

PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW YORK STATE RARITIES
28. TOWNSEND'S WARBLER

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Townsend's Warbler
Great Gull Island, Suffolk Co., N.Y.

7 May 1978

Photo by Joseph DiCostanzo

On 7 May 1978 a breeding-plumaged, male Townsend's Warbler (*Dendroica townsendi*) was mist-netted, banded, photographed and released on Great Gull Island, at the eastern end of Long Island Sound. This constitutes the ninth record for New York State and the first to be confirmed by a photograph.

The bird was first sighted (Biderman) and identified (Harrison and DiCostanzo) while it was moving about in bayberry bushes (*Myrica*

pensylvanica) about an hour before it was mist-netted. Other observers present were S. Bloomfield, D. Boxer, M. Coulter, E. Hansen, H. Hays and R. Tyler. The bird was seen again the following day by Biderman, Bloomfield and Coulter.

The warbler was easily identified by its striking head pattern with a black ear-patch, crown and throat on a yellow face and breast. This individual also showed much white in the outer tail. In the hand, the four outer rectrices were nearly entirely white except for an elongated dark spot near their tips. The amount of white in the tail varied considerably in specimens examined by Harrison in the collection of the American Museum of Natural History. The measurements taken on this bird during banding were: wing chord—68 mm., weight—9.0 gms., and fat—0.

Bull (1974, *Birds of New York State*, p. 488) lists six sightings of Townsend's Warbler in New York, five of them on dates between 24 April and 9 May. More recently the species has been reported at Montauk, Suffolk Co., 2 October 1976 (*Kingbird*, 27: 60) and at Hempstead Lake State Park, Nassau Co., 15 April 1977 (*Kingbird* 27: 175).

All banding on Great Gull Island is done under the permit of Helen Hays. The Great Gull Island Project is supported by the American Museum of Natural History and by contributions from the members of the Linnaean Society of New York.

This is publication No. 53 of the Great Gull Island Project.

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[Editors' Note: An adult male Townsend's Warbler in winter plumage was present in Southampton Township, near Vincentown, Burlington Co., New Jersey, from 5 December 1977 to 21 February 1978 (Merit, J. K. 1978. *New Jersey Audubon Magazine*, vol. 4, no. 2, p. 48, Summer 1978, Research Unit Supplement), and an adult male in breeding plumage was seen and photographed on 11 May 1978 near New Haven, Oswego Co., by Dorothy W. Crumb and F. G. Scheider.]