (auriculars) and chin were dusky gray where the male was black. The forecrown was washed yellow. Both birds were silent.

Similar Species:

The small size, slim shape and sharp bill indicate a warbler. The black face patch and bib rule out most other warblers. Black-throated Gray lacks the yellow patches and has streaked flanks. Townsend's Warbler has a yellow face and underparts and has two white wing bars.

Experience with Species:

I have seen quite a few Golden-winged Warblers before, including five others in Colorado.

This report was prepared from notes made during and after observation.

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