

## Tennessee Warbler *Oreothlypis peregrine*



**Folk Name:** (none)

**Status:** Migrant

**Abundance:** Uncommon to Fairly Common

**Habitat:** Deciduous woods

The Tennessee Warbler is seldom seen east of the mountains during spring migration. Most spring reports from this region are recorded from Mecklenburg County to the west. Spring reports total less than one fifth of all the reports we have on file. Spring dates range from 3 April through 17 May. We have no records of this bird in the months of June or July. It is important to observe spring migrants carefully as a spring male Tennessee Warbler can be confused with a Red-eyed Vireo.

Tennessee Warblers have been reported on Spring Bird Counts in the region only about a half dozen times over 50 years of counts. The first was reported on May 6, 1978, two were reported on May 7, 1983, one was tallied on May 5, 1984, and one was reported on a spring count on May 2, 1987. Three spring Tennessee Warblers were reported on the Charlotte Spring Bird Count held on April 25, 2015.

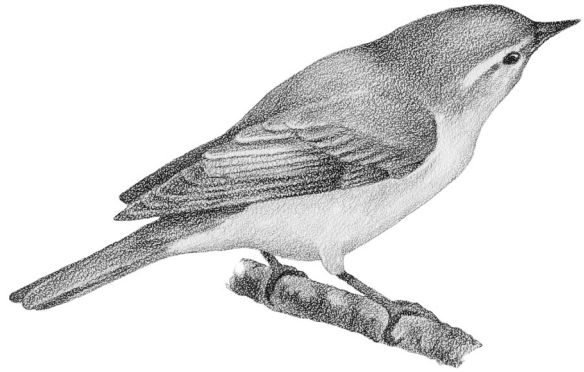
Jeff Lemons provided this description of a Tennessee Warbler he found at Cowan's Ford Wildlife Refuge on April 17, 2015: "Very pale, yellowish, un-streaked warbler. No wing bars. Line through eye. Long thin bill of warbler vs. that of Red-eyed Vireo. Moved like a Warbler not like a vireo. Very uncommon Spring bird."

The Tennessee Warbler is an uncommon to fairly common migrant in this region in the fall. They are usually seen moving through the Carolina Piedmont in numbers during the first few weeks of September. Again, be careful with identification during this season as the fall-plumaged Tennessee Warbler may sometimes be confused with the Orange-crowned Warbler or Philadelphia Vireo. Fall sightings range from 26 August through 1 November.

Loomis collected a single specimen of this species



*Tennessee Warbler. (Jim Guyton)*



in Chester County on September 25, 1879. Elizabeth Clarkson spied a single Tennessee Warbler moving through her garden on October 15, 1944, marking the first known report of this species in Mecklenburg County.

Sarah Nooe conducted a two-week study of Tennessee Warblers migrating through Charlotte "in numbers" from September 20 to October 8, 1952. Her study site was a vacant lot two blocks from her office in the Biology department at Queens College: "I observed them feeding on insects in these trees (Mimosas), usually in the afternoon because that was the most convenient time for me to go to this spot."

She observed multiple species of warblers at this location during her study as well as Tennessee Warblers at other locations during that period. Ms. Nooe estimated hundreds, "if not thousands," of warblers moving through Charlotte at the same time. She concluded "I had thought spring warbler migration was most fascinating but now can't wait for another fall to work on some of the problems in identifying fall warblers."

Four Tennessee Warblers were found dead after hitting the ceilometer tower at the Charlotte airport while migrating through town on the night of September 25, 1955. John Trott observed one bird from just 4 feet away in New London, Stanly County, on October 1, 1955. He noted it as a first sighting for that area. Jim Guyton photographed a Tennessee Warbler still "hanging out" with other warblers in his backyard on October 23, 2016. One remained there until the first of November. We have only one other published report of a Tennessee Warbler lingering here into the month of November. Paul Hart reported a very late bird at Crowders Mountain State Park on November 22, 1985. We have no reports of this species from the months of December through March. Our peak count is 10 birds reported on October 6, 2004, in Catawba County.