

Rcd 12/30/99 wpl

1999 - 87

ACCEPT 7-0

Subj: **Re: Rare Bird Report**
Date: 12/30/1999 2:19:14 PM Mountain Standard Time
From: chickaddd@juno.com (BB Hahn)
To: NCSWPL@aol.com

CFO -ORC-FILE#

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS SIGHT RECORD FORM

Results:

Species: Blue-throated Hummingbird

Date: July 29, 1999

Number of birds seen: One

Sex: Female

Plumage: Adult

Locality: 2915 Hodgen Road, 1/2 mile west of Highway 83.

Elevation: 7,580'

Nearest town: Monument

County: El Paso

Time observed: 2:00 to 2:25 p.m.

Duration of observation: 25 minutes.

Other observers with you: None.

Other observers who saw the bird independently: None.

Light conditions: Clear skies, sunny.

Optical equipment: Swarovski HD80 AT Scope and Swarovski 10x42 binocs

Distance from bird: From 2 feet to 50 feet.

Describe the bird's behavior: The bird flew in to a large clump of Monarda (Bee Balm or Horsemint) growing below and adjacent to our deck. I was sitting on the deck a couple of feet away. She fed actively from the Monarda, flaring her tail at any Broad-tailed Hummers that got too close. She also visited the Salvia, Penstemon strictus, annual Nicotiana and the Asiatic Lilies before flying to a twig at the end of a low, dead branch of a Ponderosa Pine about 50 feet away, where she sunned, preened and flared her tail. She made three trips back and forth from the flowers to the twig. On the second trip, she hovered just off the floor of the patio at the junction of a landscaping timber and concrete pad and picked off a few small "sugar" ants.

On her fourth flower foray, a male Rufous Hummingbird flew in, they faced off, flaring their tails and chirping at one another, and the Blue-throat flew off, headed south-southwest.

Describe the bird (what you actually saw): A large hummer. Seemed quite a bit larger than the Broad-tails, and a whole lot larger than the one Calliope and the several Rufous hummers. Quite distinct white postocular stripe that curved back and downward with a dark, distinctive ear patch line below it, and with a short, indistinct, thin white moustache. Bill was dark and slightly decurved. Upperparts were bronzy-green, almost gold on several feathers. Underparts were more gray than brown, including the throat, and not the cinnamon color of young birds. Tail showed stark white on outer three rectrices with the white stair-stepping from about 1/3 on the outermost to a small spot on the innermost. The outer tail, in good sunlight, looked dark brown/black and had very little color, and the primaries and secondaries looked brown as well.

Describe the bird's song and call if heard: She only "chittered" once, when the male Rufous came in.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird: Ponderosa Pine edge of small pasture with extensive perennial/shrub gardens, small pool and fountain.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species: vs. Magnificent Hummingbird: The white on the tail was very white, not an off-white or grayish, and the area of white was larger than on a Magnificent. Also had the little white malar stripe.

vs. White-eared Hummer: Not expected here at all, too small.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species: Saw a number of Blue-throated Hummers and White-eared Hummers in the highlands east of San Blas, Nayarit, Mexico, in 1996. Saw Magnificent Hummers in Arizona in 1993.

List books if they helped in your identification: NGS Field Guide, The Hummingbirds of North America, by Paul Johnsgard.

This report was written from notes taken during and after observation.

Reporting observer: BB Hahn, 2915 Hodgen Road, Black Forest, CO 80921 719-495-0647

----- Headers -----

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