

FIRST RECORD OF AUDUBON'S WARBLER (*DENDROICA CORONATA AUDUBONI*) IN JAMAICA

GARY R. GRAVES

Department of Vertebrate Zoology, MRC-116, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution,
P.O. Box 37012, Washington, D. C. 20013-7012, USA; e-mail: gravesg@si.edu

Abstract: I observed and photographed an "Audubon's" Warbler (*Dendroica coronata auduboni*) in Kingston, Jamaica, in December 2005. This is the first well-documented record of the *auduboni* population complex of the Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*) in Jamaica and the Caribbean.

Key words: "Audubon's" Warbler, Caribbean, *Dendroica coronata auduboni*, Jamaica, Yellow-rumped Warbler

Resumen: PRIMER REGISTRO DE LA BIJIRITA DE AUDUBON (*DENDROICA CORONATA AUDUBONI*) EN JAMAICA. Se observó y fotografió una Bijirita de Audubon (*Dendroica coronata auduboni*) en Kingston, Jamaica, en diciembre del 2005. Este es el primer registro bien documentado del complejo poblacional *auduboni* de la Bijirita Coronada (*Dendroica coronata*) en Jamaica y el Caribe.

Palabras clave: Bijirita Coronada, Bijirita de Audubon, Caribe, *Dendroica coronata auduboni*, Jamaica

Résumé : PREMIERE OBSERVATION DE PARULINE D'AUDUBON (*DENDROICA CORONATA AUDUBONI*) EN JAMAÏQUE. J'ai observé et photographié en décembre 2005 une Paruline « d'Audubon » (*Dendroica coronata auduboni*) à Kingston en Jamaïque. C'est la première observation bien documentée d'un individu du complexe d'espèce *auduboni* de la Paruline à croupion jaune (*Dendroica coronata*) en Jamaïque et dans la Caraïbe.

Mots-clés : Paruline "d'Audubon", Caraïbe, *Dendroica coronata auduboni*, Jamaïque, Paruline à croupion jaune

THE *AUDUBONI* GROUP of populations of the Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*) breeds in western North America from British Columbia south through the mountains of the western United States to Durango, Mexico (American Ornithologists' Union 1957, Dunn and Garrett 1997). The *auduboni* group winters commonly in the western United States from California, Arizona, and New Mexico southward through western and highland Mexico and sparsely south to Honduras. Individuals with *auduboni* plumage characteristics occur casually in eastern North America south to Florida. The only previous report of *auduboni* in the Caribbean was an inadequately documented sight record from Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands (Aldridge 1987). In this note I photographically document the first record for the Caribbean in Jamaica.

On 19 December 2005, I observed and photographed an "Audubon's" Warbler (*Dendroica coronata auduboni*) in Hope Botanical Gardens, Kingston, Jamaica (18°01.34'N, 76°44.95'W; WGS-84). The warbler, which appeared to be a male in first basic plumage, was studied through binoculars (Zeiss, 10×40) at close range (6-8 m) in good morning light for about 5 min (08:45-08:50 hr). The warbler was similar in appearance to a male "Myrtle" Warbler (*Dendroica c. coronata*) observed earlier

that morning, but differed in possessing a bright yellow throat and in lacking a pale supraloral streak and superciliary (Fig. 1). The warbler's distinctive call note was sharper than those of nearby "Myrtle" Warblers. The photo-documentation represents the first record of the *auduboni* population complex of the Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*) in Jamaica.

Brian Schmidt, Ricardo Miller, and I relocated and photographed the "Audubon's" Warbler at close range (6-10 m) for more than 1 hr on 20 December (08:30-09:30 hr). It associated closely with several "Myrtle" Warblers, part of a mixed-species flock that frequented three enormous trees (*Enterlobium cyclocarpum*) growing on the mowed lawn. This introduced tree is seasonally deciduous and the pinnately-compound foliage preferred by the warblers was beginning to abscise. In addition to the "Audubon's" Warbler and "Myrtle" Warbler, the loosely organized flock included Northern Parula (*Parula americana*), Magnolia Warbler (*D. magnolia*), Cape May Warbler (*D. tigrina*), Black-throated Blue Warbler (*D. caerulescens*), Yellow-throated Warbler (*D. dominica*), Prairie Warbler (*D. discolor*), Palm Warbler (*D. palmarum*), and American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*). Schmidt and I returned with Catherine Levy and several other



Fig. 1. “Audubon’s” Warbler in Hope Botanical Gardens, Kingston, Jamaica, 20 December 2005. Photos by Brian K. Schmidt. See pdf file for color.

observers on 21 December and watched the warbler forage in the *Enterlobium* trees for another 2 hr (07:30-09:30 hr). The species composition of the flock was unchanged from the previous morning but the number of “Myrtle” Warblers had increased significantly (four to 15 individuals) suggesting the overnight arrival of migrants. The number of “Myrtle” Warblers in the area dwindled to two individuals by the morning of 22 December and the “Audubon’s” Warbler could not be located.

“Myrtle” Warblers exhibit an irruptive abundance pattern in Jamaica and are rare or absent in Kingston during many winters (e.g., 2003-2004). The correlative evidence suggests that the *auduboni* individual was associated with the pulse of “Myrtle” Warblers that passed through the Kingston area in mid-December 2005.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Catherine Levy and Susan Koenig for comments on the manuscript, Brian Schmidt for photographing the bird, and the James Bond and Alexander Wetmore funds of the Smithsonian Institution for support.

LITERATURE CITED

- ALDRIDGE, B. M. 1987. Sampling migratory birds and other observations on Providenciales Islands B. W. I. North America Bird Bander 12:13-18.
- AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS’ UNION. 1957. Checklist of North American birds. 5th ed. American Ornithologists’ Union, Baltimore, MD.
- DUNN, J. L., AND K. L. GARRETT. 1997. A field guide to the warblers of North America. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, MA.