

## COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS SIGHT RECORD FORM

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

CFO-RC FILE #: \_\_\_\_\_  
RESULTS: \_\_\_\_\_

rec'd 3/25/04

Species: Indigo Bunting  
(Common Name)Passerina cyanea  
(Scientific Name)

IR

Date(s) of observation: 2/23/04 and for six or seven days thereafter.Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: Male Plumage: blue (electric blue)Exact location: Backyard of residence at 4760 Venturi LnCounty: Larimer Nearest town: Fort Collins Elevation: 4900 feetLength of observation: 15 to 20 minutes Times(s) of observation: Usually during mid day, noon per timeOther observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Edith Held, wife. Also, daughter & son-in-law fromOther observers who independently saw the bird(s): Chicago visiting here at that time.Light conditions (quality; direction relative to bird's position): Overhead light, looked NE to bird.Optical equipment used: Field glasses at times but eventually saw the bird on patioDistance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): within five feet - viewed through patio door.Was bird photographed?: No If so, have you submitted photographs? \_\_\_\_\_

Who took the photographs? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: Suburban backyard with viburnum, shrubs, flowering crab, Austrian pine and junipers.Describe the bird's behavior (flying; feeding; habits; behaviors used in identifying the species or in supporting the identification): About the size of a house finch - black seed eating bill. Brighter blue plumage than that of bluebirds which are familiar to us.

Describe the bird(s) in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include overall size and shape, and how you placed the bird(s) in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings, and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Describe other details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches, or copy of field notes):

Describe bird's call or song: None heard. Observed primarily from inside house.Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: First glimpse we thought of the Mountain BluebirdWhat is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? Had first seen species as a boy in law during the 1930's. Observed again at our home here in May 1982. At that time (see reverse)List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how these influenced your identification (during and after observation): Peterson's Western Birds; Sibley's Guide to BirdsThis report was made from notes made during ✓ or after ✓ observation, or later from memory \_\_\_\_\_.Date of written report: March 24, 2004Reporting observer: R. Burnell HeldSignature: R. Burnell HeldObserver's address: 4760 Venturi Lane Fort Collins CO 80525Send report to: Tony Leukering, P.O. Box 660, Brighton, CO 80601

There was small flock of mixed species at our feeder - bazuhi, indigo, and hybrids of the two. We had not seen any since then. We keep a record of dates that we see birds that are less common. Our records go back to 1979.

The date of its appearance, so early in the season, surprised us. The bird was quite shy at first. We saw it in the viburnum about 50 feet from the house. Our bird feeder has thistle seed & sunflower seed and there is a pan with millet seed on the patio. Eventually, the bird came to the feeder and ate millet. It returned about noon each time and we watched it as we ate our lunch.

INDIGO BUNTING - *Passerina cyanea*. A description of an electric-blue bird the size of a House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) with black seed-eating bill came from a Fort Collins, Larimer, residence on the odd date of 23 February 2004; the bird stayed an additional 6-7 days. Though reported as an Indigo Bunting, which would be very unusual in Colorado at that time of year, the documentation submitted was extremely brief. The term "electric-blue" may have different connotations to some, but for most, may not suggest Indigo Bunting. Male Indigo Buntings in basic plumage are usually mottled grayish-brown/blue. Though there is evidence that vagrant birds can abort or postpone their prebasic molt when conditions are difficult, the potential for occurrence of a completely blue-colored Indigo Bunting in winter in Colorado would be very odd. As well, no discussion of the darker flight feathers and tail of an Indigo Bunting in alternate plumage (which is the plumage seemingly described) was provided. With such little information to analyze, the CBRC voted 1-6.

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