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COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER

Dendroica virens

Location: Between the Rock Canyon picnic area and Valco Ponds (below Pueblo Res. dam); Pueblo County; Colorado

Date: September 26, 1993

Setting:

I was birding alone, about 5:00 p.m., working a line of cottonwoods and tamarisk with interspersed Russian olives. The warbler was bold and fairly bright. It worked along the lower branches and foliage of a cottonwood, about 8-15 feet off the ground. It foraged silently by probing with its small, slender bill. I was able to watch it in good light with my binoculars at distances of about 30-100 feet. I watched it for about 10 minutes until I lost it from sight.

Description:

The bird was small and slim, slightly smaller than a Yellow-rumped Warbler. It appeared most like a female Townsend's Warbler. It was mainly a yellow and white warbler and was quite bright compared to the duller Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped warblers around me. Above it was evenly dull green without any streaking. The rump was the same color as the back. The wings were dark gray and had two distinct white wing bars. The face, chin and throat were yellow with a indistinct, grayish auricular patch. There was a band of black across the breast and a few black streaks down the flanks. The undersides were other wise pure white. I looked for, and tried to see, any yellow wash on the undertail coverts but they appeared white in the field. The tail was medium-long and gray. The eyes and legs were dark.

Similar Species:

The I.D. was not too difficult in the field as this was quite a bright warbler. I believe that it was a female or perhaps a fall male. Blackburnian would show buffy lines on back and would lack black across the chest; Magnolia would have a yellow rump and gray head; Yellow-rumped would not have the bright face pattern, would be much less yellow on the face and would have a yellow rump; Townsend's is the closest but they typically (though not always) have a streaked back, blackish crown, yellow belly, and a much darker, more pronounced, blackish ear patch.

Experience with Species:

I have Black-throated Green Warblers in Colorado, and in large numbers in Maine in May 1993. I've seen all the other similar warblers in North America.

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

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