

and while looking at them through a 20× telescope, a very white bird appeared from behind the grass along the edge of the pond. We noticed the fast movements as it fed. The bill was very slender, head narrow with a dark eye stripe. The black stripe of the neck seemed to spread out over the head. Its beak was black and the back was very dark with a lighter V-shaped marking.

Peterson's Field Guide verified our identification of the bird as a Northern Phalarope; the color and length of the bill were the deciding factors. For further verification we checked A. C. Bent's *Life Histories of Shore Birds*.

This is the only Dutchess County record since September 4, 1924. That earlier record was of a bird on a pond near Amenia, New York (*The Birds of Dutchess County* by Ludlow Griscom.) The county also has one record of a Wilson's Phalarope on May 15, 1965 near Lagrangeville. The 1970 Northern Phalarope was seen by a number of club members and photographed by several.

Thelma Haight, Stanfordsville, New York 13581.

Unusual Plumage of a Scarlet Tanager: On the morning of June 17, 1970, several members of the Naturalists Club of Broome County observed a male Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) in the top of a dead tree about 200 feet away. At first glance the bird suggested an oriole, except that the head, throat and back were entirely orange. The bird was singing a typical tanager song. The group observed the bird through binoculars for perhaps five minutes before it flew into the dead branches in the top of another smaller tree. We approached to within 100 feet and noted that there was a rather abrupt change from the orange throat to a rather dirty-white belly, easily observed even though the sky was somewhat overcast. The bird remained in the same tree for about five more minutes, singing almost continuously and occasionally preening himself, during which operation there appeared to be a suggestion of white wing-bars, but at other times the wings appeared to be solid black.

Neither the Peterson field guide nor Pearson (*Birds of America*) mention the orange plumage. Robbins et al (*Birds of North America*) says: "first year males occasionally are orange instead of red," although the bird in the corresponding illustration is much redder than the observed bird. Bent (*Life Histories of North American Blackbirds, Orioles, Tanagers and Allies*) quotes Dwight, who describes the juvenal plumage as "below, dull white, sulphur yellow on the abdomen," and the first nuptial plumage as "sometimes pale (vermilion) or mixed with orange." Bent himself says, "I have seen young males in this first nuptial plumage in which the body color is decidedly yellowish, varying from 'cadmium orange' to 'cadmium yellow' or 'light cadmium,' often more tinged with orange above and yellower below." Forbush (*Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States*) says of young males in their first breeding plumage, "Some have orange or orange-yellow in place of scarlet." While all of these writers mention various aspects of the observed bird, none mention the combination of orange upper parts with the grayish-white underparts.

Observers: Shirley Elliott, Elva Hawken, Donna Kraus, Florence Linaberry, Harriet Marsi, Marion Vanderlip, Elizabeth Washburn.

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Ed. Note: This seems to be a variation of the occasionally-seen increase in yellow pigment in Tanagers: xanthochroism. There is a fine specimen of one which is uniform orange-yellow in color, with black wings, on display in the Buffalo Museum of Science.

Lark Bunting in Dutchess County: While eating dinner on May 12th, 1970 at our home in Stissing, New York on Route 82, we were discussing a strange bird our uncle had seen at the feeder in the afternoon. He was just describing it when a male Lark Bunting appeared at our feeder. He was in beautiful spring plumage, all black with large white wing patches, yellow legs, and his head seeming rather bluish.