

AT A GLANCE *December 1992* _____ *Wayne R. Petersen*

December's At A Glance photograph provides two views of the same species. Since it is clear from the slender pointed bill that the mystery bird is a warbler, the two angles of the species' head are especially useful in making an identification because nearly all warblers are identifiable by their head and facial patterns alone. The most outstanding features of the mystery birds are their prominent facial stripes, dark through and below the eyes and light above the eyes. In addition, the pictured warbler shows distinct pale crescents below the eyes, along with dark side streaks and at least one pale wing bar. Also, the tail is relatively long when compared to certain other warbler species.

Although the true coloring of the mystery warbler cannot be appreciated in the photograph, the supercilium, suborbital crescents, and the underparts are actually bright yellow. When this bright yellow coloration is seen in conjunction with the previously mentioned facial patterns and black side streaks, the pictured birds can only be Prairie Warblers (*Dendroica discolor*).

Besides their brilliant yellow plumage, Prairie Warblers characteristically wag their tails, which are extensively white on the terminal outer corners. Their ascending buzzy song is a frequently heard summer sound along powerline cuts and in pine barren areas.



Photo by Ralph E. Lawrence

Courtesy of MAS

AT A GLANCE



Can you identify these birds? Identification will be discussed in the next issue. Photos by S. Perkins (upper right), W. Ervin (lower right), and W. Petersen (left). Courtesy of MAS.

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