

Oporornis formosus, the scientific name of June's bird means "beautiful autumn bird," but this resident of the deeply shaded woods and dense, damp thickets is beautiful year round. Oporornis warblers can be tough to identify, but this bird is easily the most recognizable of the group, and if you hear it sing - it is a notable and persistent songster - you can name it at once.

The common name of the species (bestowed on it by Wilson in 1832) includes the name of a state that is very close to the center of the bird's breeding abundance. In this respect, it is one of the few appropriately named warblers, for the Tennessee and Connecticut warblers and the Louisiana Water-thrush all breed much farther north than their names suggest.

This species is a regular straggler in the state and was first observed here on May 31, 1898, in Medford by F. H. Mosher, an assistant to Forbush. The fact that the picture shows the bird feeding young is misleading, because there are no known nesting records in Massachusetts. However, there are indications that this species may have nested in the state or probably will do so before long. On August 17-18, 1965, two immature males were netted in Raynham by Kathleen Anderson. In view of the date, they may have been fledged locally. In 1983, singing males held forth for extended periods in Carlisle and in Fowl Meadow, and this spring, 1984, a pair was observed at the latter site.

So, what bird is it? For those birders who saw any of the three warblers of this species in Mt. Auburn Cemetery this spring walking about on the ground much in the manner of waterthrushes, it is unnecessary to explain that the bird pictured is a Kentucky Warbler and probably a female, judging by the apparently dull coloration. See the Master Guide to Birding, 3: 171, for a similar bird in color. There are no wingbars, the underparts are light (yellow), and the upperparts are dark (olive). There are bold (yellow) but incomplete spectacles to separate the dark crown from the black on the face and sides of the neck. The black mark beneath the eye is diagnostic and is less extensive in the female bird.

George W. Gove, Winchester

Our bird for August pictured opposite was photographed as it came to a feeder at the Mansfield home of the photographer in February of 1979. Readers should ignore the dark line that extends from the nape across the shoulder and onto the belly of the bird. It is only a shadow, not a fieldmark.

Bird Observer would welcome any contributions from readers of pictures that can be used in "At A Glance." Any picture or color slide that will make a clear black and white print can be used.

# At a Glance . . .

Photo by Roger Everett.  
See note on previous page.

Courtesy of Massachusetts Audubon Society



Can you identify this bird? Identification will be discussed in next issue's *At a Glance*. Bird Observer will again award a PRIZE to the reader who submits the most correct answers in 1984. Please send your entry on a postcard to Bird Observer, 462 Trapelo Road, Belmont, MA 02178 before the answer is published in the next issue.



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