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**Rufous crown feathers on adult male Tennessee Warblers.**—The presence of rufous crown feathers in Tennessee Warblers (*Vermivora peregrina*) is an undescribed feature that supports taxonomic affinities with other *Vermivora* warblers, although the possibility of hybrid origins exists. In 1980, among Tennessee Warblers collected from Aquatuk Lake in northeastern Ontario, J. A. Dick noted two adult males with crown feathers with some rufous coloration among the normally grayish crown feathers. This phenomenon seems to have been overlooked in descriptions of this species, except for a very brief passing comment by Chapman (1917). S. V. Nash and R. D. James located another example in northeastern Ontario in 1982. The Royal Ontario Museum has six additional birds displaying some rufous in the crown. This note describes in greater detail the extent of rufous crown feathers in Tennessee Warblers.

J. A. D. asked curators of several other North American museums, if they had Tennessee Warblers with rufous crown feathers. Nine of 850 (about 1%) were reported to have them. The proportion may be higher, as the coloration can be overlooked easily (see below) and in Royal Ontario Museum collections eight examples among 136 specimens (nearly 6%) show some rufous on crown feathers.

The rufous feathers, as is typical of other *Vermivora*, are found on adult males that normally have completely gray crowns. On any individual feather, the rufous is in the center of the feather, including the rachis, although one vane may be more highly colored. It may be fairly distinct and roughly tear-drop shaped, and the gray distal border of the feather is as wide as the rufous drop. Thus, the rufous might be scarcely, if at all, visible when the feathers are in place, as only the gray terminal edges of the feathers would show. On some other birds, the rufous is much less distinct, being a very light suffusion among the gray, and extends closer to the distal ends of the crown feathers. This type is usually visible with the feathers in place but can be so pale as to be scarcely noticeable.

The rufous color is not as orange as on an Orange-crowned Warbler (*V. celata*), nor as chestnut as on a Nashville Warbler (*V. ruficapilla*). It is somewhat intermediate, but more orange than chestnut. It approximates the orange-rufous of Smithe (1975), color 132C, but is very much paler than that illustrated, making it easy to overlook. The number of colored feathers also varies considerably from bird to bird. Some have only one or a very few, usually close to the front center of the crown and usually, but not always, the more strongly colored; one bird had only a single very pale colored feather. The paleness and the small numbers and size of the feathers makes them difficult to detect. On several others there were numerous colored feathers, usually less intensely colored and lying in a "patch" across the center to hind crown. The rufous coloration becomes more obvious if the feathers are ruffled to show the length of individual feathers. But it is also possible that the rufous color has faded on the older specimens, making them even more difficult to detect. One bird showed some stronger coloring toward the front center as well as more lightly colored feathers toward the back of the crown. Another showed a suffusion of color across only the fore crown, strongest toward the front center.

There is only one known hybrid specimen involving the Tennessee Warbler, Carnegie Museum of Natural History 152341, collected at the museum's Powdermill Nature Reserve, Rector, Pennsylvania, on 26 August 1979. The other putative parent species was identified by K. C. Parkes and R. C. Leberman as the Nashville Warbler, a species in which adult males have an obvious rufous crown patch. The hybrid specimen, however, is a male in first basic plumage. Although 70% of males of *V. r. ruficapilla* of this plumage stage in the Carnegie collection have crown patches, the patches are unknown in young Tennessee Warblers, and there is no sign of one in the hybrid (K. C. Parkes, in litt.). Intrageneric hybrids

are rare in the Parulinae (Parkes 1978; Bledsoe, 1988), and it would seem unlikely that the crown patch in Tennessee Warblers is a consequence of hybridization. None of those we have examined with rufous crown feathers would appear to be anything but typical Tennessee Warblers in other respects. With more than one percent of the population exhibiting rufous crown feathers, it seems much more likely that the rufous is a vestigial plumage pattern of the type typically found in most other members of the genus *Vermivora*.

Among other *Vermivora* warblers in which the males exhibit obvious rufous crown patches, it might be presumed that these patches serve a display function. It seems very unlikely, however, that the coloration now serves any display function in Tennessee Warblers, since it is either very restricted or very pale.

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**American Goldfinch nests in purple loosestrife.**—Bird foraging, nesting, and other activities are often closely related to vegetation characteristics. Introduced plants may alter the architecture and chemistry of the plant community, potentially affecting the food base and nest substrate available to birds. One non-indigenous plant, purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), is said to have little value to North American wildlife, and a biological control program is predicted to dramatically reduce American populations of loosestrife (Malecki et al. 1993). Here I report American Goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*) use of loosestrife as nest substrate.

The American Goldfinch is a widespread breeding bird in North America and nests in a variety of habitats that include parks and yards with ornamental vegetation, weedy waste grounds, forest edges, fence rows, old fields, abandoned orchards, shrub swamps, and marshes. Nickell (1951) and Smith (1988) suggested that pre-Columbian habitats were beaver