

## DOCUMENTATION FORM

R-23 Jun 01

Species: Costa's Hummingbird

Number: 1 male

Location: Crow Valley campground, Weld Co., Colorado

Habitat: feeding in scattered clumps of current bushes in open area

Date: 17 May 2001

Time: 2:05-3:20 p.m. (intermittently)

Observer: Stephen J. Dinsmore 612 1/2 West Magnolia St. Fort Collins, CO 80521

Others who saw bird(s): Joe Fontaine, m. ob.

Description of bird(s): When we arrived at the campground at 2 p.m. we found a large group of people looking at a hummingbird in the southwestern part of the campground. We identified the bird as a male Costa's Hummingbird before talking with other birders. We later learned that two campers from the Denver area had first seen and identified the bird a few minutes before our arrival.

The bird was a small, rather blunt-headed, very distinctly marked hummingbird. The bill was rather short for a hummingbird and very slightly decurved throughout its length. I estimated that the bill was slightly more than 1.5 times the length of the head. The bill was black. The forehead, face, and gorget were a brilliant purple color in good light, but appeared black most of the time. Color changes were especially apparent when the bird was perched and rotating its head. The gorget had several elongated feathers that flared posteriorly at right angles to the throat, the tips extending well behind the nape when the bird was viewed from the side. At one point, the bird flew towards directly us and Joe described it as a "little purple ball". The eye was dark-colored with what appeared to be diffuse white eye crescents. There was a very small black spot above and behind the eye. Otherwise, the cheek and lower throat were clear white. Because of the flared gorget, this white area was separated into two patches, one on the throat and one on the cheek. The breast and belly were a dull gray color, sometimes appeared to have a greenish cast on the flanks, and contrasted with the white throat. The upperparts, including the crown, nape, mantle, upperwings, and uppertail, were metallic green, except that the nape was more of a gray color and lacked a strong greenish cast. The primaries were distinctly brown-colored and the folded primaries I saw seemed to be of even width. The rectrices were narrowly tipped with white with a broader black subterminal band on the outer rectrices. The remaining upper surfaces of the rectrices and the uppertail coverts were green. When perched, the bird had a short-tailed appearance; the wingtips extended noticeably beyond the tips of the folded rectrices. The legs appeared black. In flight, I heard the bird give a few weak, metallic "tink" notes, but the bird was mostly silent.

Similar species and how eliminated: There are five "expected" species of hummingbirds in eastern Colorado (2 *Archilochus*, 1 *Stellula*, and 2 *Selasphorus*). The shape and color of the gorget, short-tailed appearance, and call note eliminated the two *Archilochus* hummingbirds. Calliope Hummingbird was eliminated on the basis of bill shape, color and pattern (unstreaked) of the gorget, face pattern, and crown color. The combination of gorget color and shape, lack of rufous or buffy color in the rectrices or on the underparts, and call note eliminated both *Selasphorus* hummingbirds. Anna's Hummingbird is probably the most similar-appearing species, and it was eliminated on the basis of size, shape and color of the gorget, tail length, and the pattern of white color on the face and throat.

Previous experience with species: I have seen many breeding Costa's Hummingbirds in the Sonoran Desert of southeastern Arizona. I am also familiar with other western hummingbirds including Anna's and all of the *Selasphorus* and *Archilochus* hummingbirds.

Viewing conditions and equipment: Viewing conditions were excellent with overcast skies and a light, intermittent drizzle. Estimated viewing distance was 3-10m. I used 10x42 binoculars.

References consulted: Sibley *The Sibley Guide to Birds*

How long before field notes written? written immediately after sighting

How long before this form completed? written 18 May 2001

rec'd 5/20

**Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form**

(this is a two page report-click at the bottom for page 2)

CFO-RC FILE X: 2001-46  
RESULTS: \_\_\_\_\_

Print this page and then fill out. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species (please include common and scientific name): Costa's Hummingbird (calypre costae)Date(s) of Observation: 5/17/01Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: M Plumage: AdultExact location: Crow Valley Campground along the west fence.County: Weld Nearest town: Briggsdale Elevation: ?Length of observation: 3 to 4 minutes Time(s) of observation: 7:30 pmOther observers who saw the bird(s) with you: unknown birder from CaliforniaOther Observers who independently saw the bird(s): Don & Mitsy Mass (Greely) + othersLight Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position): CloudyOptical equipment used: Swarovski 10x42 binos.Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): 10 FeetWas bird(s) photographed? no If so, have you submitted photos?

Who took the photographs?

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: I was told the bushes were current bushes. Yellow tubular flowerets.Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the species or in supporting the identification): Hovering while feed, while perched it preened itself in the light rain, when it put its head down to preen the gorgets would stick out the sides of the neck[click here for page 2 of this form](#) / [Back to the CBRC Home Page Links](#)

# Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

## page 2

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size

and shape and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird(s). Describe other important details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches or copy field notes):

*The bird was small even for a hummer. The field guide says 3 1/2" and I'd agree. The gorgets reached down from the neck to the sides about midway on the body. Gorgets were purple. I noticed the tail had white tips. The neck also had white patches. The back was green, the belly was white, sides were greenish.*

Describe birds call or song: *none*

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them:

*No other hummer has gorgets that reach down as far as the Costa's.*

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? *This was a lifer for me.*

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation): *Natl. Fed's guide to Birds. 3rd. edition.*

This report is from notes made during        or after        observation,  
or later from memory X

Date of written report: *5/17/01*

Reporting observer: *STEVE MESSICK*

Signature: *Steve Messick*

Address:

*1020 9th. #3306  
Greeley, CO*

*80631*  
Send report to:  
Colorado Birds Record Committee  
Tony Leukering  
P.O. Box 157  
Arvada, CO 80001

*(This is my first  
sight record form.)*

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rec'd 5/26 (R)

# Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

(this is a two page report-click at the bottom for page 2)

CFO-RC FILE X: 2001-46  
RESULTS:

Print this page and then fill out. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species (please include common and scientific name): Costa's Hummingbird Calypte costaeDate(s) of Observation: May 17, 2001Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: Male Plumage:Exact location: Crow Valley Recreation Area, near Briggsdale. Current bush on eastern side of North-South fence line. Bush just north of campsite #5- wheelchair or double occupancy #12 site.

County:

Nearest town:

Elevation:

Weld CountyBriggsdaleLength of observation: 2 1/2 - 3 min.Time(s) of observation: observed once at about 3:30 P.M.Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Steve Dinsmore + Joe FontaineOther Observers who independently saw the bird(s): Dave BeltonLight Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position): Good lighting. Bird on west side of bush (not shaded by bush) being observed in mid afternoon.Optical equipment used: Canon Digital Video Camcorder GL1  
Canon Image Stabilizer 12x36 Binoculars

Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted):

At first: about 30' Moved to a position of 18' from the birdWas bird(s) photographed? Yes If so, have you submitted photos? YesWho took the photographs? Ruth Dick

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred:

Crow Valley is an 'oasis' on the prairie with Siberian Elms, Cottonwoods and Willows lining along Crow Creek (at present is dry). Many scattered currant bushes in area + about campground. Location described above.

Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the species or in supporting the identification):

I observed the bird as it rested on the branch of the currant bush. It did briefly begin feeding on the top flowers of the bush but I basically missed it all as I was trying to film the action. He was just too quick for me. (I should have back off of the zoom) (I'm not real experienced with the camcorder).The narrow bill and gorget which flashed 2 times supported the  
[click here for page 2 of this form](#) / [Back to the CBRC Home Page Links](#)hummingbird ID.People referred to it as the Costa's Hummingbird while I was at Crow Valley. Once home I verified that ID as I studied the field guide books and video.

## Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

page 2

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size

and shape and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird(s). Describe other important details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings,

field sketches or copy field notes): *Very small bird, slightly curving downward narrow bill, gorget that narrowly tapers down toward wing which flashed a purplish color 2 times. The iridescent coloration continued on head (it appears black). The white patch on side of neck by gorget was most noticeable. Could not compare wing + tail lengths*

Describe birds call or song:

*Did not hear a call or song.*

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them:

*Anna's Hummingbird eliminated because of the red color of crown and throat, also has a straight bill.*

*Lucifer Hummingbird eliminated because of lack of iridescent crown.*

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

(female)

*This is a life bird! Have seen Lucifer Hummingbird in TX, while visiting Big Ben Nat. Park last April '01.*

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation):

*The Sibley Guide to Birds*

*National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America*

This report is from notes made during        or after        observation,  
or later from memory  and from video observation

Date of written report: 5/23/01

Reporting observer: Ruth Dick

Signature: Ruth Dick

Address: 2125 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Greeley CO 80631  
rdick@qwest.net

Send report to:

Colorado Birds Record Committee

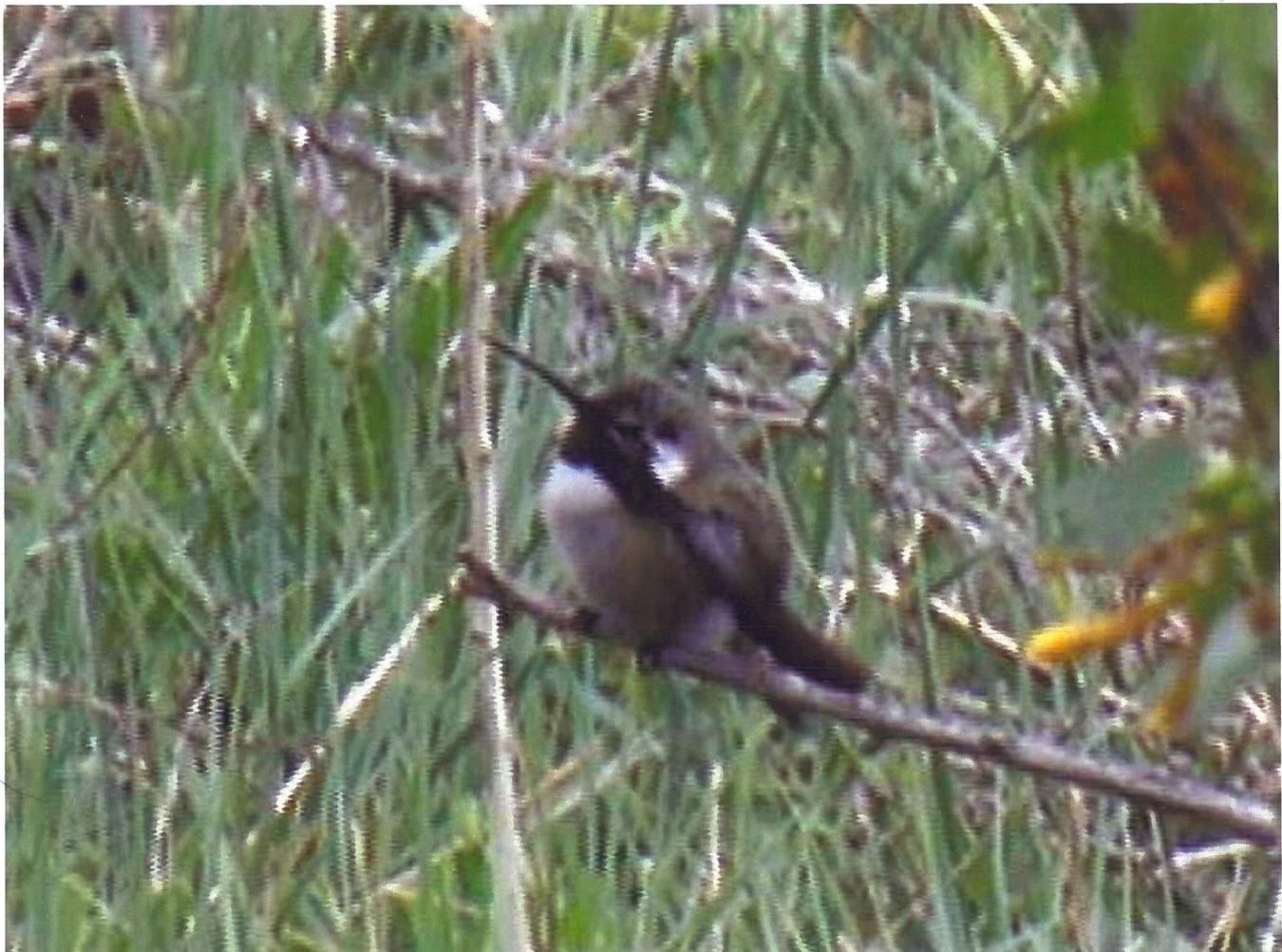
Tony Leukering  
P.O. Box 157  
Arvada, CO 80001

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Photo 1



Photo 2



# Photo 3

