

Black-throated Blue Warbler

Setophaga caerulescens

A bird of the deep forest, the Black-throated Blue Warbler breeds in the northeastern United States and southeastern Canada. On migration to its Caribbean wintering grounds it can be seen in a variety of habitats, including parks and gardens.

Keys to Identification

Adult Description

- Small songbird.
- Short, thin bill.
- Small white spot on edge of folded wing.
- Male deep slate blue above with black face, throat and flanks.
- Female dull and nondescript.

Male Description

Back, tail, and top of head blue-gray. Face and throat black. Black extending in line down sides to flanks. White below. Base of primaries white, showing as a large white patch in flight, but a small white spot near the edge of the wing when folded. Outer tail feathers with large white spots and black tips.

Female Description

Tail, wings, back, and head grayish olive-green. Yellowish to cream white stripe above eye. Darkish spot in front of eye extending to ear feathers. Lower eyelid white. Underside whitish to yellowish. White spot at base of primaries. Indistinct pale spot on outer tail feathers.

Immature Description

Similar to adult. Back and head feathers of male edged with green, white of undersides tinged yellow, and some white tips to black feathers of throat. Female like adult, but more yellowish and may be without white spot on wing.

Cool Facts

- The sexes of the Black-throated Blue Warbler look so different that they were originally described as two different species.
- On the wintering grounds the sexes use slightly different habitats. The male is most common in forest at lower to mid-elevations, while the female uses shrubbier habitat at higher elevations.

Measurements

Both Sexes

- Length - 4.3 - 5.1 inches
- Wingspan - 6.7 - 7.9 inches
- Weight - 0.3 - 0.4 ounces

