1998-119

ACCEPTED (7-0)

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - Rarity Report Form

Common Name: Black-throated Blue Warbler. **Scientific Name:** *Dendroica caerulescens.*
Number of Individuals: One. **Sex:** Male. **Age:** Adult.
Locality: Colorado: Dolores, Montezuma **County:**
Date(s) Seen: 28 June 1998 **Time:** 8:15 – 8:20 p.m.
Reporting Observer: Christopher L. Wood, 3465 South Otis Court, Lakewood, Colorado 80227
Other Observers: None.
Light Conditions: Sunny. **Optical Equipment:** B& L Elite 10 * 42 binoculars.
Distance to Bird: 10 meters. **Duration of Observation:** 8 minutes.
Habitat: Residential area in small town. The bird favored a flowering apple tree.

On 28 June 1998 I was waiting for Scott Gillihan of the Colorado Bird Observatory in the town of Dolores, Montezuma County, Colorado. After about twenty minutes, I decided to walk around the town to see if I could find any birds. I soon heard a Black-throated Blue Warbler; a bird I am familiar with given my work on the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas. After a couple minutes I found it foraging in a flowering apple tree. I returned to see if Scott had arrived and to get my tape recorder. Unfortunately, I was never able to find the bird (or Scott) for the rest of the day. Andrews and Righter (1992) report no west slope records. Indeed, there may be only one or two previous records for the west slope, and this is likely the first spring record (Brandon Percival, pers comments).

Description: Size of Chestnut-sided Warbler. Rich slate-blue upperparts. Black auriculars, throat, sides of neck, sides and flanks. White breast, belly, and undertail coverts. Blue-black wings with conspicuous white wing patch at base of primaries.

Behavior: Feeding on buds of the apple tree or perhaps on insects contained in the buds. It seemed to prefer the middle and lower layers of vegetation.

Vocalizations: Every thirty seconds or so, the bird sang a buzzy "Zeer, zeer, zeer, ZREEE?" The first notes were evenly pitched, descending slightly. The last note was rich and ascending. (Much slower and not as high-pitched, as Cerulean Warbler. Also only one rising note.)

Similar Species: Adult male Black-throated Blue Warbler unmistakable. Cerulean Warbler smaller, has wing bars, streaked flanks, lacks black on face and throat, and has either a prominent white supercilium (spring females) or narrow band across chest (spring males).

Tape recordings / Photos? None.

References:

Andrews, R. and B. Righter. 1992. *Colorado Birds: a Reference to their Distribution and Habitat.* Denver: Denver Museum of Natural History.

Curson, J., D. Quinn and D. Beadle. 1994. *Warblers of the Americas: an Identification Guide.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

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: Notes taken ten minutes after observation.

Experience with Species: While working on the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas last summer I had breeding Black-throated Blues in five blocks. I also saw them annually in migration.

Are you Positive of the Identification? Yes.

Signature: Chris L Wood
Date: 7-6-98