DOCUMENTATION --
RARE BIRD SIGHTING

1998-120
ACCEPTED (7-0)

MOUNTAIN WEST REGION
AMERICAN BIRDS

Species: Black-throated blue warbler
(Vernacular name)

Dendroica caerulescens
(Scientific name)

✓ rec'd 12/98

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students--those studying occurrences 50 years from now--must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Date (s): Nov. 17, 1998 Time Bird Seen: 7 A.M. to 7:05 A.M.

Locality: Animas Valley, 8 mi. from Durango, CO. in La Plata Co.
Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Bausch + Lomb 7x26 custom compact binocs.

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ♂ Plumage: _____

Light conditions: Good; sun not quite over Missionary Ridge.

Distance from bird, and how measured: 25' measured with tape.

Describe the bird's overall behavior: Bird was feeding in remaining leaves of pear tree directly outside picture window, moving from branchlet to branchlet.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:
corner of yard is dominated by a weeping willow tree beneath which are several fruit trees in a line N. to S. Yard on east is bordered by irrigation ditch and rose (wild) hedge. Some conifers also.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):

_____

_____

_____

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough.) Describe what you actually saw in the field.

Bird was small, slightly larger than a ringlet which visits our orchard on a regular basis. Warbler shape. Blue-grey above with black bib and small white spot on wing and very white underneath. Black on sides of face and on sides, contrasting with white. Tail only very slightly rounded.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery--i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

No sounds audible.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Nothing is very similar to this sp. Other possibilities in my mind before I saw the bird thru binocs were ruby-crowned Kinglet and yellow-rumped warbler both of which frequent our yard. Neither resembles bird being considered.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

On 10-28-92 a black-throated blue warbler—also a male—came to feed in the same part of the yard only in a snowball bush.

This report was written from notes made during ✓ after ✓ observation; from memory ___.

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