

RECENT WINTER RECORDS OF THE BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER IN FLORIDA

BILL PRANTY^{1,4}, JOHN H. BOYD III² AND KURT RADAMAKER³

¹8515 Village Mill Row, Bayonet Point, Florida 34667

E-Mail: billpranty@hotmail.com

²15770 SW 104th Terrace, Apartment 103, Miami, Florida 33196

³16313 East Crystal Point Drive, Fountain Hills, Arizona 85268

⁴Current address: Avian Ecology Lab, Archbold Biological Station,
123 Main Drive, Venus, Florida 33960

Robertson and Woolfenden (1992) challenged Florida birders of all degree to “seek and preserve the best possible supporting documentation” of birds rare in the state. Documentation is especially needed for Neotropical migrant species observed in Florida during winter. Collectively, Robertson and Woolfenden (1992) and Stevenson and Anderson (1994) listed 30 Neotropical migrants that had been reported between December and February, but for which verifiable evidence was lacking. Ten of these species were wood-warblers. Subsequently, photographs have been obtained for four of these 30 species during winter: the Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*; Bowman et al. 1995), Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*; Pranty 2000), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*; Doyle 2002), and Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) (R. Webb in Pranty 1998).

The Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*) breeds from southeastern Canada south through the Appalachian mountains to extreme northeastern Georgia (AOU 1998). Its principle wintering range is from the Bahamas south through the Greater Antilles, the Cayman Islands, Yucatan Peninsula, and Belize (AOU 1998). It winters in Florida annually, primarily the extreme south, in small numbers. Since winter 1980-1981, three to 15 Black-throated Blue Warblers have been reported annually on Christmas Bird Counts in Florida (Audubon website: <<http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc>>), but none of these winter reports appears to have been documented (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, Stevenson and Anderson 1994). Here, we describe two Black-throated Blue Warblers photographed within Everglades National Park in January 2001.

On 27 January 2001, JHB discovered a female Black-throated Blue Warbler along the boardwalk at West Lake, Miami-Dade County. The bird was with a mixed wood-warbler flock that included Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*), Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*), and American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*). The following day, Boyd relocated the Black-throated Blue Warbler within the same flock and photographed it as it foraged among black mangrove (*Avicennia germinans*) pneumatophores below the boardwalk. The sole photograph obtained shows only a dorsal view of the bird, but is identifiable. Field marks visible include: the pale olive head and mantle; dull bluish tinge on the wings, rump, and tail; and small white patches barely visible at the base of the primaries. The very restricted amount of white in the primaries suggests a first-year female (Dunn and Garrett 1997, Sibley 2000). The head is in shadow but a hint of the pale supercilium appears to be visible.

Two days later, on 30 January 2001, KR photographed a male Black-throated Blue Warbler among other wood-warblers along Snake Bight Trail, Monroe County. Again, only a single photograph was obtained, but clearly visible are the slate-blue upperparts; conspicuous white patch at the base of the primaries; black face, lower part of the head,

chin, throat, and flanks; and the remainder of the underparts white. The legs and eyes are black. The back appears to be solid blue without black streaking, representing *D. c. caeruleascens* (Dunn and Garrett 1997, Sibley 2000), which, based on specimens, is the more common subspecies in Florida (Stevenson and Anderson 1994).

Copies of both warbler photographs have been deposited at Tall Timbers Research Station (TTRS) and the FOS Archives at the Florida Museum of Natural History at the University of Florida (FOSA); Boyd's photograph is TTRS P767 and FOSA 123, and Rademaker's photograph is TTRS P768 and also FOSA 123. Todd Engstrom and Tom Webber provided catalog numbers for TTRS and FOSA, respectively.

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