

2003-94

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Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

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

Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

rec'd 12/23/03

CBRC FILE #: 2003-94

RESULTS:

Species: (Common Name) Scarlet Tanager (Scientific Name) *Piranga olivacea*
 Date(s) of occurrence: First observed approximately 12/6/03. Subsequently observed by myself or others in my neighborhood off and on since then. I have observed this bird several times today, most recently about 20 minutes before I completed this report.

Number of birds seen: 1	Sex: Male	Plumage: Winter
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Exact location: Greyrock Commons Cohousing Community, just NW of the intersections of Taft Hill Rd and Vine Drive

County: Larimer	Nearest town: Fort Collins	Elevation: Approx 5000 ft
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Length of observation: Min: 15 sec; Max: about five minutes	Time(s) of observation: As early as 9:00 a.m.; as late as 4 p.m.
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Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Karen Spencer, Beth Dillon, Donna Braginetz

Other observers who independently saw the bird(s): Heidi vonNieda, Susan Lawton, Elizabeth Bassett, Renate Justin, Beth Karberg, Willie Schreurs, Jason Beason, Rachel Hopper

Light conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s) and observers position): I have seen this bird in a variety of light conditions, with both sun and overcast skies, generally excellent viewing conditions

Optical equipment used: 7x35 Bushnell Custom binocs, Swarovski spotting scope, Leica spotting scope

Distance to bird(s) (estimated, unless otherwise noted): 12' to 150'

Was (Were) bird(s) photographed? Yes	If so, are you submitting photos? Yes
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Who took the photograph(s)? Rachel Hopper

Describe the general and specific habitats in which the bird(s) occurred: The bird has been seen in various locations around the built area of the Greyrock Commons Cohousing Community. This is a cluster of attached homes around a central green. There is a lot of bird-friendly vegetation including fruiting trees, shrubs and vines. We first observed the bird in a native chokecherry bush, eating dried chokecherries. My wife subsequently observed it at very close range in the plum tree outside our kitchen window. I have observed it several times since then perched in various trees (most often in a dense pussywillow tree), feeding on a grape vine and at other locations around the trellis/porch where the grape vine is located, and perched on roofs and gutters.

Describe the bird's (birds') behaviors, particularly behaviors that were used in supporting the identification, e.g., flying, feeding, habits: This is a solitary bird. It is fairly tame, not skittish or fast-moving. It has remained perched in one place for as much as a couple of minutes. I have observed it eating chokecherries and grapes and possibly insects. Jason Beason observed it eating some sort of seed or fruit off a pussywillow tree. It has shown no apparent interest in our sunflower feeder. It has most predictably moved between the trellis/porch where the grape vine is located and a pussywillow tree. I have also observed it behaving a little like a flycatcher as it apparently went after bugs.

DESCRIPTION -- This is the most important part of this report. Include in these details the overall size and shape of the bird and give as many plumage details as possible, even including those that you feel might not have relevance to the specific identification. Please fill out this portion even if photos are accompanying your report.

- Size: a good notch larger than the juncos and House Finches that I've seen it close to, yet considerably smaller than a robin.
- Bill is moderate length, not a heavy seed-eating bill
- The first impression is a yellowish-green bird with black wings and tail.
- Head and back are yellowish-green; breast is more yellow; flanks are grayish; wings and upper surface of tail are very dark (perhaps black), contrasting strongly with the rest of the body; primary and secondary feathers are a little lighter than the scapulars and appear to be fringed with a lighter band of greenish; undertail coverts are quite yellow; bottom of tail is grayish; the skin around the eye, or the orbital feathers, appear as a fairly distinct yellow-green ring around the eye; bill is flesh-colored or a little darker.
- Tail is slightly notched.
- Perching posture closer to horizontal than vertical
- Plump (feathers are presumably poofed out for warmth this time of year)

Describe the bird's (birds') call(s) and/or song(s), if noted: We haven't heard any vocalizations.

SIMILAR SPECIES – This is another critical part of your report. Please discuss how you eliminated similar species from consideration: The other species that I first suspected I was looking at was the Western Tanager. I eliminated that from consideration based on the completely dark wings; no wing bars. It was also suggested that Summer Tanager should be considered. Several features eliminate that as an option: the strong contrast between the very dark wings and tail versus the rest of the body, proportionately smaller bill, underside of tail more grayish than greenish, no sign of a dark loral line.

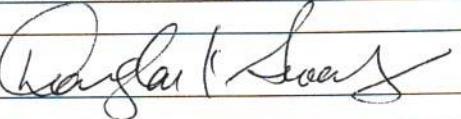
What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? I have seen Scarlet Tanagers in summer plumage many times in New England. I have seen Western Tanagers numerous times in Colorado. I have been birding for more than 30 years.

List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how these influenced your identification (during and after observation): The Sibley Guide to Birds (Sibley), Western Birds (Peterson), Birds of North America (Robbins, Bruun, Zim).

This report was made from (check one) notes made during observation notes made after observation later from memory.

Date and time of written report: 20 December 2003, 4:30 p.m.

Reporting observer: Doug Swartz, 970-224-4763, dswartz@greyrock.org

Signature: 

Reporting observer's address: 2232 Sun Rose Way

City: Fort Collins

State: CO

Zip: 80521

Send report to:
Colorado Bird Records Committee

**Tony Leukering
PO Box 660
Brighton, CO 80601**

Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

CBRC FILE #:

2003-94

RESULTS:

Species: (Common Name) Scarlet Tanager

(Scientific Name) *Piranga olivacea*

Date(s) of occurrence: 12-20-2003

Number of birds seen: One

Sex: Male

Plumage: 1st Winter

Exact location: Greyrock Commons Housing Development

County: Larimer

Nearest town: Ft. Collins

Elevation: 5016 ft.

Length of observation: 10-15 minutes

Time(s) of observation: Approx. 4:00 p.m

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Jason Beason, Doug Swartz

Other observers who independently saw the bird(s): MOB

Light conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s) and observers position: Partly cloudy, calm.

Optical equipment used: Swarovski EL 8 X 42 and Leica Televid 77 APO Scope with 20-60 zoom

Distance to bird(s) (estimated, unless otherwise noted): As close as 20 feet at times.

Was (Were) bird(s) photographed? Digiscoped

If so, are you submitting photos? Yes. [Pics\scta1.jpg](#),
[Pics\scta2.jpg](#), [Pics\scta4.jpg](#), [Pics\scta6.jpg](#)

Who took the photograph(s)? Yes.

Describe the general and specific habitats in which the bird(s) occurred: Urban backyard.

Describe the bird's (birds') behaviors, particularly behaviors that were used in supporting the identification, e.g., flying, feeding, habits:

DESCRIPTION -- This is the most important part of this report. Include in these details the overall size and shape of the bird and give as many plumage details as possible, even including those that you feel might not have relevance to the specific identification. Please fill out this portion even if photos are accompanying your report. **This bird was found and identified by Doug Swartz. Please see photos.**

Describe the bird's (birds') call(s) and/or song(s), if noted:

SIMILAR SPECIES – This is another critical part of your report. Please discuss how you eliminated similar species from consideration: **Please see photos.**

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? **I have seen several Scarlet Tanagers.**List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how these influenced your identification (during and after observation): **National Geo.**This report was made from (check one) photos made during observation

Date and time of written report: 04-10-2004

Reporting observer: **Rachel Hopper**Signature: **Rachel Hopper**

Reporting observer's address: 1721 Cottonwood Pt. Dr.

City: Ft. Collins

State: CO

Zip: 80524

Scarlet Tanager
Adult male, winter plumage
Greyrock Commons Cohousing Comm
Fort Collins, CO
Photographed by Rachel Hopper
20 December 2003



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Adult male, winter plumage
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