

filed x/99 wpl

1999 - 88

Magnificent Hummingbird - Boulder Co. - 10 August 1999 - Christopher L. Wood

ACCEPT 7-0

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD
Eugenes fulgens

LOCATION: Flagstaff Mountain, Boulder County

DATE: 10 August 1999

SETTING

Myron and Suzi Plooster accompanied Joey Kellner and I to look for the large hummingbird that has been present on private property on Flagstaff Mountain, Boulder County. The bird has been present since June and was previously identified as a female Blue-throated Hummingbird. The Ploosters left after a couple hours, since they had seen the bird on previous dates. After waiting six hours, Joey Kellner and I finally saw the bird for about 15 seconds. The bird flew in to feed at the feeder around 3:15pm, hovered for a couple seconds, landed, drank for a few more seconds, hovered, drank some more, and promptly flew off to parts unknown. We were only able to view the bird from the front and right side. When in flight, the bird pumped its tail and flashed it open. No vocalization was heard.

DESCRIPTION

The large size (for a hummingbird), fairly dark body, and light-colored outer retricies alerted us that we were dealing with either Blue-throated or Magnificent hummingbird. The following features identify the bird as a Magnificent Hummingbird:

HEAD: Conspicuous white postocular spot contrasting with whitish postocular line, which it touched. Postocular line noticeable, but not as obvious as postocular spot. Blackish-gray ear patch, darkest near eye, bordered above by white postocular line and lighter gray cheek below. Faint hint of a white stripe extending from base of bill to below eye. Throat grayish, appearing spotted with darker gray.

TAIL: Appeared dark greenish-black with dirty-white tips to outer feathers. These tips were inconspicuous, certainly less than one cm on outer retricies, even less on inner retricies. These were not bold and flashing as in BLUH, nor were they as large. When the bird was sitting, you could barely see the white on the tail.

BILL: The bill was extremely long and straight, almost suggestive of a starthroat, but not quite as long.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Blue-throated Hummingbird would have a more apparent postocular stripe without a contrasting postocular spot; a more contrasting white moustache; retricies blue-black with larger white tips to outer retricies; and a shorter very slightly decurved bill.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

I have seen hundreds of Magnificent Hummingbirds, mostly in AZ and during the four months I lived in Costa Rica. I also saw the female in Douglas County (October 1997). I have seen about 100 Blue-throated Hummingbirds, all in Arizona.

Chris Wood
zelclonia@worldnet.att.net
Lakewood, CO (home)
Bloomington, IN (grad school)
Cape May, NJ (Sea Watch this fall)