

DOCUMENTATION FORM

For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What Species? Prairie Warbler

How many? 6 (1 adult male, 1 adult female, 4 juveniles)

Location? Lake MacBride State Park, Johnson Co.

Type of Habitat? Overgrown brushy hillside

When? July 8, 1995, 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. The male was seen in the same location on May 17, June 7 and June 9. The male and one juvenile were seen there again on July 15.

Who? Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Ave., North Liberty, IA 52317

Others with you: N/A

Others before or after you: N/A

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Adult male: bright yellow face and underparts with black eye stripe, mustachial stripe and streaks on sides; olive green crown, nape and back with chestnut streaks on back; dark gray wings and tail; white underside of tail; black eye, bill and legs.

Adult female: similar to male except duller; gray stripes on face and streaks on sides; very faint chestnut streaks on back.

Juveniles: light gray head and throat; pale yellow breast and upper belly fading to white on lower belly; a few faint gray streaks on sides; olive green back; gray wings and tail; white underside of tail with narrow black edging; same size as adults.

The fledglings hopped among the branches of small shrubs and occasionally flew short distances. The adults made frequent trips to feed the young and rested only briefly. The male foraged primarily in trees and shrubs, while the female most often foraged near the ground. They occasionally hovered and gleaned insects from the tips of branches. Several types of insects, including green caterpillars, were fed to the young. The juveniles gave continual sharp call notes which became louder and more frequent as the adults approached with food.

The adult male sang a typical ascending buzzy "zee-zee-zee" song infrequently, and on two occasions was observed singing other songs. On 17 May it repeatedly sang "witchety-witchety-witchety" similar to a Common Yellowthroat. On 15 July it repeatedly sang a high, thin song similar to an American Redstart. On one occasion the male was seen chasing a Blue-winged Warbler.

Similar species; how eliminated: Adults in breeding plumage are distinctive.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification? N/A.

Viewing conditions: Viewed in full sunlight 5 - 25 yards away with 8 x 40 binoculars.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Many previous observations.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None.

How long before field notes made? Thirty minutes.

How long before this form completed? Thirty minutes.