

First record of Ruby-throated Hummingbird in Arizona

By Rich Hoyer



Text and digiscoped images by Richard C. Hoyer using an Olympus C-4000 ZOOM digital camera with a Leica Apo-Televid 77 spotting scope and 32X wide-angle eyepiece.

8 February 2005

First seen on 19 or 20 December 2004, Arizona's first Ruby-throated Hummingbird was recognized as an *Archilochus sp.*, but with only a single fleeting glimpse was passed off as a probable Costa's Hummingbird. When resighted on 1 January 2005, and confirmed to that genus after all, recordings were made, digiscoped images were obtained, and a firestorm of interest was ignited. At least 32 people stopped by 3919 N. Vine Ave. in north-central Tucson before the bird was captured on 11 January and confirmed to species. They noted its clean white throat contrasting with the face mask, dark green upperparts including the entire crown, shortish bill, short wings falling well short of the tail tip, and lack of tail wagging in hovering flight.

3 March 2005

Throughout its stay at least 140 visitors saw this bird. It was last sighted on 14 April (although it may have stayed a few days more) and during this time it was in continuous molt of the heavily worn wing and tail feathers. In this photo, the distinctive pointed tip and straight edge of the inner web of p6, the fourth primary visible from outermost, is quite noticeable. The last primary to molt is p9, still very worn here, while p10 is just emerging as a pin-feather. Note missing tail feathers.