

LBRC Report Form

1. English and Scientific names: Black-throated Gray Warbler, *Setophaga nigrescens*
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
One in adult plumage, sex unknown
3. Parish:
St. James
4. Specific Locality:
Oak Alley Plantation, in live oaks
5. Date(s) when observed: 12/31/23
6. Time(s) of day when observed: 2:41
7. Reporting observer: Emily Holcomb
8. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird(s):
None
9. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s):
None
10. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light):
Poor lighting, with the bird deep in shadows under the oak
11. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): 400 mm telephoto lens (no binoculars)
in good condition
12. Distance to bird(s): 10-20 feet, directly above me
13. Duration of observation: About 15 seconds
14. Habitat: Live oaks in a very manicured lawn
15. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): I was taking a family trip to the plantation with the aim of picking up a few species for St. James Parish while I was there. I noticed a large number of small birds actively feeding in the live oaks and thought I'd take a few pictures. Among the expected species like Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Orange-crowned Warbler, I observed a strikingly black and white warbler that I assumed was a Black-and-white Warbler. It was feeding along with the other species in the oak tree. Unfortunately, I was quite distracted because I was keeping an eye on my kids, so I put the ID question aside for later. Only when I looked at the pictures on my desktop did I make the ID.

16. Description (include only what was actually seen, not what "should" have been seen; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species, body bulk, shape, proportions, bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species):

I only observed at the time that it was boldly patterned in black and white and didn't look like any of the species I was expecting to see. The black throat stood out to me. Looking at the pictures, I also made note of the clean, white undertail coverts and the two very striking white stripes on the head.

17. Voice: Silent.

18. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):

I ruled out Black-and-white Warbler when I realized that it did not have the "scalloped" appearance under the tail, along with the very thick striping on the head. I also considered Carolina Chickadee, but the two white stripes on the head seemed to rule it out as well. A Blackpoll Warbler should not have the black throat.

19. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?):

Yes, photographs taken by me, and are attached.

20. Previous experience with this species: Very little! I heard it singing on a trip to Washington State years ago, but I'd never seen it in person.

21. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

I used The Warbler Guide and also asked advice on the Facebook site "What's this Bird? - American Birding Association."

22. Identification aids used when?

After observation

23. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain:

I think so! Despite the poor quality of the pictures, and the fact that I was quite distracted while making the observations, I can find no other species that matches the pictures.

24. Date report completed:

1/3/24

25. May the LBRC have permission to display in whole or in part this report and accompanying photos on the LOS-LBRC website and LBRC Facebook page?

Yes

26. If yes, may we include your name with the report?

Yes







