

Prairie Warbler  
20 May 1981  
Grammer Grove, Marshall Co., IA  
\*B. Proescholdt  
IBL 51:63, 69; 52:42

Record Number: 81-07  
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Beth Proescholdt

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 51:63, 69  
Records Committee: 52:42

VOTE: 6-III, 1-IV

III, call is distinctive.

IV, Record is really not well described ('olive-backed' but 'really didn't see streaks'). The resemblance to a field sparrow's song seems far fetched, although recently I heard a field sparrow song entirely limited to an ascending series of notes of about the same number and pitch as a Prairie Warbler. Nevertheless, the difference between this field sparrow variant song and a Prairie Warbler song is great -different tempo, quality and delivery.

REVOTE at meeting of 5 Sep 1981: 7-III

81-07

Summary of Review of an Ornithologic Observation  
by the Records Committee  
of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union

SPECIES: Prairie Warbler

DATE SEEN: 20 May 1981

SITE OF OBSERVATION: Grammer Grove WA, Marshall Co.

OBSERVERS: Beth Proescholdt, R. Sommerlot

DATE OF REVIEW: summer 1981, 5 Sep 1981

METHOD OF REVIEW: circulated, meeting

CLASSIFICATION OF RECORD: III

COMMENTS: One thought the call was distinctive, another had doubts.  
After discussion at meeting the opinion was unanimous.

Any action may be re-reviewed upon submission of additional evidence.

Explanation of Classification:

- I = labeled, diagnostic specimen, photograph, or recording available for review by the Committee
- II = acceptable sight record documented independently by 3 or more observers
- III = acceptable sight record documented by 1 or 2 observers
- IV = probably correct record, but not beyond doubt
- V = record with insufficient evidence to judge
- VI = probably incorrect identification, escapee, or otherwise unacceptable record

Classification is based on the highest category agreed upon by six of seven committee members.

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

81-07

1. Species Prairie Warbler 2. Number 1  
3. Location Grammer Grove Wildlife Area, n. Marshall County  
4. Date: May 20, 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: 9:15 AM to 9:20 AM

6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):

a tail-wagging olive-backed warbler, showing chestnut color on upper back (we didn't see the streaks the books describe, just a seeming wash of color), yellow underparts, black streaks only on sides and two black streaks on face, one through eye & one under eye

7. Description of voice, if heard: an ascending "field sparrow" song, only tinnny sounding - repeated often - this was what first attracted us to the bird  
8. Description of behavior: it was feeding and singing in the young willows, moving into good view most of the time, moving closer to us  
9. Habitat - general: open river bottom woodlands, about 1/2 mile from Iowa River

specific: a line of 20'-25' sapling willows, in an open area, close to more dense woodland

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain: Magnolia or Canada warbler - however this bird had streaks only on sides with clear yellow underparts - & 2 streaks through & under eyes

11. Distance (how measured)? 20' closing in to 15' as bird moved closer (estimated) 12. Optical equipment: binoculars

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): clear sky, sun behind us shining directly on bird

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: no experience with Prairie warbler - but observations of many warblers for years.

15. Other observers:

Ramona Sommerlot

16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: none

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description: 2 Peterson guides - his old one, & the new, used after we Robbins, et al - Birds of North America noted all markings on bird

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? immediately in my notes

Signature: Beth Proescholdt Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: May 24, 1981 City, State: Liscomb, Iowa, 50148