

By far, the most unusual bird found in Wyoming County on the Migratory Bird Count on May 13th was a male Painted Bunting which I (William Reid) saw in Nicholson Township.

I was driving slowly down Marshall Squire Road toward Phelps Swamp around 7:30 a.m. when I saw a small bird in a small tree near the road. As I stopped my car I heard a bird singing. It sounded somewhat like a warbling vireo, and I suspected that that is what the bird was. (I did not know at the time that Peterson says that the song of the Painted bunting resembles the warbling vireo.

When I stopped the car and put my binoculars (7X35) on the bird, I immediately knew that the bird was not a warbling vireo! Three things stood out immediately: the bright blue head, the yellow-green back, and the red tail and under parts. Instantly I knew that the bird was a male Painted bunting. It was about the same size as a male yellow warbler which was also in the tree. It had a thick, stubby bill. The bird was about 30 feet from me and about 6 feet about the ground. The sky was partly cloudy, the bird provided excellent views, and the sunlight was to my back. No branches or leaves obstructed my view of the bird.

I don't know exactly how long I saw the bird: it was one of those times when time stands still. I imagine I saw it from 2 to 5 minutes. The yellow warbler also saw the bird and was not happy about the invasion of its territory. It flew near the bunting a couple of times. The bunting got the message that the warbler did not want it, and it flew off in the following days.

My previous experience with the bird is a big zero. I've looked for the bird in the south several times, but I've never seen one before. I don't know of any bird which the male can be confused with. I am familiar with some of its closest relatives – indigo bunting, blue grosbeak, and lazuli bunting, but none of these can possibly be confused with a Painted bunting.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)

Date of Sighting: 13 May 2006 to 13 May 2006

Location: NICHOLSON TOWNSHIP

County : WYOMING

Observer(s): Wiliam Reid

Date of Submission: 2006

Submitted by: Wiliam Reid

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut			X					
A. Guarente			X					
T. Johnson			X					
J. Stanley			X					
E. Witmer			X					
J. Heller			X					
G. Malosh			X					
TOTALS			7					
DECISION			X					

Comments: 7/0

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

11/16/06