

1997-91
ACCEPTED 7-0

CFO-ORC FILE # 1997-91

rec'd 6-5-97v

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS
SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD

UNUSUAL RECORD X

Species:

(Vernacular Name): Prairie Warbler

(Scientific Name): Dendroica pinus

Date(s): 6/01/97

Number of birds seen: 1

Sex: male

Plumage: breeding

Locality: Bonny Reservoir, Yuma County at the spot numbered 2 in the recent Harold Holt "Birder's Guide to Colorado".

Elevation: ?

Nearest Town: Hale

Time(s) observed: 8:30 am to 8:40 am and about 10:00 am to 10:10 am

Duration of observation: 20 minutes.

Other observers with you (names, addresses, phone numbers):

Gail Evans

(303)758-2231

1480 S. Jasmine Way

Denver, CO 80224

Also several participants in DFO/Denver Audubon trip led by the Kingery's (except the Kingery's were elsewhere and did not see the warbler with us) including

Bob Spencer.

Other observers who saw the bird independently:

Dan Bridges

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light): Bright and sunny. Sun behind us and shining through very light clouds.

Optical equipment used: Leica 10X42 binoculars.

Distance, and how measured: Estimated at 20 to 40 feet up by just guessing and we were anywhere from 20 to 50 feet away on the ground.

If photographed, type of equipment and film: I took about 5 photographs with a Sigma 400 APO Macro lens on a Canon EOS A2E using Fuji Sensia 200 color slide film.

Who else photographed the bird? N/A

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying): The bird stayed in the top fourth of the cottonwoods. It would move to a small twig sized branched and perch and sing. It stayed still for several seconds sometimes and sometimes moved fairly steadily. When moving it did not fly far from the tree, instead it usually just moved a few inches at a time, although it would occasionally fly between trees. It sang constantly.

Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern. Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observe in the field: Gail and I were actually leaving to go home. We had the windows open and heard the warbler as we drove by. We both

immediately exclaimed, "What is that?!" I stopped the car and we got out. It took a few minutes to find it but we both recognized it immediately as a Prairie Warbler. It had a black eye line and a black mustache curving under the eye. The throat was pure yellow. The breast was also yellow and the belly was yellowish but much paler than the breast and throat. Short black stripes extended along the sides of the neck on down the flanks almost to the coverts. The stripes faded to gray near the coverts. It had two faint pale yellowish wing bars. The back was greenish with the rump and head more yellow and paler than the back and upper tail.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration): The song was delivered from a perch on a twig. It was a series of high-pitched buzzy notes that rose in pitch and sometimes ended in a longer note that was 2 or 3 times as long in duration as the beginning notes. Each song was somewhere around 7-10 notes long although they were quick enough that I couldn't really count them. The song was obviously fairly loud since we heard it as we drove by (going probably about 20 MPH).

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird: The southern end of a narrow grove of cottonwood trees extending from a riparian lakeside toward grassland.

Previous experience with the species: I have seen perhaps a dozen before.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

I believe that the combination of black eye line, moustache, and flank stripes and yellow underparts is unique.

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) **at time of observation:** We looked at the NGS guide but we already knew what it was.

b) **after observation:** none

This report was written from reports made during XX,
after observation --, from memory --

Date and time report was written: 5:00 pm, 6/01/97

Reporting observer: David W. Quesenberry

Signature:

David W. Quesenberry

Address: 6254 S ELMIRA CIR
ENGLEWOOD, CO 80111

Return to:

Mark Janos
10 Sedum Ct.
Pueblo, CO 81001

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTING

1997-91

Species: Prairie Warbler

Date(s): 1 June 1997

Time seen: 10:30-10:45

rec'd 6-3-97

Locality: North side of Republican River, near Foster Grove campground, Bonny State Park

Latilong: 14 Optical equipment: 8x40 binoculars

Number of birds seen: one Sex: Male Plumage: Alternate

Light conditions: Sunny, bright

Distance from bird: 60 feet

Weather at time of observation: clear, warm, sunny

Prior weather & number of days since change: Storm two nights before but clear the previous day and night. Major thunder and hailstorm on May 27.

Describe habitat: String of cottonwoods about 50 feet high lining Republican River; extensive cattail marsh on south, cottonwood forest on north.

Describe behavior: Singing in treetops, pausing to feed on insects between songs.

Field marks observed: size, color, pattern, shape, bill, etc.: Urling first heard song (described below). Yellow warbler with entirely yellow breast; black stripes on upper side of breast. Very yellow face with black lines including black lines through and under eye; yellow around eye. Back greenish. Wing bars.

Bird's call or song: Rising "zee-zee-zee-zee-zee" distinctive and diagnostic in itself.

Field marks not seen: Top of head, tail spots. Bird seemed much yellower on back than greenish gray depicted in Nat'l Geographic Field Guide. However, we viewed it 50 feet up in the crowns of the cottonwoods and had little opportunity to inspect its top side.

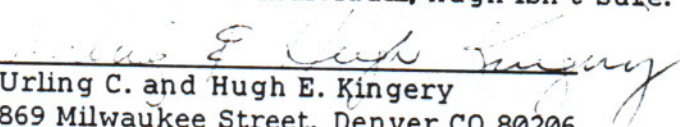
Similar species: Townsend's, Black-throated Green, Hermit, Golden-cheeked, Grace's, Yellow-throated all have white bellies. Manolia has no yellow on face but does have gray (which this bird lacked). Prairie's song diagnostic. Other yellow-bellied birds lack facial markings and wing bars.

Prior experience: Urling especially has heard and seen dozens of Prairies in Florida for the past 3 years. We also saw one 3 years ago in a shelter belt 4-5 miles west of this sighting.

Other observers: Chuck Walter, Carolyn Kerchek, Dan Bridges.

Description from: Notes taken in field immediately after observation.

Note: Dave Quisenberry and Gail Evans, and others in our DAS/DFO party, observed a Prairie Warbler from 9:00-10:00 a.m. Their bird sang vigorously in treetops across the cattail marsh 800 feet south of this observation (on a dike where the Bonny perimeter road turns south to cross Plainsman Creek). Urling thinks our bird was a second individual; Hugh isn't sure.


Urling C. and Hugh E. Kingery
869 Milwaukee Street, Denver CO 80206