

**LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE
RARE BIRD DOCUMENTATION**

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Species: Lucy's Warbler, *Oreothlypis luciae*

Location: Lafitte Woods Preserve, Grand Isle, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana

Date: 15 November 2014

Age and sex: Hatch year (formative) male

Molt status: None apparent

Number of individuals: One

Other observers: Cameron Rutt, Glenn Seeholzer, Johnathan Hruska, Matt Brady, Michael Harvey

Original observer: Van Remsen (?)

Circumstances: A group of us went to Grand Isle to chase the continuing Lucy's Warbler that had been present for a few weeks, arriving around 9:30. It took us just under an hour to relocate the bird, but we found it feeding in a dense tangle of *Baccharis* and *Tamarisk*. We were able to follow it intermittently and got some poor photos as it fed in the dense vegetation. There were a few other birders present and were able to show them the bird as well. We watched the bird for about a half hour and then went to go birding in the rest of Grand Isle.

Description: A small pale gray warbler, maybe slightly smaller than nearby Orange-crowned Warblers, but very similar to that species in structure. Compared to an Orange-crowned, it was perhaps somewhat shorter tailed and more slender overall. The pale gray coloration had a very "soft" quality to it, and was slightly paler below, with an almost creamy wash to the belly. The wings were dark and the greater and median secondary coverts had small buffy tips, indicating a bird in formative plumage. The tail was dark gray without any white spots. The tips to the retrices were fairly pointed, also indicating a young bird. The face was plain gray, so that the black eye stood out from the face quite well. There was perhaps a hint of a pale eye ring. The bill was small, dark gray, and very sharply pointed. At one point I got a brief look at some rusty coloration on the rump/uppertail coverts, but I was unable assess this character well.

Discussion: Other small gray birds with which this could be confused (Verdin, Bushtit, titmice) are sedentary and not found at this location. A Virginia's Warbler would have some yellow on the chest and some yellow on the vent, which this bird lacked.

The combination of the buffy tips to the wing coverts and the pointed tips to the retrices indicates a young bird in formative plumage (HY). Photos taken by Erik Johnson show some rusty on the rump and crown, which indicates that this is a male.

I have extensive experience with this species from doing bird survey work and territory mapping on the lower Colorado River.





