

2000 Report

Vol 36/2 April 2002

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Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

(This is a two-page report. Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.)

7-0A

Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

Recd 4/7/00 upl

CFO-RC FILE X:

RESULTS:

Species:(Common Name) Vermillion Flycatcher

(Scientific Name) Pyrocephalus rubinus

Date(s) of occurrence: March 26, 2000

Number of birds seen: Two

Sex: Male and female

Plumage: breeding male, adult female

Exact location: Higbee Cemetery, Purgatoire Canyon Road west of HWY 109

County: Otero County

Nearest town: La Junta

Elevation: probably same as La Junta or lower
do not have that elevation

Length of observation: 2.5 hours

Time(s) of observation: 9:30-12:00 a.m.

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Tom Mathies

Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s): Brandon Percival, and others on April 1, 2000

Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position: Bright sunshine, bird illuminated from front and top light

Optical equipment used: Nikon binoculars 10 x 35

Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): 30 feet at closest; 100 feet at furthest. Bird was easily observed with naked eye as well as through binoculars. Red plumage was well illuminated from any distance.

Was bird(s) photographed? no (my camera was not powerful enough)

If so, have you submitted photos? no

Who took the photographs? no one

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: Open fields, some agricultural, some desert grassland, along small stream. Bird observed in air, perched on streamside fenceposts, on eastern edge of cemetery chainlink fence, and in large cottonwood (one of two trees) adjacent to stream east of the cemetery.

Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the Species or in supporting the identification): At 9:30 male vermilion was spotted doing long hovering flight displays above green field. Feathers seemed fluffed out. Then he would swoop down and land on the streamside fenceposts where a female vermilion was observed sitting. Male kept switching fenceposts. Subsequent but shorter flight displays observed. Male then observed perched on cemetery chain link fence. Finally, male observed performing repeated flycatching behavior—short flights and a return to same or nearby branch— from a high perch in a cottonwood tree, during last hour of observation. Perching Kestrel observed in cottonwood just to left of vermilion's tree. Female was not observed in cottonwood, nor anywhere else. Female was never observed flycatching.

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size and shape and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird(s). Describe other important details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches or copy field notes): Brilliant red and brown/black plumage of male, and size of bird made identification of male immediate. No lighter or white feathers observed. All plumage that should be red was red. Brown/black plumage was not mottled. Bill was short and small. Female was identified by pink belly, and lightly streaked white breast, lighter brown plumage on wings, tail, and back, and brown on head. Small brown bill. Dark eyes on both male and female. Flycatcher posture and flight.

Describe bird's call or song: Not certain about hearing any call. I am wondering if there was a call associated with the flight display which caused me to initially notice the male.

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: Nothing similar at all. All other red birds, tanagers, cardinals, are much larger in size and bill.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? Seen dozens in Arizona and Peru, and one vagrant male in Seattle area.

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation): National Geographic Field Guide (III) consulted afterwards to check plumage of female. Male is unmistakable without reference.

This report is from notes made just after March 26 observation

Date of written report: April 4, 2000

Reporting observer: Laurie Zuckerman

Signature: Laurie Zuckerman

Reporting Observer's Address: 906 Stover Street

City: Fort Collins

State: Colorado

Zip: 80524

Phone # 970-482-5589

Send report to:
Colorado Birds Record Committee
 c/o Bill Lisowsky
 2919 Silverplume Dr.
 Ft. Collins, Co. 80526

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS SIGHT RECORD FORM

Rcd 4/22/00
(2 photos)
tape

Species:

Vermillion Flycatcher Pyrocephalus rubinus
(Common Name) (Scientific Name)

Date of occurrence:

seen Saturday 4/9/00

Number of birds seen:

two

Sex:

Male and female

Plumage:

Adult

Exact location:

Higbee Cemetery

Elevation:

1290 meters, 4140 ft

County:

Otero

Nearest town:

La Junta

Length of Observation:

twenty minutes; bird was present and singing when I left.

Time of Observation:

7:30 to 7:50 AM

Other observers who saw the bird with you:

none

Other observers who independently saw the bird(s):

m. o. b.

Light conditions:

direct sunlight, clear skies, directly on bird, at right angles and behind the bird, and with the bird

flying directly overhead

Optical equipment used:

Swarovski SLC 10x40

Distance from bird (estimated unless otherwise noted):

thirty to fifty feet

Was the bird photographed?

yes

If so, have you submitted photos?

copies of photos included with report

Who took the photographs?

I did.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred:

High plains short grass prairie, with closely mowed grass in cemetery, longer grass outside the fence. Around the periphery of the cemetery were One-seeded Junipers, Siberian elm beginning to flower and leaf out, with a few fruit trees in the cemetery beginning to bud. There was an irrigation canal with water at the low end of the cemetery. There was a power line going over the cemetery

Describe the bird's behavior (flying; feeding; habits; behaviors used in identifying the species or in supporting the identification):

Male bird was very obvious, sitting in the open, flying out to catch insects but mostly flying up, with a wing fluttering flight, singing its "p p pit tsee" call repeatedly, somewhat reminiscent of the sound of the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, but softer and higher pitched. I was able to make a good sound recording of the bird.

Describe the bird in detail:

The birds were approximately the size of the House Finches that they conveniently sat near at one time. The birds sat upright in relatively exposed areas and were "flycatching" flying insects and behaving like a phoebe, sometimes pumping its tail. The male was brilliant red, somewhat like the Northern Cardinal but a little darker red, on its head throat undersides, flanks, crown and ventral areas. Its wings, back and tail were dark brown. The brown on the back went up to the nape and then through the auriculars and around a dark eye, giving somewhat of a "lone-ranger mask" appearance. The bill was small and dark. There were no wingbars. The bill was small and dark. The tail was medium length and slightly notched.

The female was the same size, but much different. It was lighter brown with slight olive cast on the backs and wings. The throat, breast and flanks were white with faint brownish streaking. The bill was small and dark. The auriculars were dark with a faint whitish eyebrow, giving it a look of having a dark cheek patch. The female was much less active, tended to stay in less visible perches. I did not hear it call.

Describe the bird's song and calls if heard:

"p p pit tsee" call repeatedly, somewhat reminiscent of the sound of the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, but softer and higher pitched. I was able to make a good sound recording of the bird.

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them:

There is really no bird that resembles the male!

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

I had just seen several pairs of Vermillion Flycatchers during a birding trip in South Texas the week before.

List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how this influenced you identification (during and after observation):

NGS Field Guide to the Birds of North America, second edition

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

Reporting observer:

David M. Elwonger MD
2500 Constellation Drive
Colorado Springs CO 80906

Signature: _____



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VERMILLION FLYCATCHER
HIGBEE CEMETERY
4/8/2000

photo by Elwonger

2000 - 87



VE FY

4/8/00

Hughes Cemetery

OTERO CO CO

CFO-ORC-FILE# _____

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS SIGHT RECORD FORM

Red 4/14/00 upl

~~Pyrocephalus~~

Results: _____

Species:

Vermilion Flycatcher

Pyrocephalus rubinus

Dates: 4/2/00**Number of birds seen:** 2**Sex:** 1 male and 1 female**Plumage:** adult**Locality:** Higbee cemetery**Elevation:** 4100 feet (from GPS reading)**Nearest town:** Higbee**County:** Otero**Time observed:** 11:25 am - 12:00 pm**Duration of observation:** visible about half the time so a total of 15 minutes**Other observers with you:** Ric Olson.**Other observers who saw the bird independently:** many including Brandon Percival and Mark Janos**Light conditions:** It was partly cloudy with the sun to my right.**Optical equipment:** Leica 10x42 binoculars, Swarovski 80mm scope - zoomed to about 40 power.**Distance from bird:** Estimated to be 100 meters for the closest views to 200 meters for the longer views, although the male flew within 30 or 40 feet once.**Describe the bird's behavior:** They usually perched about 5 to 10 feet up in a tree or on a low fence post. They would stay perched for a couple of minutes at a time before flying up in typical flycatcher fashion - sometimes returning to the same perch and sometimes flying to another perch out of sight.**Describe the bird (what you actually saw):****Head:** The male's head was bright red except for a dark band through the eyes and around the back of the head. The female's head was brown.**Back, Wings & Tail:** The male's were dark. The wing tips were just past the base of the tail. The female was a lighter brown.**Bare parts:** Dark bill.**Underparts:** The breast and belly of the male were bright red. The female was pink under the tail. The belly had a light wash of pink**Size:** A Say's Phoebe occupied the same perch as the female (the longer view) once and appeared bigger although I did not see them together.

bwq

Describe the bird's song and call if heard: not noted, but I think it was silent.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird: It was in medium trees in a mostly grassy area near a cemetery and farmhouse near a small stream or canal.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species:

I know of no other birds with a bright red head, breast, and belly and with a dark brown stripe through the eye with dark brown wings, tail, and back.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species: I have seen many Vermillion Flycatchers in California, Texas, and Arizona.

List books if they helped in your identification: Not really needed.

This report was written from notes taken during x, or after observation or from memory . I spoke into a microcassette recorder while observing the bird and later transcribed the recording to paper.

Reporting observer:

David W. Quesenberry

Signature: David W. Quesenberry

Address:

6254 S. Elmira CIR E

Englewood, CO 80111

Red 5/21/00 upl

SPECIES: VERMILION FLYCATCHER | PYROCEPHALUS RUBINUS
 (Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)

DATE(S): 4/13/00 TIME OF OBSERVATION: 10:30 TO 11:00

EXACT LOCATION: HIGBER CEMETERY

NEAREST TOWN: LA JUNTA

COUNTY: _____

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THIS BIRD:

MANY OBSERVERS INCLUDING DAVE LEATHERMAN AND DAVE ELY

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: BAUSCH & LOMB ELITE 10 X 42 BINOCULARS

WEATHER CONDITIONS: SUNNY

BIRD/SUN ORIENTATION: BIRD IN FRONT, SUN BEHIND AND TO LEFT

DISTANCE FROM BIRD AND HOW MEASURED: 40 YDS APPROXIMATED

NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: 1 SEX: MALE PLUMAGE: BREEDING

BEHAVIOR AND DEMEANOR: THE BIRD WAS SITTING ON THE LOWER BARE BRANCHES OF A COTTONWOOD TREE AND WOULD FLY OUT IN TYPICAL FLYCATCHER FASHION BOTH TOWARDS THE GROUND AND IN THE AIR. IT THEN FLEW TO THE TOP STRAND OF A BARBED WIRE FENCE. FROM HERE IT WOULD FLY TO THE GROUND AND BACK TO THE FENCE

HEAD & NECK (forehead, crown, auricular & malar regions, median line, etc.): CROWN BRIGHT FIRE-ENGINE RED EXTENDING FROM FOREHEAD TO TOP OF NAPE

EYES & LORES (supercilium, eye-ring, eye-stripe, color, etc.): EYE DARK, SURROUNDED BY A VERY POUNDNCEA BROWNISH-GRAY EYE STRIPE WHICH BROADENED BEHIND THE EYE AND WRAPPED AROUND TO NAPE
 LOWER & UPPER MANDIBLES (color & shape): BILL DARK AND FINE

LEGS & FEET: DID NOT NOTICE

UPPERPARTS (nape, back, rump, uppertail coverts, etc.): SAME BROWNISH-GRAY EXTENDING UNIFORMLY FROM NAPE TO RUMP WITH NO STREAKING OR OTHER BREAKS

UNDERPARTS (chin, throat, belly, sides, flanks, crissum, etc.): FIRE-ENGINE RED (SAME AS CROWN) EXTENDING UNIFORMLY FROM THROAT TO UNDERTAIL COVERTS WITH NO STREAKING OR OTHER BREAKS,

RETRICES (inner, middle & outer tail feathers; color, pattern, shape, etc.):
TAIL DARK BROWNISH-GRAY 1/2 SHADE DARKER THAN BACK
AND RUMP

WINGS (color, length, shape, bars, coverts, etc.): WINGS BROWNISH-
GRAY, SAME COLOR AS BACK

VOCALIZATION (call/song, method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight):
NONE THAT I HEARD

HABITAT: OPEN WOODED AREA WITH FLOWING WATER

ELIMINATION OF SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

ONLY SMALLER BIRD WITH THIS COLOR PATTERN; NORTHERN
CARDINAL (ANOTHER BRIGHT RED BIRD) IS LARGER WITH CREST
AND BLACK FACE NOT EXTENDING TO NAPE AND ALL RED BACK.
TANAGERS SLIGHTLY LARGER AND ALL RED; SCARLET Tanager
HAS DARK WINGS AND TAIL, BUT STILL HAS RED BACK. FINCHES
HAVE STREAKED BROWN ON WHITE OR PINK ON WHITE UNDERSIDES,
AND CONSIDERABLE STREAKING ON BACK

PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

I HAVE PREVIOUSLY SEEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED MALE VERMILION
FLYCATCHER IN COLORADO AND HAVE OBSERVED VERMILION
FLYCATCHERS IN TEXAS AND ARIZONA. I HAVE SEEN
NUMEROUS CARDINALS IN COLORADO AND OTHER STATES.
I AM QUITE FAMILIAR WITH FINCHES AND HAVE SEEN THREE
OF THE FOUR TANAGERS IN COLORADO INCLUDING SCARLET
Tanager.

BOOKS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND ADVICE CONSULTED THAT INFLUENCED THIS REPORT:

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

THIS REPORT WRITTEN FROM NOTES MADE DURING ☒ AFTER ☒ OBSERVATION; ☐ FROM MEMORY

NAME: JOE MAMMOSER SIGNATURE: Joseph Mammoser DATE: 4/20/00

Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

(This is a two-page report. Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if ne

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Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

Rcd 2/5/01 upe

CFO-RC FILE X:

RESULTS:

Species:(Common Name): VERMILLION FLYCATCHER

(Scientific Name) *Pyrocephalus rubinus*

Date(s) of occurrence: 15 April 2000

Number of birds seen: One

Sex: Male

Plumage: Adult

Exact Location: Southeast corner of Higsbee Cemetery

County: Otero

Nearest town: Higsbee

Elevation: 4200 msl

Length of observation: Approximately 10 minutes off and on

Time(s) of observation: Roughly 8:00 AM MDST

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Brandon Percival, Tony Leukering, Doug Faulkner

Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s):

Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position: Overcast

Optical equipment used: 8 x 40 Binoculars

Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): Varied between 80 and 200 feet.

Was bird(s) photographed? No

If so, have you submitted photos?

Who took the photographs?

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: Large Cottonwoods along fencerow leading towards cemetery. Open rangeland surrounding treeline.

Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the Species or in supporting the identification): The bird perched in a vertical, upright stance, typical of flycatchers. When perched, the tail was pumped often similar to a phoebe. In flight, the bird was observed foraging by swooping down towards the ground from its perch and returning to an exposed branch.

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size and shape and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird(s). Describe other important details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches or copy field notes):

The bird was obviously a small flycatcher, being pewee-sized but chunkier with a shorter tail. The head was large (relative to the body) and peaked at the rear crown and the wings were short. The forehead, crown, throat, lower cheeks, breast, belly, and undertail coverts were a bright red. The small, thin bill was entirely black. Black lores extended through the eye (narrowly toward the bill) and broadened posteriorly to the nape. The black on the nape extended from the post crown posteriorly through the mantle, wings, and tail. The legs were also black.

The bird perched in a vertical, upright stance, typical of flycatchers. When perched, the tail was pumped often similar to a phoebe. In flight, the bird was observed foraging by swooping down towards the ground from its perch and returning to an exposed branch.

Describe bird's call or song: The bird called a few times. The typical, emphatic "whit-a-see" call was diagnostic.

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: No other flycatcher exhibits the contrasting red and black plumage.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? My prior experience with Vermillion Flycatchers is extensive. I have observed many in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona in the past.

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation):

This report is from notes made during or after XX observation or later from memory

Date of written report: 12/18/00

Reporting observer: Larry Semo

Signature:

Larry Semo

Reporting Observer's Address: 9054 Dover Street

City: Westminster

State: Colorado

Zip: 80021

RC FILE # _____
RESULTS: _____

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM
(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE. ATTACH PHOTOGRAPHS, DRAWINGS AND ADDITIONAL PAGES AS NECESSARY)

SPECIES: Vermillion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*

DATE(S) OF OBSERVATION: August 13, 2000

NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: 2

SEX: female and juvenile

PLUMAGE: juvenile plumage with heavy brown streaking on breast; first year female plumage with yellow undertail coverts.

EXACT LOCATION: Higbee Cemetery in Purgatoire Canyon.

COUNTY: Otero

NEAREST TOWN: La Junta, CO

ELEVATION: _____

LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: 15 minutes

TIME(S) OF OBSERVATION: 3:45 Sunday, August 13th

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO SAW THE BIRD(S) WITH YOU: Tom Mathies

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY SAW THE BIRD(S): none

LIGHT CONDITIONS (QUALITY; DIRECTION RELATIVE TO BIRD(S); POSITION): Sunny, good light

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED: Nikon 10x binoculars

DISTANCE FROM BIRD: Looking up 10 feet into branches

WAS BIRD PHOTOGRAPHED? no

DESCRIBE THE GENERAL AND SPECIFIC HABITAT IN WHICH THE BIRD(S) OCCURRED: One juvenile female had a very yellow rump. The other juvenile was younger and with brown spot/stripes on breast, dark tail, light eyebrow. Both were in the southeastern part of the cemetery in the tallest tree, I believe a cottonwood next to the picnic tables. They sat and flitted around the bare branches together and then the female took off over into the field to the south. The other juvenile stayed in the branches and was observed for about fifteen minutes. No sign of either adult..

DESCRIBE THE BIRD'S BEHAVIOR (FLYING; FEEDING; HABITS; BEHAVIORS USED IN IDENTIFYING THE SPECIES OR IN SUPPORTING THE IDENTIFICATION): See above

DESCRIBE THE BIRD IN DETAIL. THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THIS REPORT. INCLUDE THE OVERALL SIZE AND SHAPE AND HOW YOU PLACED THE BIRD IN THE GENERAL GROUP THAT YOU DID. GIVE COMPLETE DETAILS OF PLUMAGE, INCLUDING HEAD, THROAT, UNDERSIDES, NAPE, BACK, WINGS AND TAIL. GIVE PARTICULAR EMPHASIS TO MARKS YOU USED TO IDENTIFY THE BIRD(S). DESCRIBE OTHER DETAILS, SUCH AS COLOR AND SHAPE OF BILL, LEGS, EYE, ETC. THAT WERE IMPORTANT IN MAKING THE IDENTIFICATION. (FILL OUT THIS PORTION EVEN IF PHOTOGRAPHS ARE SUBMITTED; YOU MAY ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS, DRAWINGS, FIELD SKETCHES OR COPY OF FIELD NOTES):

Plumage exactly matches Juvenile plumage in Sibley guide. Female (first year) plumage also matches Sibley drawing but had softer streaking on breast. Appeared fat less streaky than the juvenile.

DESCRIBE BIRD'S CALL OR SONG: high-pitched, one note peeps

DISCUSS SIMILAR SPECIES AND HOW YOU ELIMINATED THEM: Nothing to be confused with.

WHAT IS YOUR PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES? A lot of familiarity, as well as prior Colorado record of adult V. flycatchers. Not as familiar with juvenile or first year female plumage.

LIST BOOKS, GUIDES, RECORDINGS OR OTHER SOURCES CONSULTED AND HOW THIS INFLUENCED YOUR IDENTIFICATION (DURING AND AFTER OBSERVATION):

National Geographic, third edition; Sibley Guide to Birds

THIS REPORT WAS MADE FROM NOTES MADE AFTER OBSERVATION.

DATE OF WRITTEN REPORT: Original sighting report sent to Brandon Percival 8/17/00. This record report written 12/28/00.

REPORTING OBSERVER: Laurie Zuckerman

SIGNATURE: _____

OBSERVER ADDRESS: 906 Stover Street Fort Collins, CO 80524-3415 970-482-5589

SEND REPORT TO:
COLORADO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE
c/o BILL LISOWSKY
1059 PLEASANT HILL CHURCH RD.
CADIZ, KY 42211