

VERIFICATION OF UNUSUAL SIGHT RECORD FOR UTAH

Common Name: Yellow-billed Cuckoo Scientific Name: *Coccyzus Americanus*

Date: July 18, 1990 Time: about 10:00 a.m. Length of time observed: 1 min (approx.)

Number: 1 Age: adult Sex: ?

Location: Lytle Ranch in southwest Utah

Latilong: 37°05'N ; 114°00'W Elevation (if known): ?

Distance to bird: 30 yards Light conditions: bright, sunny day

Optical equipment: Zeiss binoculars 10X40

Weather: sunny, clear, warm (80's)

Description: (Write a detailed description of the bird's appearance, including size, shape, plumage pattern, color, and any unique features.)

When I first saw this bird perched in a bare tree I knew instantly that it was a Yellow-billed Cuckoo. It was about the size and shape of a Blue Jay, but it was more slender and had a longer tail. The lighting was excellent (I was looking west across the open area near the trailer towards the stream in the morning sun.), so I could see many details on the bird: ~~the~~ large, bright white spots in pairs on the underside of the tail; bright white underside; a dark bill with yellow ~~at~~ the base of both mandibles; rust in the primaries (other wise the upper body was grayish brown); a dark eye with a ^{slight} eyering. The one detail that differed from others of this species that I have seen was that the bird appeared to have a dark mask about the eyes (like a mangrove Cuckoo). When the bird flew away from me to the stream after a minute (?), I could see the ^{rufous} patches in the primaries and the length of the tail more clearly.

Voice or call notes and method of delivery: none

Behavior: perched on limb of bare tree in hunched-over position
then flew away from me to ^{trees near stream and disappeared}
heavily-foliated

Habitat: riparian; desert

What similar species might it have been and how were these eliminated:

Black-billed Cuckoo - not found normally in Utah; ~~tail~~ spots under
tail were large and white; base of bill was yellow; rust color in
primaries
Mangrove Cuckoo - way out of its range; underside of bird
was bright white

What experience have you had with this and similar species:

I have seen yellow-billed cuckoos at very close range at High Island,
TX, ~~at~~ at Great Swamp, NWR, New Jersey, and at the Sonvita
Creek Sanctuary in Patagonia, AZ.

Books, illustrations, and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

I did not need a book at the time. I consulted one to
write this report (scientific name, range, etc.)

Significance of record in this area or the state:

?

Additional material: (attach drawing, photograph, tape recording if available)

Description from notes taken at time of sighting notes made later from memory

Observer: JOHN T. SUGGS

Signature:

John T. Suggs

Address: 515 West 110 St, #9C
NY, NY 10025

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

Date prepared: Feb. 5, 1991

Return this form to: Ella Sorensen
3868 Marsha Drive
West Valley City, Utah 84120