

52-93-48
A

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

CAPE MAY WARBLER

Dendroica tigrina

Location: Rock Canyon picnic area below Pueblo Res. dam, Pueblo County, Colorado

Date: October 31, 1993

Setting:

I was birding with Brandon Percival about 12:00 noon on Sunday in an overgrown scrubby riparian area located between the fishing pond and the river at Rock Canyon picnic area. We were working a mixed row of ash, Russian olive, willow and larger cottonwood. Brandon first spotted the warbler in a Russian olive about 15 feet off the ground. It was a fairly bright warbler for the fall in Colorado, and Brandon knew on first glimpse that it was a "good" warbler. We pursued it and observed the bird around this, and nearby, trees for about 10 minutes. We achieved excellent clear views in good light at distances of 20-35 feet. The bird was loosely associated with some White-crowned Sparrows and chickadees. It fed by working along the larger stems, small branches and terminal twigs near the outer edges of the Russian Olive, at a height of from 10-20 feet. It was very small and rather slow moving, or at least not very "flitty". This made the bird difficult to find as it moved quietly through the foliage of the Russian olive (where it spent most of its time). The bird was silent during the period of observation.

Description:

The bird was very small, even for a warbler. I remarked that it was very short-tailed while we watched the bird. It was about 4 1/2" - 5" long and with a slender, pointed bill. Above (crown, nape and back) was colored a flat, dull olive-grey. The back was not streaked, or at least not clearly streaked enough for us to observe. The rump was a contrasting yellow, but not as bright as a Yellow-rumped Warbler. The tail was short, square, slender and with a dark upper surface. I did not note the color of the underside of the tail. The folded wings were dark, with a single, broad, dull white wingbar, which formed a small whitish panel, or patch. The bird's undersides (chin, throat, breast and upper belly) were quite a bright yellow, turning clear white on the lower belly, vent and undertail. The breast and flanks were strongly marked with fine black streaks, more obvious on the flanks, less so in the center of the breast. The face was dull yellowish with a slight orange or brownish tinge. The face was brightest on the superciliary and lower face and dullest on the dull brownish-grey ear patch. There was a grey eyeline. We looked for, and saw, a distinctive orangish-yellow patch on the side of the neck.

Similar Species:

The I.D. was not too difficult in the field as this was quite a bright fall warbler. I believe that it was a fall male. Close I.D. contenders (warblers having yellow undersides with streaks, and wing bar(s)) are: Blackburnian would show buffy lines on back, a brighter face pattern, two wing bars and would lack the orangish spot on the side of the neck and the yellow rump; Magnolia would have two wingbars, a plainer grey face and would lack the orange spot on the side of the neck; Yellow-rumped would not have the bright face pattern, would be much less yellow below, would be bigger and longer-tailed and would lack the orange spot on the side of the neck; Townsend's and Black-throated Green would have a more distinctive face pattern, would lack the yellow rump, would have two wingbars and would lack the orange spot on the side of the neck; Prairie would show a reddish tinge to the back, would lack the yellow rump and white wing panel and would lack the orange spot on the side of the neck; Pine would lack the clear whitish wing panel, would show a much plainer face and would lack the yellow rump and orange patch on the side of the neck.

Experience with Species:

I have seen several Cape May Warblers and other I.D. contenders. I saw the December Cape May Warbler found by Silverman two years ago in Colorado City.

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

Mark Janos
10 Sedum Ct.
Pueblo, CO 81001

Colorado Field Ornithologists - Sight Record Form

- -New State Record - X - Rare bird in CO

Cape May Warbler
(Species)

Dendroica tigrina
(Scientific name)

Date(s):

October 31, 1993 11:55 AM - 12:05 PM 5 minutes

Locality:

Rock Canyon, Below Pueblo Reservoir Dam, Pueblo, Pueblo
County, Colorado.

Nearest town, county and state)

Optical equipment:

10X40 Bausch & Lomb Binoculars.

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used:

Not photographed.

Number of birds seen:1 Sex: male Plumage: immature

Light Conditions:

excellent

Distance from bird and how measured:

20-30 feet.

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

I observed a warbler with yellow and streaks, I saw it about
four times before Mark could see it. The bird did not move
very much, it flew from a russian olive to another russian
olive and then to a cottonwood tree and then a russian olive
and then disappeared. When we observed it in the four
different trees the bird moved slowly in the upper
branches.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

The was usually in russian olive trees along a ditch near
the Arkansas River. Once it was in a cottonwood tree. It
was seen with loosely Black-capped Chickadees and a
Ruby-crowned Kinglets.

Other observers who independently identified the bird
(Please list names and address):

Mark Janos 10 Sedumn Court, Pueblo CO 81001

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. The field marks used to identify the bird. Include Size, overall shape, plumage, and color pattern; details on shape of bill, wings, and tail.:

I identified the bird by it's warbler shape, by it's black eye stripes, and by it's yellow rump. The bill was black, the eyes were dark, the head was olive. The earpatches were dark with yellow around it. The back was olive. The wings were black with a white wing bar. The front of the bird was yellow with heavy streaking on the breast. The underparts were yellow, except for white under tail coverts. The bird had a yellow rump. The legs and feet were dark. The bird was about 5 inches. The bird was in immature male plumage. The bill was thin, the wings were typical warbler shaped. Also the bird had a short tail.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds if heard:
No calls or chips heard...

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Yellow-rumped Warbler: This species has no black eye stripes.

Magnolia Warbler: This species has two wing bars on both wings.

Blackburnian Warbler: This species has a dark ear patch.

Prairie Warbler: This species wags the tail and no wing bars.

Pine Warbler: This species has two wing bars.

Blackpoll Warbler: Does not have black eye stripe.

Black-throated Green Warbler: Has dark earpatch.

Townsend's Warbler: Has dark earpatch.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

Cape May Warbler: I have seen one in this plumage at Colorado City, Colorado in December of 1990.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: I have seen many in CO,CA,AZ in all plumages.

Magnolia Warbler: I have seen four in CO one adult malee, one adult female, and two immatures.

Blackburnian Warbler: I have seen one immature male on September 26, 1992.

Prairie Warbler: I have never seen this species.

Pine Warbler: I've seen three of this species, adults and immature.

Blackpoll Warbler: I've seen two adult male of this species in CO.

Black-throated Green Warbler: I've seen one adult male and a immature female in CO.

Townsend's Warbler: I've seen 95+ in CO, including males, females, and immatures.

Field Guides used to determine sighting:

National Geographic Society's Birds of North America

This report was written from notes made during____ after X;
from memory____.

Name: Brandon K.Percival

Mailing address: 835 Harmony Dr.

Pueblo West, Colorado 81007-2604

(719)-547-3722

Signature: *Brandon K. Percival*