

8-1996
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690 East 2780 North
Provo, Utah 84604-4045
3 June 1996
(801) 377-3397

Mrs. Richard S. Sorensen
3868 Marsha Drive
West Valley City, UT 84120

Dear Ella:

Of course I've heard of you! Merrill Webb suggested yesterday that I write to you and send you the enclosed pictures.

I am a member of the Utah County Birders and have been an amateur bird photographer for the past 20 years. At present, I am using a Canon EOS Elan camera with a Sigma 500mm Autofocus lens, and Fujicolor ASA 100 film.

This past week, I took pictures of two rare sightings: the Scarlet Tanager and the Olive Tree-Pipit! Of course I realize the latter sounds crazy, but so far as I can tell from the National Geographic Field Guide to the BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA, second edition, pages 340-341, the bird is a pipit and can't be any other kind of pipit.

Scarlet Tanager

Photographed Monday afternoon, 27 May 1996, near Utah Lake State Park. From Center Street, follow the dirt road leading south along the Provo River. The Scarlet Tanager was first sighted about four o'clock PM on Sunday, the day before, in the cottonwood trees to the west, before the nearby turnoff that is closed to Motor Vehicles. The weather had been partly cloudy, occasionally rainy and windy, and sometimes sunny. I was there shortly after noon on Monday. People who have gone there since, early in the morning, have not seen the bird.

A group had been viewing it in the trees, and it was back behind the leaves when I first saw it. When the group left, and I stood there alone trying to take pictures, it moved forward into the sunlight, so that I was able to see it clearly and get good pictures. I enclose two views.

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Olive Tree-Pipit

Photographed in Utah Lake State Park late afternoon, Wednesday, 29 May 1996. Head for the south pier, and before you drive along the pier itself, and just as a campground road branches off to the right (west of the Marina), there is a clear view of the Provo River to the left. There had been high water in the river and debris washed up on the gravel. I saw a little brown bird where I had previously seen a Spotted Sandpiper, and drew near in my car and took a series of pictures from the window of the car. I enclose all five, and have numbered them, as follows:

1. Shows how near the bird was to the River.
2. Shows the pink legs, and lightly streaked olive-gray back.
3. Shows the rich buffy breast, spotted, the white outer tail feather, and the **unique and distinctive eyebrow: buffy by the bill, with a brown dividing line that curves up from in front of the eye, and white over the eye and on back.** No other pipit shows the brown dividing line in the eyebrow.
4. Shows dark slender tail, slightly notched; white underparts, lightly marked.
5. Shows the round, dark eye, enclosed in its brown "horseshoe"; the white of the eyebrow that **begins above** the eye; and the broad white stripe that curves from the bill around the dark ear patch, not quite meeting the white eyebrow; and the slender, dark pipit bill.

I hope that this sighting and identification can be confirmed by those who are far more skilled in birding than I.

Good luck! Waiting to hear from you, Sincerely,

Margaret T. Sanchez

Margaret Tuttle Sanchez

Copy to Merrill Webb

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