

1997-95

ACCEPTED 7-0

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

PROTHONOTARY WARBLERProtonotaria citreaLocation: Lamar Community College/Willow Creek; Lamar, Prowers County, ColoradoDate: May 4-5, 1997Setting:

I was birding with Brandon Percival when we discovered this bird at 3:45 p.m. We observed it on the 4th for about 10 minutes initially. When we first found it we were walking parallel to the asphalt drive behind the college, heading south. We were walking in the manicured lawn part of the area, right along the edge of the marsh, where Russian olive and currant were quite heavy. The bird first flew up from the ground where it was bathing in a puddle. After it bathed for a few minutes, it flew up and perched in the open, about 10' high. It looked rather soggy and forlorn. It dried out and shook itself off as we watched. We observed the bird again (along with many others) on the 5th where it foraged and fed high in the trees near the creek. Once we had the male Blue-winged Warbler and the Prothonotary in the same binocular view. On the 4th, total distance to the bird was about 15' 25'.

Description:

The bird was an adult male. It was a stocky, plump warbler (about 5"), with a short tail. It had a black, slender, sharp, chisel-shaped bill - quite large for a warbler. The head and undersides were a brilliant, pure yellow. The undertail coverts were white. The undertail showed white spots. The back and nape were dull greenish-gray. The wings and tail were bluish-gray. The eye was black and striking in the middle of the brilliant yellow face. The legs and feet were black.

Similar Species:

The only other mainly yellow-headed warblers are: Blue-winged (wingbars; black eye-line); Orange-crowned and Tennessee (lack blue-gray wings and tails); Yellow (streaked below; lacks blue-gray wings and tail; has yellow undertail coverts); and Wilson's (smaller; lacks white undertail coverts; has tiny bill).

Experience with Species:

I have seen all the warblers mentioned above. I've seen three previous Prothonotary Warblers in Colorado and quite a few in other parts of the country.

This report is prepared from notes made at the time of observation.

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