

rec'd 8/26/04

2004-43

7-0 (A)

Species: Hooded Warbler (breeding record)

Date and time: 27 July 2004, about 9:30-10 AM for about 30 minutes

Location: Archuleta County, Lower Piedra Campground: along FR 621, about half a mile north of US 160 and several hundred feet south of campground entrance.

Habitat: mixed coniferous/deciduous riparian woodland within about 100 ft. of the Piedra River. Dominant trees were ponderosa pine, narrowleaf cottonwood, douglasfir, juniper, Gambel oak, boxelder, willow, and various deciduous understory shrubs. Understory dense in some areas and more open in others; canopy more or less complete.

Distance and light conditions: birds seen at distances of 10-30 feet; birds usually less than 10 feet above ground (and often much less); sunny with good light conditions-birds seen with light from behind observer or from the side

Number and sex: 2 birds (one adult female, one fledgling, possibly male)

Description (adult female): a largish warbler. Face and underparts bright yellow and unmarked, possibly lighter toward crissum, and darkish in the lores. Bill black. Center of crown black, extending behind the face onto the side of the neck, partially framing the face. Upperparts (back and wings) dark olive-green; no wingbars or streaks. Tail dark (blackish) with conspicuous, broad white sides seen when bird fanned its tail. No spots, bars, streaks, or other marks on either upperparts or underparts.

Description (fledgling): head and underparts yellow, lighter and creamier than the adult, with obscure grayish breastband (possibly indicating that it was a male) and some gray in the lores. Upperparts olive-green (similar to adult or slightly lighter). Bill somewhat heavy and pale (horn-colored), especially toward base (a typical fledgling-type bill). Tail mostly dark, and appeared to have pale areas along the side, but less conspicuous than the adult because the fledgling moved around less and fanned its tail less frequently.

Voice: adult frequently gave a loud, sharp "tic" note. The fledgling gave typical begging calls.

Behavior: Adult was actively foraging, mostly within six feet of the ground in deciduous shrubs, but occasionally higher (up to about 15 feet) and occasionally in conifers (young pines or junipers). The adult regularly fed the fledgling. While foraging, the adult frequently flicked and fanned its tail. The fledgling was less active, but did tend to follow the adult and was capable of flight. The fledgling was never seen to forage or feed on its own, but waited until the adult brought food to it, and engaged in some typical fledgling begging behavior when the adult came near.

Separation of similar species (adult female): only male Wilson's Warbler could be confused, but it lacks black coming down on the side of the neck and framing the face, and it also lacks the broad white patches on the side of the tail. The bird also seemed larger than Wilson's, and had a different call from the softer Wilson's call. Prothonotary lacks black on crown or side of neck/face. Kentucky has a different face pattern.

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Separation of similar species (fledgling): rather similar to a fledgling Yellow Warbler, but larger, darker upperparts (with no wingbars), grayish breastband, and a suggestion of pale tail patches all rule out Yellow (in addition to being fed by an obvious adult Hooded). Also similar to fledgling Wilson's, but ruled out by larger size, pale tail patches, and identity of adult feeding it. Fledgling Kentucky and Canada have different face patterns (darker faces and crowns). The grayish breastband may suggest the fledgling was a male.

Similarity with similar species: I am very familiar with both Wilson's and Yellow Warblers, having seen hundreds (thousands?) of each in a variety of plumages. I have seen a handful of Hooded Warblers, both adult males and females, but I have never seen a fledgling Hooded.

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