

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD ☐UNUSUAL RECORD ☒

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Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: Black-billed Cuckoo | Coccyzus erythrophthalmus
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): May 14, 1989Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: Unknown Plumage: AdultLocality: Ponny Reservoir - west end - in the area I Elevation: 7685Nearest town: Idalia 1000' from the lake in County: Hama
tree - old-growth cottonwoodsTime(s) observed: 10 AMDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 4 minutes

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

None

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)

None

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

Good light - sunny - I was looking south - sun to the east - Bird 80' up in a cottonwoodOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): 8X binocularsDistance, and how measured: 200' estimatedIf photographed, type of equipment and film: NoWho else photographed the bird? _____

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

Feeding in the crotch of a very tall cottonwood. First it would be right side up. Then it would move around and be upside down.

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

A fairly large, long-tailed bird. When I figured out that it was a cuckoo, I was expecting a yellow-billed Cuckoo - but I got several excellent looks at the all black bill. The back was a solid, very dark brown with no rust in the wings which were spread a couple of times as it moved around.

(over)

Description (continued):

I did not see red around the eye - I was not looking for that.
The undertail pattern seemed plain but I did not see
that very well because the bird kept its back to me all
the time

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

I heard it from a distance, later - A simple,
repetitious cu-cu-cu etc.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

This is a large, very tall grove of Cottonwoods. I have never
seen a cuckoo so high in a tree - 80' up.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

Yellow-bellied Cuckoos have yellow bills - This bird had a black bill
" " " have rust in the wings - This bird had no rust
in the wings - The simpler call fits Black-bellied Cuckoo

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

I have seen many Black-bellied (mostly New England)
and Yellow-bellied Cuckoos (here in Colorado)

This is my 2nd Colorado sighting of Black-bellied Cuckoo.
List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this in-
fluenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: None

b) after observation: Natural Geographic and Golden Guide
Birds of North America

This report was written from reports made during _____, after observation _____ from memory ☒
Date and time report was written: 8 PM May 24, 1989

Reporting observer: Dan Bridges Signature: T. W. Dan Bridges

Address: 1925 S. Vaughn Way #207 Aurora CO 80014

All reports will be maintained permanently at the address below:

Return to: CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS
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