

Species: White-winged Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera*

8 Jun 1975 1015 to 1025

Location: Echo Lake, ~~South Shore~~ West Shore

Nearest Town: Idaho Springs, Clear Creek

Other Observers: Linda Lybarger 2415 S. Memphis Way Aurora Colo 80013

7515745

Optics: 10x50 Bushnell Sportview

Not Photographed

Light: Good - Sunlight

Distance: 10-15 ft - estimated (had difficulty focusing on birds)

Number of Birds seen: 2 Sex: 1 Male, 1 Female Plumage: Spring(?)

Birds behavior and demeanor:

Birds flew into small pine (10-12 ft tall) on lake shore. They flew into the lower branches about 3 1/2 - 4 ft above ground and were glimpsed moving about in the branches. Female dropped to ground and moved about and behind ~~roots~~ roots. Male dropped down and return to branches twice, presenting good views as he perched on a root. Birds seemed unconcerned with our presence. Later they flew off with several Siskins to northwest.

Birds appeared to be gathering material or looking over the tree rather than feeding. The birds stay in the interior of the tree when they were on the ground, rather than around the cones.

Description: Birds were sparrow sized, slightly larger than the White-crowned Sparrow, but were not as large as Pine Grosbeaks. (6-6 1/2"). They were chunkier than Sparrows. Male was pinkish on head, back and breast.

tail. Rump not seen or noticed. ~~Then~~ Mandibles were curved and crossed at tips. ~~Male~~ had some yellowish feathers mixed with pink. Pink had a brick tint rather than rosy or pure pink of Pine Grosbeak. Female was yellowish with dark wings, white wing bars, more prominent than male's wing bars; dark tail cross curved mandibles. First impression was of small Pine Grosbeak. Pink male, dark-yellowish female, white-wing-bars and crossed mandibles ~~not~~ identified birds.

Bird's Song or Call: none heard

Habitat: Pines on lake shore. ~~Mostly~~ Mostly young ~~shorter~~ shorter trees.

Elimination of Similar Species: Red Crossbill does not have wing bars and is brick red not pink. Pine Grosbeak is larger and does not have crossed mandibles. No other similar species. First impression was of ~~small~~ Pine Grosbeak, which was expected, but bird seemed too small and color was right. When mandibles were seen to be curved and crossed, knew it was Crossbill.

Experience: Like Bird, Pine Grosbeak and Red Crossbills have been seen under good conditions in the past.

Books: Check Robbins, ^{later (45 min.)} but bird is distinctive. Robbins did show that Rump is same color as body.

Report written from memory 36 hours later.

William A. Hybarger William A. Hybarger 9 Jun 75
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