

## First Occurrence of Blue-throated Hummingbird (*Lampornis clemenciae*) in South Carolina

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On 6 August 1993, I received a call that a large, unusual hummingbird was being seen in a Laurens County yard since 31 July. After obtaining permission from the property owner, Mrs. Paula Aiken, I arranged to meet Lex Glover at the site early Saturday morning. Jerry Pasquarella, a Carolina Bird Club member from Greer, also joined the search.

We arrived at the site at 0730 hrs. There were several hummingbird feeders in the front yard, as well as a feeder and flower bed in the neighbor's back yard, with at least 8 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*) in attendance. The "odd" hummingbird was being seen mostly in the back yard, around a good size swimming pool, bordered by several blooming red Hibiscus (*Hibiscus* sp.) and tropical vines, also with reddish blossoms. The bird's reported behavior pattern was to fly down a grove of sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*), oaks (*Quercus* sp.) and Black Gum (*Nyssa aquatica*) to the pool-side blooms, then to the kitchen window (with a red-aproned figure in it); then over the house's roof to the front yard, and back to the canopy. The hummingbird was reported as avoiding the feeders.

We positioned ourselves so that all feeders and the pool could be seen; and over a period of 5 hours, a large hummingbird flew out twice following the described course. All three of us got glimpses, too brief to call, except that it was larger than a Tufted Titmouse (*Parus bicolor*) or House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) with a long full tail and noticeably slow wing-beat. The wings could actually be seen, although still too fast to count. The bird called several times, a sharp *seek* or *peek*, very different from a Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

I returned to the site alone on 9 August at 0750 hrs. At 0830 hrs., the bird flew down from the Sourwoods and hovered for several seconds, facing me, over the pool about 3 meters away. It appeared to be at least 50% larger than a Ruby-throated Hummingbird. The bird called 2-3 times while hovering, and flew to some blossoms. It had a medium-blue throat, with a few gray feathers scattered in the bib. It had a gray chest fading towards the belly, a long, fully rounded black tail, with large dirty white corner spots. The back and crown were a dark metallic green fading to a grayish-green on the cheeks; both surfaces of the wings were basically dark gray, with perhaps a brownish tinge. The bill was rather long, 1.5 times the length of the head, rather thin for the size of the bird, and slightly decurved. The face had a clear white ocular stripe, though the mustacial stripe shown in field guides (Farrand 1983, National Geographic Soc. 1987) was not noted. The bird flew up into the canopy where I observed it flitting about, possibly gnatcatching, for several minutes. The bird was seen by the owner, Mrs. Aiken one more time on either 11 or 12 August and then it disappeared.

The observed field marks matched closely those of the adult male Blue-

throated Hummingbird (*Lampornis clemenciae*) a Mexican species that reaches its northern limits in southern Arizona, southern New Mexico and the Big Bend area of Texas (A. O. U. 1983). The Blue-throat is not known for vagrancy, though a few reports are available from California, Colorado, Utah, and eastern Texas (DeSante and Pyle 1986). This is the first report of a Blue-throated Hummingbird for South Carolina (Post and Gauthreaux 1989). The report was submitted to the South Carolina Bird Records Committee. The report was accepted after its review and this species was placed on the South Carolina Provisional I list (Worthington et al. 1993).

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