

1997-87

ACCEPTED 7-0

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER

Dendroica fusca

Location: Valco Ponds; Pueblo; Pueblo County; Colorado

Date: September 27, 1997 (also seen on September 16)

This bird was found by Brandon Percival.

I saw this bird early on the morning of the 27th. Brandon Percival and I were birding the riparian area near Valco Ponds along the Arkansas River. We watched the bird for about 20 min., at 7:15 a.m., and then nearly continuously as it foraged at medium heights in the trees above us (about 10 - 30 feet up). We watched it with our binoculars at distances of about 20-50 feet. The conditions and observation was quite good.

Description:

The bird was a fall immature female. It was quite easy to observe and as it foraged actively in the middle and upper levels of mixed deciduous trees. It paused long enough for us to observe it well and at length. It was small (about 5" long), slim and short-tailed. It had a short, dark sharp bill. The uppersides were overall dark, blackish. The crown and back were blackish-brown. The back was faintly streaked with paler streaks. It had a pale stripe on either side of the back, on the scapulars. The wings and short tail were black. It had two clear white wingbars. The undersides were yellowish. The throat was yellow with a vaguely orange tint. The breast, flanks were yellow but the belly and undertail were white. There was indistinct, smudgy blackish streaks on the flanks. The face showed a shadowy patch in the shape of the male's face patch (darkish cheek framed with yellow and a yellow dot below the eye). The eyes, legs and feet were blackish.

Similar Species:

The small size, slim shape and small, pointed bill indicate a warbler. The short tail, yellowish undersides and flank streaking eliminate all but a few fall female Dendroicas. Townsend's would have a more streaked breast, less yellow underparts and lack the pale back streaks. Yellow-rumped has a yellow rump. The white/pale diagonal streaks on the back are diagnostic for this species. Cape May Warbler lacks the face patch, is heavier streaked and has a yellowish rump.

Experience with Species:

I have seen Blackburnian Warbler five times before in Colorado.

This report is prepared from notes made after observation.

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