

Species: Blue-throated Hummingbird

Lampornis clemenciae

D. Schaefer

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): September 7, 1975

Time Bird Seen: 8:30a.m. to 9:00a.m.

Locality: 7 miles north of Durango on the West Animas Road -Childress Home

Nearest Town: Durango

County: La Plata

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

Elva Fox

53 Rio Vista Circle

Durango

247-5890

Optical Equipment: 7X35 Bushnell Binoculars

If photographed, type of equipment used: Sears 55mm single lens reflex

Light Conditions: extremely rotten completely overcast and rain

Distance from bird (how measured): 10feet estimated

Number of Birds Seen: five Sex: ???? Plumage: female or immature fall

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:

The usual hummingbird fighting that goes on around a feeder. The birds weren't really pugnacious like a rufous but could stand their ground if another hummer challenged. They were not shy of the observers but they left the feeder shortly after the camera was set up.

Describe in great detail the bird's size, overall shape, plumage and color-pattern. Include details on shape of bill, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to the marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance in field guide descriptions is not enough. Describe what you actually saw in the field:

The birds were large slower hummers as compared with the Rufous and Black-chinned that were buzzing around the feeder. The overall body color was a lighter green than the other hummers. It was sort of a yellow-green not emerald green. The faces had a white streak above and beyond (back) the eye with a black streak below the eye. These marks were not all as distinct on some of the birds, but they were present. The bills were larger and heavier than the other hummer's. Underparts (including throat, chin and breast) were gray mottled with a darker gray. The whole underpart area was the same coloration, no darker areas or spotted on throat as a female Rivolis'. Wings were a slate gray or gray-brown.

Now comes the problem! The tail was large when spread, fan shaped and a DARK green not the black, like the field guides suggest. This color was on the upper tail surfaces and not underneath. (under tail feathers were light gray) The tail had large amounts of clear white spots on the outer tail feathers. The spots were largest on the outer-most feathers. Tail was longer than wings.

Describe the bird's song or call, if heard, including method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

Heard only the chips of hummingbirds, could not tell which birds were making the noise.

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Hummingbird feeder located in the Animas Valley. The house is in the wooded part of the valley sides. All kinds of trees including Ponderosa Pine, Juniper, Gambel's Oak and fruit trees.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

All smaller hummingbirds by the size comparison made with Rufous and Black-chinned.

Rivolis' The throat of these birds was the same color as the rest of the underparts not streaked with rows of spots like on a female Rivolis'

The tail of BTH has large white spots on the outer tail feathers, while the Rivolis' has smaller corners of a gray or dirty white. As I mentioned before the green on the tail of these birds was not the proper color, but it wasn't a body-colored green like a Rivoli's but a dark color reflecting green only under certain lights

Confused yet? I am.

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

None

Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation?

The books did more harm than good. We both thought at first that we were looking at Blue-throated, but, the more we read the more confused we became.

This report was written from notes made during XXX after XX observation; from memory X

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SIGNATURE: Richard Stransky DATE: December 13, 19

Town and State: Durango, Colorado ZIP: 81301

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