

First Record of Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*) for North Carolina

Dwayne Martin

Hickory, NC

On 29 Jan 2008, I received a call from Becky Duggan saying she had a yellow oriole coming to a feeder in her back yard in Conover, Catawba County, NC. I went to her house to watch for the oriole, and within 30 minutes, it showed up. I could tell right away that it was not a Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*). Using the Sibley Guide to Birds (Sibley 2000), I was able to identify it as an immature male Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*).

The individual had a black bib that extended about half way down the breast. It was bright yellow underneath, all the way from the bottom of the black bib to the undertail coverts. Its head was black, but the black ended at the neck. This characteristic identified it as an immature male because females lack black on the head. The rest of the back was grey with black specks. There was some yellow on the wings but not as much as would be on an adult male. The wings also had two white wing bars (Fig. 1).



Scott's Oriole, 29 Jan 2008, Conover, NC. Photo by Dwayne Martin.

I called Lori Owenby who came to the Duggans' house, saw the oriole, and agreed with my identification. I took several photos of the bird and sent them to Susan Campbell, Taylor Piephoff, and Ricky Davis to make sure our identification was correct. They all agreed that it was a Scott's Oriole. With the Duggans' permission, I sent out a message on the Carolinabirds listserv about the bird. Over the next ten days, about two hundred people from five

80

states came to the Duggan home to see the Scott's Oriole. It was last seen in a tree behind the Duggan home on 10 Feb 2008.

Scott's Oriole is a fairly common breeding bird of arid mountain slopes from central Texas, west to California, and north to Nevada and Utah. A neotropical migrant, Scott's Oriole generally vacates northern breeding areas and winters in Mexico south to Oaxaca, though overwintering birds are frequently found in California. (Dunne 2006).

Scott's Oriole has been previously recorded in the eastern United States during winter. Records exist for Kentucky (Palmer-Ball 2007), New York (Wilson et al. 2009), Pennsylvania (Johnson 2007), and Georgia (Boehm and Boehm 2002), so it may not be surprising that the species was observed in North Carolina. The species is not known to have occurred in states neighboring North Carolina, with the exception of Georgia.

This sighting was accepted to the Official List by the North Carolina Bird Records Committee as the first record of Scott's Oriole in the state (LeGrand et al. 2009).

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank Steven Shultz for providing the range information for Scott's Oriole.

Literature Cited

- Birds in Forested Landscapes. Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Species reference for Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*), accessed 23 June 2010. <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/bfl/speciesaccts/scoori.html>
- Boehm, R. T. and M. F. Boehm. 2002. First record of Scott's Oriole from Georgia. *Oriole* 67: 49–50.
- Dunne, P. 2006. *Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion*. Houghton Mifflin, New York.
- Johnson, T. 2007. First record of Scott's Oriole for Pennsylvania. *Pennsylvania Birds* 21:26. <http://www.pabirds.org/PABIRDS/BackIssues/PBV21N1.pdf>
- LeGrand, H. E., Jr., K. E. Camburn, S. Cooper, R. J. Davis, E. V. Dean, W. K. Forsythe, J. S. Pippen, M. H. Tove, and R. L. Tyndall. 2009. 2008 annual report of the North Carolina Bird Records Committee. *Chat* 73:2.
- Palmer-Ball, B., Jr. 2007. Field note: Scott's Oriole in Franklin County. *Kentucky Warbler* 83: No. 2, May 2007.
- Sibley, D. A. 2000. *National Audubon Society: The Sibley Guide to Birds*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
- Wilson, A., J. Skelly, J. S. Bolsinger, T. W. Burke, W. D'Anna, A. Guthrie, S. S. Mitra, and D. Sherony. 2009. Report of the New York State Avian Records Committee for 2007. *Kingbird* 59:325–326. <http://www.nybirds.org/NYSARC/Reports/NYSARC2007.pdf>