

21-1987

10 August 1990

- Dear Ella

Thanks for the letter & list. I'll certainly let you know as
any you're missing. I'm surprised you don't have a Subirós Gull.
I've two - but Kayasta & I can't find any more. You'll probably see
one this fall. Our phone # is (602) 697-3610. It is
in the phonebook but when people call DIA they say they
have no listing

I was browsing thru some records and came across
the N. Parula I saw w/ Anne on Navajo mt in May 87. I'm no
expert on these matters - warbler IDs - but after seeing several
♀'s NPWs since then I can say with no doubt that this was
a ♀ NPW. If one considers the combination of characters - even
w/out wing bars - there is only 1 bird that fits. These are: yellow throat
& breast, white belly, small size, split eyeing w/ lower approaching
"spot" proportions, grey upper parts w/ olive spot on back.
There were no wing bars and I did not notice a bicolored bill.
The bird was very worn and this certainly would have eliminated wing
bars - a not uncommon transformation. Although conventional wisdom
tells us that birds molt in fall and spring birds should therefore
be relatively fresh it is (or is it?) noteworthy to find such a
frayed individual in spring. I have personally seen 2 ♂ black
throated grey warblers that had been taken in ~~May~~ May - one was fresh
& the other frayed & worn. I don't know if such wearing is
typical in warblers but ~~that~~ I'll guess that 2nd year
& older warblers probably have a complete molt in late summer
and immatures - at least in some species - may have only a
partial molt in late summer involving only body feathers
and leaving tail's remiges and coverts until their 2nd year.

I believe I've subjected you to this several
times before - my apologies for bringing it to death!

The bird described is the bird we saw. The look was good and it obviously is some species. I've no doubt now what it is and am urging you to reevaluate the record. If in fact we do learn more about warbler (and other passerine) molt in different age/sex classes then it will give another twist to field ID's and therefore make ~~the~~ the practice a little more accurate. I've enclosed a photocopy of the original note for your files. If the above age/molt guess ~~is~~ is true perhaps it is no coincidence that ^{this bird was lost!} ~~the bird was lost!~~

Hope all is going well for you and that your work schedule has slowed down. The birds down here are starting to heat up - good shorebirding, swarms of hummers at Cleome thickets, tanagers eating our grapes, wandering raptors in the trailer court... etc. Haven't had a chance to hit the warbler thickets yet. I hope to hit 300 species on the Navajo/Hopi Indian Reservations before I leave - am now at 285. Have added seven in the past year so 2-3 years may do it if I'm lucky.

All is going well down here. Anne's busy, Katherine's into every thing and our new addition - Charlie is grinning now. Say hello to Craig et al. Let meet this fall somewhere

Sincerely, Chuck

P.S. I'll be meeting Dave Ellis Aug 19 (and Aug 24-26?) and he's very good at feather ID as well as ^{or} direct contact w/ Roxy L. @ Smithsonian. He works at Patuxent... & if you send down your mystery owl feathers I'll show/pass them to him. I understand the ~~paranoia~~ paranoia regarding feathers that the USFWS has instilled (ie your eagle feather story) ~~my~~ Be assured that my offer/desire to examine the above feathers is purely altruistic. All will be promptly returned -

CRC

Did you ever find your
ptarmigan?

21-1987

(1)

7 DEC 1987

Greetings Ella,

I wondered where you went but
figured you must have been busy
with work. As for the N. Parula. I'm
no doubt in my mind that it was a
N. Parula. It was very ~~old~~ worn and although
this might not normally be the case
the wear was obvious as the rectrices were
strikingly frayed etc. I've seen spring
Bk-thr. Grey specimens one of which
was relatively fresh, the other very worn.
Since adults typically molt into a fresh
full basic plumage I suspect the
Parula to be a worn ~~and~~ no. old bird.
The wearing of course sufficient enough to

(2)

remove the outer couple mm's as the
secondaries & coverts ~~are~~, thus eliminating
the wing bars. Severe wear should not affect
the general appearance of the rest of the
bird hence it fits perfectly into the
? Xiparola. One other observer noted all of
the above at the close ~~range~~ range we were
at. However, if it's not accepted, such
is life.

Yes, I generally try to send my
observations ~~to~~ to AB. Generally they
go thru Gale Monson but am trying to
develop correspondence w/ Dave Ste

Had a pretty good fall binding
~~for~~ ^{for} play and binding for work. In

S.W. Colo. in early Oct saw merlin,
Swamp Sparrow, Blk-thr. Blue Warbler, Red-eyed
vireo and dickcissel. Records of interest
to you from Utah Aug-Nov include

- Swainson's Hawk - 1 @ Bear's Ears ⁴/₃ Oct
 - Al. Harrier - 1 @ summit Navajo Mt. 30 Aug
 - merlin - 1 on Cedar Mesa 6 Sept.
 - C. Leon - 1 @ Recapture Res @ Blanding 28 Oct
 - N. Pygmy Owl - 1 @ Arch Canyon w/ Blanding 18 Oct
 - W. T. Swift - 50+ @ Bluffs 17 Oct
 - Black Phoebe - 1 in Road Canyon, Cedar Mesa 9 Sept
 - Evening Grosbeak - 1 @ Mouth Chino Wash / San Juan R
on 17 Oct. Several groups of 1-5 noted
Golden-crowned Kinglet - 1 @ Bear's Ears on 4 Oct to my 1st
ever on Elk Ridge, but that may not
mean any thing. but saw nothing
of note.
- Spent 5th & 6th Dec on lower Chino W. & Rapplee Ridge
Our trip on the San Juan ~~to~~ Bluffs on
17 Oct didn't turn up much. Here in
N. AZ saw some fun stuff including
Gn-bk heron, w. t. swift, sabbine's gull and
others.

As regards N. AZ data (or lack thereof)
I hope to fill in the void somewhat

with a paper on the ~~the~~ birds of northern
Black Mesa. Peabody Coal Co. has agreed
to cover pub costs and it should come out
as part museum of Northern Arizona's Bulletin
series this winter. The whole project has
been an eye-opener.

Again it was good to hear from you
and the birds of Utah. We're a child
due in February so Bliss trips would be
out for January - Feb. However the spring is
wide open so let me know if a trip is
beginning to form it'll be right up San Juan Co.
is a favorite stopping ground for us.

Take care & have
a merry Christmas

Chuck