

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER
Dendroica fusca

ACCEPT 7-0
 Red 1/20/00 upl

Location: Lake Henry grove; near Ordway; Crowley County; Colorado

Date: May 15, 1999

This bird was found by others at least one day previously.

I found this bird at about 1:00 p.m. while birding with Vic Zerbi. Vic also saw the bird. We watched it for about 10 minutes from very close range (20-50 feet). There was bright sun. We observed it with binoculars (mine are B&L 10x40 Elites). It foraged very slowly and was hard to find and re-see. It stayed in heavy foliage at medium to high heights in the cottonwoods at the north edge of the grove

Description:

The bird was an adult male in breeding plumage. It was quite small warbler about 4-5" long. It was slim and quite short-tailed (with white undertail spots). Its bill was black, small, pointed, straight, sharp and thin. It was a bright and beautiful bird. It had a brilliant, bright orange forehead and stripe up through the center of the fore-crown. Its face, chin, throat and upper breast also were a clear, bright orange. There was an odd-shaped, irregular black patch on the face, and a black eyeline. There was a tiny orange crescent below the eye. The orange breast contrasted sharply with the white belly and whitish undertail coverts. The white flanks were sharply streaked with black. The cap was black, as were the nape, back and wings. There were two pale, off-white diagonal stripes up the back ("railroad tracks"). It had a large white wing patch. The eyes, legs and feet were black.

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 seven times before in Colorado.

This report is prepared from notes made during and after observation.

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