

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species: Common Yellowthroat

Number: 1 immature male

Location: Riverton W.A., Fremont County, Iowa

Habitat: grassy edge of a frozen canal

Date: 29 December 1998

Time: 2:25-2:40 p.m.

Observer: Stephen J. Dinsmore 612 ½ West Magnolia St. Fort Collins, CO 80521

Others who saw bird(s): W. Ross Silcock

Description of bird(s): We were walking along the edge of a canal near the southeast part of the wildlife area when I flushed a small, yellowish bird along the frozen water edge. The bird flew a short distance and then disappeared into the grass. My initial thought was that the bird was either a Common Yellowthroat or an Orange-crowned Warbler, although the habitat and behavior favored the latter. We got several brief looks at the bird before I could identify it. In flight, the bird appeared greenish above and yellow below and had a long-tailed appearance. When it was perched, I noted several additional features. The bill was short, thin, and dark, typical for a warbler. The eyering was dull yellow. The bird showed a hint of a black mask, most evident on the auricular area and just above the base of the upper mandible. The throat and undertail coverts were lemon yellow while the rest of the belly was a paler yellow color. The crown, mantle, wings, and tail were olive green. There were no wingbars. The legs (difficult to see well) appeared pinkish or flesh-colored. The bird did not vocalize. On the basis of the incomplete mask and brightness of the throat, I concluded the bird was an immature male.

Similar species and how eliminated: The combination of an incomplete mask, pattern of yellow on the underparts, lack of wingbars, long tail, and leg color is diagnostic for Common Yellowthroat.

Previous experience with species: Very familiar with this species and other warblers that are possible in Iowa in late fall or winter.

Viewing conditions and equipment: Viewing conditions were good, although I had only brief looks at the bird. Estimated viewing distance was as close as 3m (in flight) and 10-15m (perched).

References consulted: none

How long before field notes written? none written

How long before this form completed? written 4 January 1999