

Cape May Warbler

15 Dec 1996

Indianola, Warren Co., IA

S. Dinsmore

first seen 13 Nov at Sinclair feeder; IBL 67:62, 82, P-0540, Sinclair
1997

Record Number: 96-72

Classification: A-P

PHOTOGRAPGH

Stephen J. Dinsmore, P-0540 [6/15/97]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 67:62

Records Committee: IBL 67:82

Sinclair, J. 1997. A record late Cape May Warbler in Iowa. IBL
67:132-133.

VOTE: 7 A-P

A-P, female

A-P, The extensive streaking on the underparts, lack of strong
facial marks, and slight wingbar are convincing. Documentation
would have been extremely useful.

A-P, Pattern on the face is a bit difficult to see but the
suggestion is there. Yellow wash to underparts, heavy streaking,
and thin bill all good for Cape May. Thin wing bar suggests
immature female.



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throat patch was bordered by a thin white line. There was no "V" of white in the malar area as depicted in many field guides. There was also a faint white line above and behind the eye, reminiscent of an auricular patch. I also noticed that the rectrices appeared heavily worn; the tips were frayed and at least one was broken off near the tip. In flight, it was noticeably smaller than a Double-crested Cormorant and flew with more rapid wingbeats. On the water, the bird was easily picked out among the Double-crested Cormorants by the smaller body and shorter neck. Based on the incomplete border to the throat patch and worn rectrices, I concluded the bird was an adult that had nearly completed the molt to alternate plumage.



Fig. 1. Neotropic Cormorant at Little River Rec. A., Decatur County, 4 May 1996. Photo by Stephen J. Dinsmore

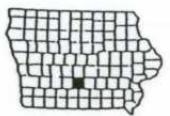
This represents the first record of a Neotropic Cormorant in Iowa. The increased number of records in states surrounding Iowa indicated this species would eventually occur in Iowa. The spring of 1996 saw an influx of Neotropic Cormorants to the Upper Midwest in April and May with records from Nebraska (*Nebraska Bird Review* 64:44, 1996), Missouri (*Field Notes* 50:286, 1996), and Illinois (*Field Notes* 50:286, 1996).

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A RECORD LATE CAPE MAY WARBLER IN IOWA

JIM SINCLAIR

On 14 November 1997 as I sat at my desk in our kitchen area, a small warbler landed on one of our suet feeders, which hang in front of our kitchen windows. My immediate assumption was a somewhat late, but certainly not totally unexpected, Yellow-rumped Warbler. I approached the window and was able to observe the bird within three feet, for approximately two minutes, at which time the bird flew into some nearby evergreens. By this time I was not at all sure of what I had just seen. As I stood gazing out the window, mentally cataloging field marks, the bird returned for another brief feeding stint and then departed again.



This small warbler was basically gray-green above with faint streaking on the back and a dirty cream color with medium streaking on the breast and flanks. The head was the same gray-green with a white throat, a faint supercilium, and a small, slightly decurved bill. The pale hint of a neck collar was noticeable at close range. The median primary coverts were edged with white forming a narrow wing bar. The rump, the only dash of color on the whole bird, was a greenish-yellow which, because of the general dullness of the bird, probably appeared brighter than it really was. After the second opportunity to observe the bird, I was convinced that I was looking at a female Cape May Warbler, probably a first-year bird. A quick glance at the National Geographic Society field guide confirmed the identification.

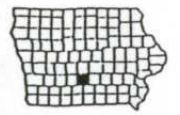
The Cape May Warbler is a long-distance migrant that winters in the West Indies. Most Cape May's have departed Iowa by the end of September with an occasional October straggler and two previous November records. This bird was present from 14 November through 18 December, the first winter record of the species in Iowa. Its frequency of occurrence at our suet feeders corresponded directly with the severity of the weather. When the weather was warm and sunny, the warbler visited us little or not at all. Twice during periods of benign weather I saw it foraging in evergreens in our neighborhood. When the weather was more inclement, the bird was a frequent visitor to the commercial suet cakes, sometimes feeding and then roosting on the top of the feeder. I last saw the warbler late in the afternoon of 17 December, and my son, Taylor, saw the bird briefly on the morning of the 18th. On the 18th a massive cold front, bringing with it record low temperatures, swept into Iowa and presumably terminated this Cape May Warbler's experiment in overwintering in Iowa.

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HOARY REDPOLL IN WARREN COUNTY

ANN JOHNSON

The morning of 3 February 1996 was bright and sunny but bitterly cold. At approximately 7:30 a.m. I looked at my niger feeder 20 feet from the window and saw a Common Redpoll. It was soon joined by another redpoll which was much paler in comparison. The second bird was ultimately identified as a Hoary Redpoll.



I observed the bird, and two Common Redpolls, throughout the weekend and took numerous photographs. A number of other observers also saw the bird that day through 12 February.

This was a very pale bird in comparison to the browner Common Redpolls. The mantle background was light buff on the scapulars and white on the back with much gray-brown streaking extending up the neck to meet the red cap. The lower scapulars were whitish, as were the edges of the secondaries and tertials, contrasting with the brownish-gray cast to the mantle. The greater coverts had a fairly substantial white edge. The breast and belly were white with some flank streaking which extended perhaps two-thirds of the way to the tail. Although the streaking was not pencil thin, it was not as bold as on the Commons. The rump was white but the uppertail coverts were streaked.

The face was buffy with a very noticeable buffy-gray auricular patch. The bird had a small patch of black at the base of the lower mandible but the rest of the throat was buffy. The bill was bright yellow and small in comparison to the Commons and to goldfinches. At the base of the upper mandible was a small black spot, and the forehead was white up to the red cap on the crown. This cap was fairly small and extended back only to a point about even with the eye. A white supercilium separated the dark buffy cheek from the red cap. A black line ran through the eye.

Much of the time the bird fed on the back side of the feeder in a position where I could clearly see the underparts. The undertail coverts were immaculately white with the exception of a gray center towards the end of the two longest covert feathers. This position also helped verify the shortness of the flank streaking.

Often, all three birds were on the feeder concurrently which allowed for a number of comparisons. While the streaking on the back of this bird made it look somewhat