

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLERDendroica fuscaLocation: Valco Ponds; Pueblo; Pueblo County; ColoradoDate: September 2, 1998

This bird was found by Brandon Percival.

I saw this bird early on the morning of the 2nd with Rachel Kolokoff, Brandon Percival, Bob Dickson and B.B. Hahn. We watched the bird for about 30 min., at 7:45 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 - bright sun and still. It had a loud, sharp chip that first led up to its location. The bird was small and active, and active wing flicking and tail cocking as it fed.

Description:

The bird was a fall male. It was quite easy to observe and as it foraged actively in the middle and upper levels of mixed deciduous trees. We discovered in low down though, about head height as it fed in a small Russian Olive. 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 back was dark, blackish-green with two light diagonal scapular lines (diagnostic for this species). The facial pattern was a smudgy, washed-out version of the adult breeding-plumaged male's and there was a dark pointed extension of the framed face, down into the upper throat. The crown was dark. The underparts were yellow fore and white aft. The chest was a richer, deeper yellow with orange tones. The lower belly and undertail were white with a faint yellow wash across the vent and undertail. The bird had two distinct, strong, white wingbars. 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 six times before in Colorado.

This report is prepared from notes made after observation.

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