

LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY

P.O. BOX 160, Port Rowan, Ontario, Canada N0E 1M0 Tel: (519) 586-3531



RARITY REPORT

In order that any sight record or banding of a rare species can be accepted for the historical record, it must be properly documented. LPBO cooperators are therefore asked to complete a form in every case where a rarity is being claimed. Guidance as to which species are considered rare in the Long Point area may be obtained from the Migration Program Manager. Each observer should prepare his/her description independently and preferably before consulting any field guides or other literature. PLEASE PRINT.

Species claimed: Blue Grosbeak (Guiraca caerulea)

No. of birds: one Age: Unknown, 45y? Sex: female

Date(s): 6 May to May 2004

Place: Eastern Tip of Long Point

Time(s) of Observation: 1900 to 2100 ~ 6 May, daily until departure.

Who first saw the bird(s): Sophie Barker

Who first identified it: Mike Burrell

Other observers (names and addresses): Christian Friis, Adam Knight, Juliette Juillard, Crissy Panellucci, Patricia Breiter. [C/O LPBO]

Any who disagree: None

Your previous experience with the species: In Mexico

Your previous experience with any closely similar species:

(a) Formerly: Indigo Bunting in North America, Lazul: Bunting in South Dakota, Rose-breasted Grosbeak in North America, Black-headed Grosbeak W. North America.

(b) Same day: Rose-breasted Grosbeak

Species present for comparison: Baltimore Oriole, Gray-colored Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Northern Warbler

Which were beside it for comparison: Baltimore Oriole

Distance from observer(s): Ranged from 10m to 100m

How measured: Estimate

Optical aids used: Swift Audubon 8.5x, 44 Binoculars.

Weather conditions (at time of observation)

Visibility: 2-3 km

Cloud Cover: 9/10

Lighting: overcast diffuse light.

Wind direction and speed: SW BF3

Other relevant conditions:
(eg. rain, snow cover, etc.)**For "Waterbird " records only**

Lake conditions:

Wave height:

Height of observer above lake:

Was observer's position sheltered:

Weather system preceding the date of observation (if known):

Southernly system, otherwise not known precisely.

Attach weather map clipping from local or national newspaper if relevant.

Associated movements of other species: migrants included Least Flycatchers, Blue Jays, Ruby-Crowned Kinglets, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, white-crowned Sparrow and American Goldfinch.

Was the bird trapped: No

Band # if banded:

Was it photographed: Yes

If yes, by whom (name and address): Mike Burrell [10 LPBC]

Specimen or parts preserved:

Present location:

Circumstances:

After missing much of a good day at the tip, because of a supply trip into town, I returned to the news that a Blue Grackle had been seen earlier in the afternoon. I unloaded the supplies, with help, and immediately ran out to the point to relocate the bird. Within about five minutes of birding the point it was relocated in a patch of willows on the north-shore. We observed the bird for about two hours, while trying to capture it unsuccessfully; feeding with Orioles it had apparently been with for the entire day.

Description:

Give separate description for (a) in the field (b) in the hand. Include full measurements and wing formula with hand descriptions.

- a) Overall - brown plumage, large bumping-like bill, rufous wing-bars, slight bluish wash to tail. while foraging the bird bobbed its tail in a Phoebe-like behavior. Large size apparent.
- Head - Brown, very large bill (reminiscent of RBGR)
- Upperparts - Brown, nothing very noticeable besides the distinct wing bars. The upper bar (median coverts) more distinct than lower (greater coverts).
- Underparts - Brown, unstreaked, paler throat.

(Continue on extra sheet if required)


Did you refer to any guides/other literature:

(a) at the time: No

(b) afterwards: Yes - Sibley

Finally, is this record 100% certain? Absolutely

Signed:


(Christian Fried)

Date: 7 May 2004

Mailing Address: 610 LPBO.

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Species claimed: BLUE GROSBEAR

No. of birds: 1

Age: -

Sex: FEMALE

Date(s): 6TH MAY 2004

Place: THE TIP, (AREA 01) LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY, PORT ROWAN, ONTARIO

Time(s) of Observation: 2 PM & 7 PM (APPROX)

Who first saw the bird(s): SOPHIE BARKER, C/O LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY

Who first identified it: MIKE BURRELL, C/O LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY

Other observers (names and addresses): ADAM KNIGHT, CHRISTIAN FRAIS, PATRICIA BREKKE, JULIETTE JULLERAT,
CRISSY RANELLUCCI, C/O LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY

Any who disagree: -

Your previous experience with the species: NONE

Your previous experience with any closely similar species:

(a) Formerly: Banded and extracted Rose-breasted Grosbeak (5 individuals)
Extracted ♂ Indigo Bunting and saw two individuals (both male)

(b) Same day:

Three Rose-breasted Grosbeak observed personally.

Species present for comparison: Baltimore Oriole

Which were beside it for comparison: Baltimore Oriole

Distance from observer(s): Between 10 and 20 metres

How measured: First seen at south end of a net ride, while I was standing at the north end.

Optical aids used: Binoculars, telescope, digital camera.

Weather conditions (at time of observation)

Visibility: 2 km

Cloud Cover: 9/10

Lighting: -

Wind direction and speed: SW, 2

Other relevant conditions: THUNDERSTORMS APPROACHING
(eg. rain, snow cover, etc.)

For "Waterbird " records only

Lake conditions:

Wave height:

Height of observer above lake:

Was observer's position sheltered:

Weather system preceding the date of observation (if known):

A FRONTAL SYSTEM WITH SOUTH WESTERLY WINDS PASSING OVER DURING THE LAST 24 HRS, THE COLD FRONT BRINGING CLOUD IN THE AFTERNOON AND THUNDERSTORMS BY EVENING.

Attach weather map clipping from local or national newspaper if relevant.

Associated movements of other species: A WIDE VARIETY OF OTHER MIGRANTS INCLUDING 10 CHIMNEY SWIFT, 22 LEAST FLYCATCHER, THE SEASON'S FIRST RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD, 126 BLUE JAY, 33 RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET, 9 AMERICAN PIPIT, 47 YELLOW WARBLER, 15 ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK, 68 WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW AND 35 AMERICAN GOLDFINCH.

Was the bird trapped: No

Band # if banded: -

Was it photographed: Yes

If yes, by whom (name and address): MIKE BURRELL, C/O LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY

Specimen or parts preserved: -

Present location: AT TIME OF WRITING, STILL PRESENT WITHIN THE TIP CENSUS AREA

Circumstances: AT 2PM I WAS WALKING EAST ALONG THE NORTH TRACK TO THE TIP. I STOPPED TO LOOK IN THE LOW WILLOWS BETWEEN NETS. A BIRD FLEW IN FROM THE WEST AND LANDED IN THE WILLOWS ACROSS THE NET RIDE FROM WHERE I WAS STANDING. ALTHOUGH I WAS AWARE THAT BLUE GROSBEAK HAS OCCURRED IN THE LONG POINT AREA IN THE PAST, I ALSO KNEW THIS WAS A RARE SPECIES HERE AND MY FIRST ASSUMPTION WAS THAT THIS WAS A FEMALE INDIGO BUNTING - (TO DATE I HAVE STILL NOT SEEN ONE). AS A RESULT I DID NOT LOOK AT THE BIRD FOR THAT LONG BUT NOTED SEVERAL FEATURES WHICH LED ME TO LOOK IT UP IN SIBLEY AT THE END OF MY WALK. WHEN I REALISED IT WAS FAR MORE LIKE A FEMALE BLUE GROSBEAK, I MENTIONED THE POSSIBLE SIGHTING TO OTHERS AT THE FIELD STATION. THEY WERE NATURALLY SCEPTICAL BUT LESS THAN TWO HOURS LATER TWO OTHER VOLUNTEERS, MIKE BURRELL AND ADAM KNIGHT, FOUND THE BIRD NEAR THE TIP AND SAW IT WELL, CONFIRMING THE IDENTIFICATION AS A FEMALE BLUE GROSBEAK.

EVERYONE PRESENT AT THE FIELD STATION LOCATED THE BIRD LATER THAT EVENING AND SAW IT WELL IN TELESCOPES, AND PHOTOGRAPHS WERE ALSO TAKEN. THEY ALL SEEMED CERTAIN OF THE IDENTIFICATION.

Description:

Give separate description for (a) in the field (b) in the hand. Include full measurements and wing formula with hand descriptions.

ON FIRST SEEING THE BIRD IN PROFILE THERE WERE NO OTHER SPECIES FOR IMMEDIATE SIZE COMPARISON. IT WAS GENERALLY PALE, MEDIUM BROWN AND OF BUNTING-LIKE BUILD WITH A BLUE TAIL. THE MAIN FIELD MARK WHICH STAYED IN MY MIND WAS A RUSTY DOUBLE WING-BAR FORMED BY THE TIPS OF THE MEDIAN AND GREATER COVERTS. APART FROM THIS I WAS ALSO AWARE THAT THE BIRD HAD QUITE A HEAVY STRUCTURE, AND A LARGER BILL AND LONGER TAIL THAN MY PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE OF INDIGO BUNTING LED ME TO EXPECT. MY INEXPERIENCE OF BOTH SPECIES LED ME TO THINK THERE WAS NO REASON TO SUPPOSE IT WAS ANYTHING ELSE. ON CONSULTING SIBLEY, ILLUSTRATIONS OF INDIGO BUNTING SHOWED NO TRACE OF RUSTY WING-BARS, ONLY A FAINTLY PALER TIPPING. ON CHECKING BLUE GROSBEAK, WHERE THIS FEATURE IS CLEARLY SHOWN IN ALL AGES AND BOTH SEXES, I REALISED THAT THIS WOULD HAVE EXPLAINED THE HEAVY STRUCTURE AND BILL, LENGTH OF TAIL, AND OVERALL SIZE. WHEN THE BIRD WAS RELOCATED IN THE EVENING, IT WAS SEEN FEEDING ON THE SAME BRANCH AS TWO BALTIMORE ORIDLES, WHICH WERE APPROXIMATELY THE SAME SIZE. THE BIRD WAS ALSO HEARD TO EMIT ONE OR TWO LOW, HOARSE NOTES, WHICH MATCHED THE DESCRIPTION IN SIBLEY OF THE FLIGHT CALL OF BLUE GROSBEAK.

(Continue on extra sheet if required)

Did you refer to any guides/other literature: YES - FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA,
BY DAVID STBLEY

(a) at the time: NO

(b) afterwards: YES, AND BETWEEN MY FIRST & SECOND SIGHTINGS OF THE BIRD

Finally, is this record 100% certain? YES

Signed:



Date:

7th MAY 2004

Mailing Address: C/o LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY