

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: [Tropical Parula](#) (*Setophaga pitiayumi*)

2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage): [One, immature \(first winter\), probably a male.](#)

3. Parish: [Lafourche](#)

Specific Locality: [LA-307 in Kraemer, LA](#)

4. Date(s) when observed: [30 December 2023](#)

5. Time(s) of day when observed: [12:55pm](#)

6. Reporting observer and city/state address

Reporting observer: Erik I. Johnson
City: Sunset
State: LA

7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): [None.](#)

8. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s): [None.](#)

9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): [Clear skies. Early pm light near the winter solstice. The bird was ENE of me, so about as perfect conditions as possible.](#)

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): [Vortex Razor 10x42 binoculars, Nikon D7200 with Sigma 150-600mm f/4.5-6.3 lens, good condition.](#)

11. Distance to bird(s): [20-80 ft](#)

12. Duration of observation: [10 minutes](#)

13. Habitat: [Bottomland forest edge with scrub along roadside.](#)

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress

habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): Bird came into a screech-owl mob tape with mixed winter songbird flock. It came as low as eye level as close as about 20 ft away, actively hopping among branches. It became uninterested faster than most of the others and headed back up to the canopy where it foraged in a live oak.

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*): The bird was clearly a parula – bluish above with two broad white wing bars, a greenish back, and a yellow throat and chest. It had a small dark face mask between the eye and bill, much darker than the blue head (which had a few green flecks). It was bright lemon yellow from the chin to the belly with a wash of orange across the upper breast, not well defined from the yellow. The bill was bicolored, with a dark gray maxilla and pink mandible.

It appeared to have “partial” (sensu Pyle 1997) molt limits in a “block” style, meaning all secondary coverts were replaced, but had retained juvenile primary coverts, remiges, and greater alula. Given the age, the orange wash in the chest is suggestive that the bird is a male.

16. Voice: Not heard.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): The main issue for consideration is potential introgression with Northern Parula, which is apparently rampant where the ranges of the two species meet in south Texas, the likely origin of many/most Tropical Parula types in Louisiana. There are two things that potentially concern me with this bird: 1) a couple of paler feathers just below the right eye (only), and 2) a few greenish feathers in the crown. Given this is a first winter bird, I wondered whether this kind of variation appears in Tropical Parula populations outside of the contact zone with Northern Parula. I examined eBird photos from Costa Rica from December – February. I can find a few examples of pale feathers below the eye: <https://macaulaylibrary.org/asset/132000081> (immature) <https://macaulaylibrary.org/asset/138061701> (age unknown)

Cornell’s Birds of the World species account for Tropical shows an immature from the Rio Grand Valley in south Texas from 3 February 2009 that has a little more green wash in the crown than this bird.

<https://birdsoftheworld.org/bow/species/tropar/cur/appearance>

I was unable to find good examples from Costa Rica with any green wash in the crown, including what looked like immature (first cycle) males.

To my surprise, most of the best “Tropical Parula” photos in eBird/Macaulay from Texas in Dec-Feb show notably more white in the eye arc region and/or green in the head than this bird.

https://media.ebird.org/catalog?taxonCode=tropar®ionCode=US-TX&beginMonth=12&endMonth=2&sort=rating_rank_desc

This is also true for many of the photos explicitly identified to the subspecies *S. p. nigrilora*, which presumably would have greater reviewer oversight:

https://search.macaulaylibrary.org/catalog?taxonCode=tropar1&mediaType=photo&sort=rating_rank_desc

I suppose it depends on what is considered a Tropical Parula. Whether this bird should be categorized as a Tropical or Tropical x Northern Parula may depend on whether you have a south-Texas view or a Central/South American view. This bird would likely pass the eBird review test in south Texas.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): [Photos attached.](#)

19. Previous experience with this species: [Pretty limited – I saw one in December 2007 in Lafayette, and I've seen a couple in south Texas \(although not photographed and closely scrutinized\). Also seen in Argentina and Brazil over the last decade or so. Very familiar with Northern Parula, including some in-hand banding experience.](#)

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

a. at time of observation: [None.](#)

b. after observation: [Macaulay Library, Cornell's Birds of the World, Lovette and Bermingham 2001 \(Auk\).](#)

21. This description is written from:

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

22. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain: [I am certain this is either a Tropical or Tropical x Northern Parula.](#)

23. Date: [1 January 2024](#)

Time: [7:00pm](#)

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](#)











