

OBRC report: 2001 Magnolia Warbler

To: Harry Nehls <hnehs6@comcast.net>

Harry,

I was going through old field notes and found this bit of a description (photo of original field notes attached) of a Magnolia Warbler seen on the Scio Breeding Bird Survey. It's a brief report of a brief sighting, but I am confident in the identification, and would be remiss if I failed to send it in.

1. contact information.

Jeff Harding
39127 Griggs Drive
Lebanon, Oregon 97355
jeffharding@centurytel.net

2. Bird identification

One bright male Magnolia Warbler, *Dendroica magnolia*.

3. Dates

June 17, 2001.

4. Location

Northeast of Sublimity, Marion County, on Carter Road, south of Highway 214, north of Triumph Road.

5. Details

Here is what I wrote at the time, before continuing the survey, and before consulting a field guide:

Warbler
Bright yellow chin
Yellow breast with broad black streaks coming together at throat
Face – eye – auricular black
Pale superciliary
Back blueish-black
White under tail

A photo of those notes is attached. (I added the identification later)

The event was during the Scio BBS, at one of the stops toward the end. During the three-minute observation period, I heard a warbler-type song I was not familiar with. When the three minutes ended, I crossed the road to see what was singing. The bird was in a tree not 10 yards off the road, to the northwest, in plain sight, as described. It was facing me, and I only got the frontal view. Bill Thackaberry had stayed in the car, and when the bird flitted off momentarily, I ran back to get him, but we did not relocate the bird in a few minutes, and we continued the survey. Afterward, we returned to the site for a few minutes, but did not relocate it. Dave Copeland came out that afternoon. He said that he played a Magnolia Warbler song, and got an immediate response, exactly like the recording, but never saw the bird.

The site was an overgrown orchard, with mature fruit/nut trees, as well as a tangle of weeds and shrubs. Later in the year, before the next survey, the orchard was destroyed, and Christmas trees planted.

The notes are sketchy, and don't describe how I eliminated non-warblers, but I am not sure what other sort of bird would exhibit those characters. Other passerines were present for comparison, including Cedar Waxings, Black-capped Chickadees and Song Sparrows, others as well – the patch was quite birdy.

No other warbler would exhibit those characteristics. The closest I can think of is a hybrid Audubon's X Myrtle Warbler, that had both a yellow throat and a considerable superciliary, along with the brightest, most complete yellow ground color to the breast possible (on the belly as well), and with the boldest black streaks on the breast.

It was around 9:00 in the morning, under a clear sky, looking northwest at the bird, so viewing conditions were excellent. While it was brief, I did get the binoculars (Bausch & Lomb Elite 10x50) on it and had a good look. I knew I had seen them in the books, but did not know at the time what it was, so I wrote down what I saw before moving on.

6. Photos and recordings

None

