

Yellow-throated Warbler in Dutchess County: Right after lunch, 7 May 1992, I went out to check bluebird boxes. It was such a nice day that I decided to keep going, first to check the road where the Hooded Warbler returns each spring. I stood by my car while he sang in a tree right overhead. When he moved off into the woods I continued slowly down into Clove Valley. As I usually do, I started in the main gate to the Clove Valley Cemetery but the road was blocked. Going on I went in the back entrance and parked my car on the grass. As I worked my way along the grove of evergreens that separates the cemetery from Christie Pond on the private property of the Clove Valley Rod and Gun Club, I found many birds: Common Yellowthroat, Warbling Vireo, Chipping Sparrow, etc. Then a little flock of Yellow-rumped Warbler came working over the tops of the tall trees. I watched them casually, thinking there might be other warblers with them, when a yellow throat caught my eye. I followed the bird but could not see it well enough. Certainly not a Canada, or Magnolia. I was nearly ready to give up after twenty minutes or so, when the bird began to work its way downward. Then I saw the dark patch around the eye, white superciliary, bright yellow throat and wing bars. Its back was gray and the top of the head darker. It came down to a branch of a wild cherry nearly at eye level and about 20 to 30 feet from me. It was 1:30 PM, sunny and excellent light with the sun at my back. After a few more minutes the bird flew to a cedar tree behind me. I made a dash for my car, which seemed far away, and got my Peterson Guide and sure enough it was a Yellow-throated Warbler. I had seen the bird once before in Dutchess County and several times in Maryland. I went to a friend's house in the valley but no one was home, so I made the ten minute trip home to call Mary Key and the Hot Line. No one was home, in fact no one was home anywhere. Back I went and watched the bird for another fifteen to twenty minutes. Returning home again, I got Mary and we put it on our Rare Bird Relay. Late in the afternoon Mary and Jim Key got down and had a good observation. No one else could try, and when they did get there the next day, the warbler was gone. Like so many good finds it's a matter of being in the right place at the right time. Seen only seven times in Dutchess County since 1961, it was a good bird. Another was found in a different area on the 16 May census by Russ O'Malley.

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