

CFO-ORC FILE # 52-96-79
Accepted 7-0

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS
SIGHT RECORD FORM

rec'd 12-7-96

NEW STATE RECORD

UNUSUAL RECORD X

Species:

(Vernacular Name): Prothonotary Warbler

(Scientific Name): Protonotaria citrea

Date(s): 9/29/96 - 10/16/96

Number of birds seen: 1

Sex: Male

Plumage: mature

Locality: Arapahoe Lake housing development, about 2 blocks NE of intersection of Dayton & Caley.

Elevation: 6000 FEET

Nearest Town: Greenwood Village, CO

Time(s) observed: initially 12:50 pm to 1:00 pm, also observed on many other days at all times from about 8:00 am to 5:30 pm.

Duration of observation: initial observation was 10 minutes.

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

No other birder was with me on the initial observation, however this bird was very cooperative and many DFO members saw it over the 2 week period, including Bob Spencer (with me), Gail Evans, Lea Ann & Bob Brown, Ric Olson (with me), Joe TenBrink, Dick Schottler (with me), George Ambrust (with me), and Carl Stecher (with me, sp?).

Other observers who saw the bird independently: see above

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light): I saw this bird in all kinds of light, including bright overhead sunshine with the bird in all positions including upside down, sideways, and perched in plain view on a railroad tie.

Optical equipment used: Leica 10X42 binoculars

Distance, and how measured: Often so close you didn't need binoculars (indeed couldn't focus that close).

If photographed, type of equipment and film: I photographed it using an Olympus OM1 with a 200 mm zoom lens and using Kodak 200 ASA film. I am not sending in the photographs because they are not so hot and I don't think the id is difficult, but I will send a couple in if you request.

Who else photographed the bird? Carl Stecher also took some photos.

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying): The warbler spent most of the time in large willows that had branches overhanging the lake. It generally foraged for insects in branches about eye level to about 10 feet above the ground. Occasionally it would forage on the ground for a little while. It also liked some small purple berries on a bush near the lake. It moved slower than Yellow-rumped Warblers and Orange-crowned Warblers that were sometimes around. The bird acted somewhat like a chickadee in that it would hang upside sometimes. It generally stayed on branches with no fly catching behavior like the yellow-rumps. Sometimes, after I had observed the warbler for a while, it would take off in a beeline for the other end of the lake. When it did that it would emit one sharp, loud chip just as it took off.

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: On a nice Sunday afternoon my wife convinced me (with some difficulty) to go for a walk around Arapahoe Lake with our dogs during halftime of the Broncos game. As we were coming back I noticed a very yellow bird at about eye level in a tree ahead of us. The bird was clearly warbler sized, although it seemed a bit on the large size to me. The bill had a slight down curve and was dark on top and slightly pinkish underneath. The underparts were white from the middle of the belly back. The tail was white on the bottom with a dark border visible from below. I noted occasional flashes of white on the top part of the tail as the bird flitted around. Dark eyes stood out in a yellow face. The color was a bright warm yellow on the face, breast, throat, upper belly, neck, and extended all around the nape of the neck and top of the head. The very top of the head was mostly yellow but had a distinct greenish tint that was visible at close range. The back was greenish and the wings were darker than the back. There were no wing bars. The legs were dark but not quite black.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration): The warbler never sung. The call was a very sharp and loud chip, heard only when it left an area.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird: Arapahoe Lake is a small lake in the middle of a housing development that is 15 to 20 years old. There are many mature trees in the area, including cottonwoods, large willows, and conifers. It is kind of a home grown riparian area.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

Blue-winged Warbler: no wing bars, no eye-stripe

Yellow, Hooded, Wilson's Warbler: white underparts, dark back and wings

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

a) at time of observation: none

b) after observation: Warblers Of The Americas. I used this mostly to sex the bird. I decided it was a male because the head and nape of the neck were much brighter yellow than the female shown. I am still puzzled by the slight greenish tint on the top of the head visible at close range. Also, I could find no reference to a pinkish color under the lower bill as I observed on this bird.

This report was written from reports made during ____, after observation - the description was written using notes written within 5 minutes of the initial observation -, **from memory** - the rest was written from memory.

Date and time report was written: 5:00 pm, 11/23/96

Reporting observer: David W. Quesenberry

Signature: *David W. Quesenberry*

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