

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

PAINTED BUNTING

*Passerina ciris*7-0 (A)
Recd 2/2/01 wplLocation: Lake Hasty Campground; Caddoa; Bent County, ColoradoDate: May 7, 2000

I was leading a CFO fieldtrip to southeastern Colorado. The campground at Lake Hasty was one of our last stops. We were there about 3:00 p.m. on a clear sunny day. When we arrived, another birder who was birding in the area notified us of the presence of a male Painted Bunting. We found the bird within a few minutes and observed it, off and on, for about a half hour. Many birders saw this individual. The bird associated with other seed eaters, mostly on the lawn-like grounds of the campground. It was with other buntings (Indigo and Lazuli) as well as a variety of sparrows. We also observed it in flight and perched at various heights in area trees. I watched the bird B & L Elite 10x40 binoculars.

Description:

It was a breeding plumaged male -- quite unmistakable. The bird was a small, stout sparrow, about the same size and shape as a Lazuli Bunting -- about 6" long. It had a small, dark, thick seed-eating bill. The head was a deep blue head; the back was chartreuse green; red rump; and red undersides (chin, throat, breast). The wings were dark -- being blackish with greenish tones and a dark reddish shoulder. The tail was blackish. The bird had a red eyering around the black eye. In flight, the bird looked dark red.

Similar Species:

Not much is similar. Varied Bunting has a blue (not red) rump, and lacks both the green back and the red eyering.

Experience with Species:

I have seen quite a few Painted Buntings in other areas (Big Bend, coastal Texas, southern Florida) and a few in Colorado, including males.

This report is prepared from notes made during and after observation.

Mark Janos
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