

# Spring 1993 Field Report

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name	# of birds	date	location
✓ Common Loon	1	April 15, 1993	Des Moines
Canvasback	2	03-28-93	Newton
Red-breasted Merganser	4	04-15-93	Des Moines
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	04-24-93	Lamb's Grove
Yellow-billed Sapsucker	1	04-22-93	Lamb's Grove
✓ Golden-winged Warbler	1	5-7-93	Lamb's Grove
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1	5-16-93	Lamb's Grove
— Cape May Warbler	1	5-14-93	Lamb's Grove
— Yellow-rumped Warbler	1	5-15-93	Lamb's Grove
✓ Blackburnian Warbler	1	05-30-93	Lamb's Grove
Ovenbird	1	5-5-93	Lamb's Grove

last sighting  
1st sighting  
of warblers

I.D.#: 200 name: Blackburnian Warbler  
season: Spr yr: 1993 date: 05-30-93  
observers: G.B.  
sources consulted:

# of birds: 1  
location: Lamb's Grove  
report?: y doc?: y

habitat: Residential oak woodlands

description, visual: Warbler with bright yellow-orange throat & side of head. Had black crown and eyeline to an angle near the nape. White belly & prominent white wing patch. behavior: Was singing at the very top of a large Burr Oak.

vocalizations: Had appr. 5 slurred notes at same pitch immediately followed by crisp fast succession higher pitched notes not entirely unlike that of a slow soft sounding chipping sparrow  
similar species and how eliminated: This bird is so unique, no confusion. Was a bright male and I clearly saw all the field marks. Because of the late date I made pains to verify the sighting.

equipment used and weather conditions: 8X30 binoculars. The weather was misty with the sun trying to break through. The bird was directly overhead initially and had to find & view because of the foliage. I obtained a more lateral unobstructed view after I made a tentative ID.

I.D.#: 196 name: Cape May Warbler  
season: Spr yr: 1993 date: 5-14-93  
observers: G.B.  
sources consulted:

# of birds: 1  
location: Lamb's Grove  
report?: y doc?: y

habitat: Residential oak woodlands with some spruce plantings

description, visual: yellow breast streaked with black, belly white and a large white wing patch. Had a warm brown patch on cheek. Yellow when up from throat to nape behavior: typical warble behavior. Liked top of midsized spruce.

vocalizations: Very high, piercing pure tone notes.

similar species and how eliminated: Magnolia warbler has yellow to belly with streaks and yellow rump. Blackburnian does not have the brown cheek patch

equipment used and weather conditions: 8X30 binoculars. Had several excellent views, one horizontal at 40 ft. while warbler was in spruce in valley.

I.D.#: 188 name: Golden-winged Warbler  
season: Spr yr: 1993 date: 5-7-93  
observers: G.B.  
sources consulted:

# of birds: 1  
location: Lamb's Grove  
report?: ydoc?: y

habitat: Wooded residential area with secondary growth near stream  
description, visual: Warbler that was unstreaked and light underneath with a distinct black chin and eyeline > a wedge. I also then saw a golden crown & wing patch behavior: Buzy poking into oak flowers for insects

vocalizations: Was making a buzzing sound, usually a series of approximately 3 utterances perhaps slightly down pitched.

similar species and how eliminated: The sound first caught my attention and I thought that it wuld be a blue-winged warbler but the sighting clearly proved otherwise.

equipment used and weather conditions: 8X30 binoculars at approximately 15 yds. The lighting was diffuse evening light at 5:30 with the sun at right angles t the viewing.

I.D.#: 001 name: Common Loon  
season: Spr yr: 1993 date: April 15, 1993  
observers: G.B.  
sources consulted:

# of birds: 1  
location: Des Moines  
report?: ydoc?: y

habitat: Ponds in open area  
description, visual: Large dark bird with checkered back and long pointed bill swimming low in the water.  
behavior: Bird was solitary and made repeated long dives

vocalizations: None heard

similar species and how eliminated: Double-crested Cormorant, One was seen there as well. They swim with their bill angled up slightly with a hook at the end of the bill. They are also all black with a longer neck.

equipment used and weather conditions: Unassisted eye but only 50 yds away. Was quite surprised to see it at the ponds of the Des Moines Water Works Park as it is within the city and not secluded.

Observations: The Warbler migration was decidedly late this year. I observed peak numbers between May 15 & 20. The Blackburnian Warbler sighting May 30 was rather exciting and exemplifies the late migration. Also, I did not see many Yellow-rumped warblers this year and the first sighting wasn't until May! The cool wet spring with north winds undoubted made an impact.

The loon sighting was interesting in its location in a large city. The waterworks park was apparently a large enough oasis to attract the bird though heavy traffic and pedestrian activity was close by.

*Gordon J. Brand*