

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2013-12-08 16:17:10
Observer's Name	Mark McConaughy
E-mail	TimeTraveler50@comcast.net
Phone	724.733.5299
Observer's Address	Street Address: 3787K Logans Ferry Road City: Pittsburgh State / Province: PA Postal / Zip Code: 15239-3910 Country: United States
Names of additional observers	Bill Hoch, Alex Lamoreaux
Species (Common Name)	MacGillivray's Warbler
Species (Scientific Name)	Oporonis tolmiei
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	adult female, possibly an immature male
Observation Date and Time	11-29-2013 1:30 PM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	http://ebird.org/ebird/pa/view/checklist?subID=S15844320
County	Dauphin
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Highspire
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Highspire Reservoir boardwalk
GPS coordinates of sighting	40.2061719,-76.773999
Habitat	Brush along edge of reservoir
Distance to bird	10 ft
Viewing conditions	Cool day, partly cloudy, but easily seen - hard to photographs since it was moving around
Optical equipment used	Leica 10x bins, photographed with a Sony Alpha 65 with a 75-300 mm zoom set at 300mm
Description	The specimen had a gray hooded head with a whitish chin patch and a dark gray band below the white chin patch. There is a partial white eye ring definitely broken on the front face edge, less so on the rear edge. The mantle (back), wing coverts, upper tail coverts and tail were a dark olive color. The wing primaries and secondaries had some yellowish mixed in with their olive color. The breast and flanks were yellowish with darker olive splotching. The legs and feet were pink.
Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)	The specimen was foraging in the leaf litter and brush along the Highspire Reservoir boardwalk. It was quite active and rarely stayed put in one place long enough for my camera to autofocus on it. I had to manually set a focus

at a spot it kept returning to forage and do a burst shot (i.e., multiple shots automatically taken) to get the photographs that I have posted. It was making a tik-like call chip.

**Separation from similar species
(How you eliminated others)**

The white eye ring arcs and whitish chin separate this specimen from Mourning and Connecticut Warblers. Mourning Warblers usually do not have eye ring arcs except for thin ones in some immatures and females. Mourning Warblers also usually display a yellowish chin marking, rarely the whitish chin marking. Connecticut Warblers have distinct, full eye rings and lack the whitish chin marking. Also the olive blotching along the breast and flanks is more typical of the MacGillivray's than the normally yellowish breast and flanks of the Mourning Warbler. The tail of the specimen seems to extend long past the upper tail coverts, a feature more typical of MacGillivray's than that of Mourning and Connecticut Warblers.

Discussion – anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

I am tending to view this as a possible immature male MacGillivray's since there is a darker, almost black, section to the gray patch under the whitish chin patch. It may be starting its molt into adult male which has a dark gray to black breast patch.

Additional photos of the bird are viewable at:
<http://s5.photobucket.com/user/McConaughy/library/MacGillivrays%20Warbler%20Highspire%20PA?sort=3&page=1>

Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)

I am positive based on the combination of features, not any single feature, which indicates it is a MacGillivray's Warbler and not a Mourning or Connecticut Warbler.

During

iBird Pro and Sibley Birds aps for my iPhone

After

Sibley's Guide to Birds, Dunn and Garrett's Warblers in the Peterson Field Guide series.

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings



[MacGillivraysWarbler03.jpg](#)



[MacGillivraysWarbler06b.jpg](#)



[MacGillivraysWarbler11.jpg](#)

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PORC-webform00179

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2013-12-07 10:20:29
Observer's Name	Tom Johnson
E-mail	tbj4@cornell.edu
Phone	7179915727
Observer's Address	Street Address: 24 Meadowood Dr. City: Hummelstown State / Province: Pennsylvania Postal / Zip Code: 17036 Country: United States
Names of additional observers	Sue Hannon (original finder), many other observers
Species (Common Name)	MacGillivray's Warbler
Species (Scientific Name)	Geothlypis tolmiei
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	not confirmed; suspected to be HY male
Observation Date and Time	11-28-2013 12:00 PM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S15788673
County	Dauphin
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Highspire
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Highspire Reservoir Park
GPS coordinates of sighting	40.2061719,-76.773999
Habitat	open waterside deciduous woodland with dense understory; urban/ suburban oasis
Distance to bird	down to
Viewing conditions	clear, optimal
Optical equipment used	eyeballs
Description	Chunky, long-tailed warbler; olive green above, deep yellow below (undertail coverts, belly, flanks, lower breast; gray hood lightly washed with olive above the eye, broken by

	<p>whitish throat (slight tinge of yellow here) and shield-like cluster of concealed black feathers in the center of the lower throat; whitish eyering incomplete, occasionally giving the impression of discrete crescents, but close inspection revealed that these were connected around the back of the eye (more broken in front); lores indistinct/ grayish; supraloral pale, whitish-yellow; bill stout but pointed, pinkish with dark culmen; legs pink; olive tail extended a long ways past the undertail coverts. The bird chipped frequently, a dry, slightly metallic "tack"ing callnote (audio recording made with iPhone).</p>
<p>Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)</p>	<p>The bird would feed low to the ground, often concealed in dense vegetation. It gave its presence away by chipping frequently, and often posed in the open for short periods of time, making it incredibly cooperative (for a vagrant warbler).</p>
<p>Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)</p>	<p>The only ID contender here is Mourning Warbler. I think the eyering is ambiguous (this pattern can be shown by either MacG or Mourning, per my observations) and not useful for this particular case. I focus instead on the callnotes, which seem to be diagnostic for MacGillivray's Warbler and sound unlike the typical upswept chip of Mourning Warbler, the whitish throat, and the long tail projecting far beyond the undertail coverts; the bird frequently wagged its long tail side-to-side and also bobbed it up and down, something that I can't recall noting on Mourning Warbler (it struck me as something to pay closer attention to in the future when assessing members of this species pair).</p>
<p>Discussion – anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:</p>	<p>Bob Mulvihill aged the bird as an AHY female in an email to the PABirds listserv. I think that the bird seems more consistent with an HY male based especially on the dark shield-like cluster of feathers in the throat and the apparent molt limit between retained, dull, brownish primary coverts and newer, olive, more brightly edged greater secondary coverts. I am not confident of this conclusion based on my field observations, but I think it is worthy of consideration.</p>
<p>Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)</p>	<p>No. There exists some possibility that this is a Mourning x MacG hybrid, given that there is a recently described hybrid zone in British Columbia (described by papers from Darren Irwin's lab) and that these species are extremely similar in plumages that are not AHY males. I think that this scenario is very unlikely, and that this bird is extremely likely to be a pure MacGillivray's Warbler (and is most certainly "acceptable" as one from a BRC perspective; however, I'd be remiss to omit the possibility of this being a hybrid.</p>
<p>During</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>After</p>	<p>Pyle 1997, Dunn and Garrett 1997</p>
<p>Supporting evidence (check all that apply)</p>	<p>Photograph Audio</p>

Upload images, audio, video or drawings



[IMG_7797 \(1\).jpg](#)



[IMG_7846 \(1\).jpg](#)



[IMG_7865.jpg](#)



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PORC-webform00178

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2013-11-30 23:29:55
Observer's Name	Timothy Reichard
E-mail	diracma@yahoo.com
Observer's Address	Country: United States
Species (Common Name)	MacGillivray's Warbler
Species (Scientific Name)	Geothlypis tolmiei
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Possibly a 1st winter male.
Observation Date and Time	11-30-2013 2:30 PM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S15808517
County	Dauphin
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Highspire
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Highspire Reservoir Park
GPS coordinates of sighting	40.2061719,-76.773999
Habitat	Residential lakeside with trees and brush
Distance to bird	3-4 yd at closest approach
Viewing conditions	Overcast with some pockets of sunshine. 35F. Light wind.
Optical equipment used	Canon EOS T3 DSLR camera + 300mm telephoto lens, and Nikon Monarch 8x42 binoculars.
Description	<p>Several photos at https://picasaweb.google.com/107714670957221091332/PlacesPennsylvaniaHighspireReservoirPark?authuser=0&authkey=Gv1sRgCMelrr7_17fFcg&feat=directlink</p> <p>Similar in size to the nearby White-throated Sparrows and a Myrtle Warbler. Bright yellow underparts with yellow-green flanks. Gray head. Gray-green back. Black eyes. White eye rings, incomplete at front and back sides. Pink legs and feet. 10 tail feathers with olive to gray uppersides. Tail disproportionately shorter than a Song Sparrow's. Gray wing feathers edged with yellow-green when folded. Wide black splotch below throat, not solid. Throat paler than gray head. Pink lower beak, darker upper beak. Pale yellow lore line.</p>
Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was	Called for several minutes straight while foraging. Then called quietly for about a minute before going quiet.

doing)

Foraged in brush within 4 feet of the ground, sometimes on the ground in the leaf litter. Occasionally paused foraging to fly to the exterior of the brush and assess the situation (3-6 human observers staring at it). Then reentered the brush to forage more. A small group of people 3-5 yds away did not worry it, nor did the approach of an extra observer stopping 5 yds away.

**Separation from similar species
(How you eliminated others)**

I think the Connecticut, Mourning, and MacGillivray's Warblers are the only ones with a similar plumage to this bird. I am unfamiliar with all three of these species, so I consulted my Stoke's field guide, parts of which I quote below.

Not an adult Connecticut: "olive-brown wash to hood, upper breast, and upperparts" in winter adult plumage. The bird's hood is clearly gray. The upper breast is yellow, black, or gray depending on where the upper breast is considered to turn into the throat. The upperparts are gray or greenish gray. So not an adult Connecticut.

Eye-ring: "Mourning can have a thin eye-ring, but it is broken at both front and rear. Connecticut's eye-ring is sometimes broken, but only at rear. MacGillivray's all have distinct white eye-rings broadly broken in front and rear of eye, forming eye crescents." In my photos, the eye-ring is white and is broken at the front and quite thin at the rear. That makes it close to MacGillivray's and not a Connecticut.

Not a Mourning: "Immature Mournings usually have a yellowish throat that breaks through lower edge of hood onto underparts." In my photos, the throat is buffy, but this color doesn't break through the gray/black hood to the bright yellow breast. "1st Winter MacGillivray's: More olive-brown hood becomes grayish and extends solidly across upper breast with no extension of throat color onto breast." This description better matches my bird.

Discussion – anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

According to the Dauphin County rarities eBird Alert, birdwatchers who found this bird before I did identified it as a MacGillivray's Warbler. The eBird reviewer, who I assume is qualified to confirm the IDs, accepted this ID of my observation as well as theirs.

Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)

I have confidence in the ID of MacGillivray's because it's the closest match according to my field guide, and the agreement from several others and the eBird reviewer is a confirmation for me.

During

None

After

Stoke's Field Guide to the Birds of North America

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings

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