

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or a similar format when submitting records for review to assure that all pertinent information is accounted for. Attach additional pages or files as necessary. Please print or type for hard copy. For electronic copy, be sure to save this file to your computer before entering text. Attach field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed (if hard copy), mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216, or e-mail electronic copy as an attachment to Paul Edward Conover at <zoiseaux@lusfiber.net> .

1. English and Scientific names: “Mangrove” Yellow Warbler (*Setophaga petechia erithachorides* group) – most likely *S. p. oraria*

2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):

1 SY Male. My comments here are less on the identification of the bird in question, but are instead focused on the specifics of age/sex and the apparent progression of molt visible by analyzing our photos (<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S43944385>) against those from 28 January 2018 (<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S42308494>), two months earlier:

I think it is safe to age/sex this Mangrove Warbler as a second-year male. Assuming it follows a similar molt pattern to that of *S. p. castaneiceps* in Baja, adult males should have a solid chestnut head throughout the year, whereas SY males have more patchy chestnut on the head, gradually acquiring the full adult male-like plumage throughout the first year of life (according to Dunn and Garrett 1997). Moreover, I think photos reveal a noticeable molt limit among the greater coverts, showing a distinct step and very different feather edging between the different generations. I think what we're seeing here are the freshly molted alternate greater coverts from the partial prealternate molt (6 recently replaced greater coverts on the left side - noticeably longer with wide, yellow edging - than what I believe are retained juvenal outer greater coverts; see attached image 20180324-1E3B1425 / ML91439281). Note that the innermost greater covert on the left wing is apparently retained (short, worn, and gray). On the ring wing, there appears to be 7 recently replaced greater coverts, including the innermost (20180324-1E3B1488). Interestingly, this is one additional replaced greater covert on the left wing and two on the right wing than late January, indicating that those feathers have apparently been replaced during the past two months, as evidenced by Joan Garvey's pictures from 28 January 2018, when the molt limit and step were even more drastic (ML83884741 and ML83885151; pictures of both wings can be found at <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S42308494>). There's also more extensive chestnut on the crown and the back of the head now when compared with similar poses in Joan's photos (compare my attached image 20180324-1E3B1488, with ML83884741 from Joan Garvey).

3. Parish: Jefferson Parish

Specific Locality: Grand Isle, west of Ludwig Road and the LDWF facility on the bayside of the island (29.2390388, -89.9895716)

4. Date(s) when observed: 24 March 2018

5. Time(s) of day when observed: 8:33 - ~9:00 AM.

6. Reporting observer and city/state address

Reporting observer: Cameron L. Rutt
City: Baton Rouge
State: Louisiana

7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): David Muth, Van Remsen, Dan Lane, and Michele McLindon

8. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s):

9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Good morning light as we had partly cloudy skies and direct sunlight, which we were able to position at our backs or over our shoulders.

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Swarovski EL 8.5x42 binoculars and a Canon 7D Mark II with a 400mm f/5.6L

11. Distance to bird(s): Less than 10 m at its closest

12. Duration of observation: off-and-on for ~25 minutes. Observations were primarily dictated by whether or not we were using playback and the bird's dwindling response over time.

13. Habitat: a relatively small patch of black mangrove and *Baccharis*. The mangroves in this area were "burned" by a prolonged cold spell with sustained temperatures in the low 20s between 16-18 January 2018.

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): In my opinion, we didn't get to see natural behavior as the bird initially responded to playback and all subsequent observations were due to continued playback, which produced acute or general interest from the bird.

15. 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, *or for species that are known to hybridize frequently, stress features that help eliminate possible hybrids*): At this point, I would effectively be describing the bird from photos alone, which allowed for more thorough scrutiny of the bird than I managed in the field anyhow. Thus, I'll let the attached photos (as well as the other photos on the eBird checklist) speak for themselves.

16. Voice: Primarily chipped in response to playback, but also sang weakly and gave flight calls, all of which Dan Lane recorded (<https://macaulaylibrary.org/asset/91305571>). When chip notes are played within quick succession of *S. p. aestiva* chips, the two sound strikingly similar to me. However, to my ear, the flight call is distinctly weaker/thinner and less trilled than typical *S. p. aestiva* varieties, and the song seems richer, lower, and more rambling (it never gave the strongly stereotyped "sweet, sweet, sweet, I'm so sweet" song of *S. p. aestiva*), but some of this could be due to the relatively early date and inexperienced or unseasoned song. Responded to vocalizations of both *S. p. aestiva* and *S. p. erithachorides* groups, but responded most aggressively - repeatedly approaching us/playback - to vocalizations of the *S. p. erithachorides* group (recordings from South Padre Island, TX?).

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Separated from all populations of the northern migratory *S. p. aestiva* group by the bird's patchy, chestnut head. Otherwise, the bird falls into *S. petechia* by an entirely yellow or olive-yellow plumage, including the combination of yellow-edged flight feathers and yellow tail spots, unique among North American warblers.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): Yes, by me (attached) and by other members of our party (all accessible via our joint eBird checklist - <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S43944385>)

19. Previous experience with this species: None with the *S. p. erithachorides* group, although I have seen the *S. p. petechia* group in the Caribbean and have extensive experience with the *S. p. aestiva* group.

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

a. at time of observation: None

b. after observation: A Field Guide to Warblers of North America (Dunn and Garrett 1997) and Identification Guide to North American Birds: Part I (Pyle 1997)

21. This description is written from:

<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made during the observation.	Are notes attached?	eBird checklists
X	notes made after the observation.	At what date?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	memory		
X	study of images		

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

23. Date: 3 May 2018

Time: 11:15 AM

24. 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

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



