

DOCUMENTATION FOR UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTING

SPECIES: Pine Warbler Adult and Immature

LOCATION: Under white and scotch pines at edge of Hancher Auditorium parking lot, University of Iowa, Iowa City (Johnson County).

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240.

OTHER OBSERVERS: Jim Scheib and Matt Prather. Later in day, m.ob., including photography by Tom Kent.

DATE and TIME: 20 December, 1992 (8:55-9:20 AM) and 12:55-1:00 PM).

BACKGROUND: On the Iowa City CBC, three of us were searching for kinglets that had been reported at this location a few days previously. Jim Scheib yelled that he had a warbler, and that it had yellow on it. As I arrived, two birds flew about 50 feet and landed. We soon relocated them foraging under white pines.

DESCRIPTION of BIRD #1 (Adult): This bird was warbler size, and on first view showed yellow. The breast and throat were indeed a rather bright yellow color, with some faint dark streaking along the sides. The yellow also extended up the sides of the neck. The yellow faded into white on the lower belly and vent, where there also was some faint streaking. The head and upper back showed a greenish cast in good light. The rest of the back was brown and unstreaked. The tail and folded wing were brownish. There were two wingbars of an off-white color. The dark eye had an eye ring which appeared to be a yellow-white color. Both birds continued to forage under pine trees, and at one point this bird appeared to eat a small moth.

DESCRIPTION of BIRD #2 (Immature): This bird was the same size and shape, but in coloration was rather dull in shades of brown. The only yellow on it was very faint on the throat. The upperparts were brown on the head and back, while the tail, and folded wing were dark brown. The folded wing had two wingbars which were a dirty white color. There was also an eye ring which was also an off white color. The underparts were mostly dirty white, with some faint streaking along the sides.

SIMILAR SPECIES: The combination of light eye ring, whitish wingbars, unstreaked back, and light belly and vent should separate this species from any other warbler.

OPTICS and VIEWING: The bird was viewed from distances of 20-50 feet using both Swift Audubon 8.5 X 44 binoculars, and

KOWA TSN-4 telescope 20X setting. Viewing was generally toward the north. It was early morning on a clear day with the sun in the southeast.

FIELD NOTES and REFERENCES: Field notes were immediately reviewed, and this form was typed the next day, on 12/21. The Peterson guide was consulted after the birds had been viewed for about 15 minutes.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION: On 22 December, 1992, I spent 45 minutes during the noon hour chasing these birds around the Hancher Auditorium area and attempting to take photographs. They were still often associating with Golden-crowned Kinglets. A feature that I had noticed also on the 20th, but failed to get into my field notes at that time was the vocalization of the adult bird only. It had a very sharp, rather high pitched chip note, which was pretty regular and continuous. The immature bird did not make any noise. Another feature that I noticed on the 22nd, which for some reason had missed the first day, was an obvious white in the tail when the birds flew, especially the adult.