

Accepted (6-0)

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTINGS
FOR
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

SPECIES: SWAINSON'S WARBLER (Vernacular Name) _____SPECIES: Limnothlypis swainsonii (Scientific Name) _____DATE(S): 5-22-95TIME BIRD WAS SEEN: 5:00 P.M. to 5:10 P.M.

LOCATION AND HABITAT: WEST OF VALCO POND fisherman's parking lot.
UNDERBRUSH of fallen wood, SNAGS, woodvine, shrubs
+ A RUSSIAN OLIVE. AREA NEAR RUN-OFF DITCH, between
ARKANSAS RIVER on the NORTH + the PATH on the SOUTH.
Before you CROSS A BRIDGE OVER DITCH. AREA VERY WET
but NOT EXACTLY A marsh.

Nearest town, county and state: PUEBLO, PUEBLO, COLORADOOPTICAL EQUIPMENT: BAUSCH + Lomb 10x40 (both observers)PHOTOGRAPHED: Yes _____ No X If yes, Equipment used: _____PHOTOGRAPH ENCLOSED: Yes _____ No X SKETCH ENCLOSEDNUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: 1 SEX: ? PLUMAGE: BREEDINGDISTANCE FROM BIRD and HOW MEASURED: 12' to 15' Educated guess.LIGHT CONDITIONS: PARTLY CLOUDY - but SUN WAS OUT.WIND CONDITIONS AND WEATHER CONDITIONS: SLIGHT BREEZE - NOT STEADY
@ 75°

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO IDENTIFIED THIS BIRD: (Name and address)

CLIFTON SMITH 2823 5TH AVE. PUEBLO, CO 81003
1-719-543-6421

I've called PAVE JOHNSON, MARK YAEGER + Bob Dickson
HOPING ONE OF THEM CAN FIND THIS BIRD!
TRIED MARK JANOS but he + PERCIVAL must have
been on the phone for an HOUR - I'll try AGAIN.

DESCRIBE THE BIRD'S OVERALL BEHAVIOR: Looking for bugs UNDER shrubs, SNAGS + fallen cotton wood stump. "SNEAKY" little Devil. (Thought we couldn't see him.) But because of low SNAGS without leaves it was in plain view. This bird was busy GATHERING bugs on the logs + twigs. It would EVEN catch flying insects by barely flying out of the deepest UNDERGROW just to the EDGE to "hawk" a bug. It DIDN'T ACTUALLY "hawk" up high - JUST AT THE EDGE OF THE SNAGS + THEN FLY BACK INTO DENSE shrub. IT DID FLY OUT 2 TIMES ONCE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE RUSSIAN OLIVE.

DESCRIBE THE SPECIFIC HABITAT(S) IN WHICH THE BIRD WAS OBSERVED:

Low UNDERGROWTH CONSISTING OF DEAD STUMPS, SNAGS, woodvine, unknown shrubs + RUSSIAN OLIVE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF GORGE (ditch). AREA WET between RIVER + PATH.

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. DETAIL: of bill (shape and size), wings, tail and undertail coverts (if seen). (REFERENCE TO ITS RESEMBLANCE TO FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS IS NOT ENOUGH). DESCRIBE WHAT YOU ACTUALLY SAW IN THE FIELD DURING YOUR OBSERVATION.

Distinctive EYEBROW buffy-white in color. CANNOT call it yellow; to me yellow is associated with the yellow on a CANARY! Rusty-brown solid cap. The back + wings + tail ALL THE SAME GRAY-BROWNISH color. NO WING BARS. UNDERNEATH A CREAMY-grayish WITH NO DISTINGUISHING MARKS. Bill LONG + THIN. Little to no forehead - HEAD SORT OF "FLAT". Eyebrow consistent thickness + EXTENDED ALL THE WAY BACK TO NAPE, from in front of eye. Darkish line in front of eye + slightly behind. NO "cheek" - but "d, lc The breast + UNDER-TAIL COVERTS SEEMED CREAM-gray with a buffy wash overall. Tail not long - but not short + NOT NOTCHED or S. Back + wings + tail OVER ONE color - NOT SHADES of brownish-gray THAT WOULD BE SEEN AS DARKER ON THE WINGS THAN BACK. IT WAS LIKE AN ALL ONE color ABOVE + ALL ONE color (buffy-white) below. Except for the crown THAT WAS RUSTY BROWN.

IF HEARD, DESCRIBE THE BIRD'S CALLS OR SOUNDS, INCLUDING THE METHOD OF DELIVERY i.e. from a perch, in flight, deep within shrub, etc.:

Could not get him to call or chip. He would act curious when I'd call a yellow WARBLER song. The bird would SNEAK OUT JUST A TOUCH THEN GO BACK INTO "HIDING".

AND ONCE WHEN A KID CAME UP FROM THE RIVER + FLUSHED IT.
THIS BIRD FLEW VERY FAST + LOW TO THE LOWER BRANCHES
OF A SMALL COTTONWOOD. THE KID PASSED IT AGAIN + IT FLOW
BACK TO THE ORIGINAL SPOT, INSIDE THE LOWER SNAGS + SHRUBS.
WE GOT TO WATCH THIS BIRD FOR @ 10 MINUTES IN
GOOD LIGHT + "UN-LEAFED" (NEW WORD) SNAGS! IT WAS WONDERFUL
(BUT NO CAMERA :)

* LIST SIMILAR SPECIES AND STATE HOW THEY WERE ELIMINATED:

I kept trying to turn this into a TENNESSEE WARBLER. But the RUSTY BROWN solid cap was too distinctive. The bill longer than most WARBLERS. The back had no yellow-green wash to it. The eyebrow was not as short or thin as TENNESSEE WARBLERS eyebrow tapers behind the eye, + the crown was RUSTY BROWN - NOT GREEN. TENNESSEE'S TAIL SHORTER + NOT AS ROUNDED. The eyebrow was not white like the TENNESSEE but rather a "buffy" - white or cream. (Remember, to me "yellow" eyebrow would be like a yellow on a yellow WARBLER) Plus, this bird had little forehead, the TENNESSEE has a "normal" round head look.

Also, tried to make it a WARBLING VIREO. No way - color wrong + bill too long. PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILAR SPECIES: 1992 SAW, HEARD + WATCHED SWAINSON'S WARBLER in Whitney, TEXAS. AGAIN in 1994, Whitney watched 2 SWAINSON'S chasing each other while female (I assumed it was the female) kept on creeping around shrubs for food! The one WARBLER paid no attention to the other two, I assume, fighting over "her". CLIE also saw th
THIS REPORT WAS WRITTEN FROM NOTES MADE DURING X AFTER X
OBSERVATION; FROM MEMORY + NOTES in field. Plus field guides: "FIELD GUIDE to the BIRDS of NORTH AMERICA" NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC. "Golden field guide for WESTERN BIRDS". PETERSON'S field guides for EASTERN + WESTERN BIRDS.

SUBMITTED BY: NAME (print): PEARLE SANDSTROM-SMITH

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PHONE: (719) 543-6427

SIGNATURE: Pearle Sandstrom-Smith

RETURN FORM TO:

CFO RECORDS COMMITTEE
c/o CURATOR-ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS
DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
CITY PARK
DENVER, CO 80205

* I checked out the female Black-throated Blue WARBLER. Her face was far too dark + bill too thick. Plus this bird had ABSOLUTELY NO wing bar + she has a visible wing patch, our bird didn't.

WE BOTH WENT THROUGH EVERY VIREO + WARBLER in the books. This bird just didn't fit anything we could find.

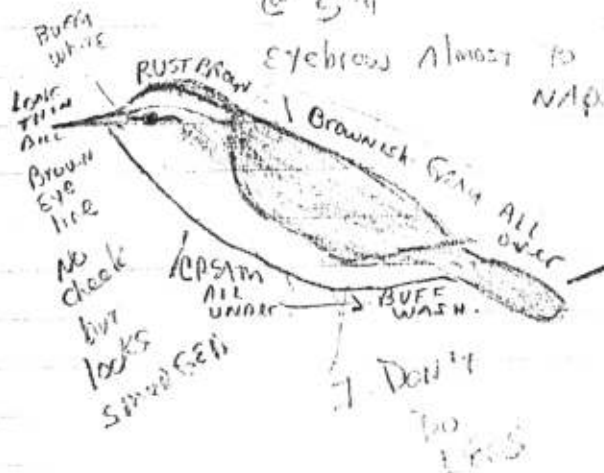
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5-22-95

VALCO Pond - West of p'tag

@ 5 1/4"

eyebrow Almost to Nape



? SWAMPY WREN
 TENNESSEE WARBLER
 WARBLING VIREO