

1998-129

ACCEPTED (70)

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - Rarity Report Form

Common Name: Prothonotary Warbler **Scientific Name:** *Protonotaria citrea*
Number of Individuals: One. **Sex:** Male. **Age:** Adult.
Locality: Colorado: Crow Valley Campground, Pawnee National Grasslands, Weld County:
Date(s) Seen: 26 May 1998 **Time:** 8:15 - 9:15am
Reporting Observer: Christopher L. Wood, 3465 S. Otis Court, Lakewood, CO 80227
Other Observers: Norma Erickson and others.
Light Conditions: Sunny, though shaded by canopy. **Optical Equipment:** B&L Elite 10 * 42 binoculars.
Distance to Bird: 3-20 meters **Duration of Observation:** 5 minutes in view; 1 hour overall.
Habitat: N side of Crow Valley Campground along creekbed, which had at least two feet of running water. Creekbed covered by sapling cottonwoods.

As I was walking along the N side of Crow Valley, I heard a loud ringing "zweet, zweet, zweet, zweet, zweet," which I immediately recognized as a Prothonotary Warbler. I made a tape recording, which was identifiable, though not good because of the wind. I searched unsuccessfully for about 30 minutes, also trying to bring the bird in with the recording I made. I eventually gave up when I stopped hearing the bird. As I returned to the car, I bumped into Norma Erickson. I played her the recording I made, at which point the Prothonotary started singing. We eventually had great looks at the bird as it sang from low in the cottonwoods.

Description: A large chunky warbler. Bright golden head, hindneck and underparts, becoming more white on belly. Sharp contrast between gold nape and greenish back (which had a warm orange-yellow hue). Slate gray rump and uppertail coverts. Undertail coverts white. Blue-gray greater coverts and flight feathers, contrasting with greenish median and lesser coverts. Blue-gray retricies (same color as flight feathers) showing large white oval spots (inner webs) in flight and when tail opened. Heavy black bill (for a warbler), and dark legs and eye.

Behavior: Singing frequently from low in cottonwoods. Not very responsive to playback.

Vocalizations: A loud ringing "zweet, zweet, zweet, zweet, zweet." Sometimes singing more notes, though always on the same pitch.

Similar Species: Blue-winged Warbler has very different vocalizations, is smaller, with black eye line, and white wing bars. Yellow Warbler also has very different vocalizations, lacks blue-gray on wings and tail, and is smaller overall, with smaller bill.

Tape recordings / Photos? Poor tape recordings will be sent at the end of 1998 with other recordings made during 1998.

References:

Dunn, J. and K. Garrett. 1997. *A Field Guide to Warblers of North America*. T. Schultz and C. House, illus. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Description from: ____ Contemporaneous notes; __xx__ Later notes; ____ Memory.

Experience with Species: I saw and heard hundreds while working in Grant County, Wisconsin, on the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas in 1996. I've also seen a handful in Colorado.

Are you Positive of the Identification? Yes.

Signature: Chris UC 7-6-98