CBC RARE BIRD DOCUMENTATION FORM
Submitted as documentation of  (check all that apply):

X  Unusual Species  ____ Unusual Date  ____ Unusual Habitat

1. MOST IMPORTANT: On back of form give complete details of this observation. Use additional sheets as needed. Include information on the bird’s plumage, shape, size, vocalizations, habitat, behavior, etc. Describe exactly what you saw: include photocopies of your original notes and sketches. Name the species that you considered ID contenders; explain how you eliminated them.

2. Count Name: Orilla Verde  Count Code: NMDV

3. Species Eastern Bluebird  Age:  Sex#: 1  # 4

4. Date(s) of Observation: 17 Dec, 2014  Time: 1:45 PM to 2:05 PM
   Earlier/Later dates by others, if known:

5. Place: Lower Ranchitos (West edge of Taos) just east of confluence of Rio Fernando and Rio Pueblo
   Nearest Town: Taos  County: Taos

6. Observer: Robert Templeton
   Address: Box 357, Dixon, NM 87527
   Telephone/E-mail: 505-579-4095

7. Observation Details:
   Other Observers: Tom Jackman (John Kay)
   Optics Used: Swarovski 8x42, Kowa 82mm scope
   Distance From Bird: 150 ft
   Viewing Conditions: Backlit, intermittent snow, occasional filtered sun
   Weather, sky cover: Overcast, occasional filtered sun, intermittent snow
   Photo Taken?: No  Video?: No  Sound Recording?: No  Specimen?: No

Are these available to the CBC Regional Editor? ____ Where are they?

8. Past Experience: With this or similar species?
   Extensive Western, Limited (obs < 5) with Eastern.

9. References or Advice Consulted: Nat-geographic & Sibleys

10. Was this report done from notes made during or after observation or from memory? Memory

Signature: Robert Templeton
Date: 12-20-2014

Observers please give this form to your compiler. Compilers please send all rare bird forms directly to your regional editor. Contact information for regional editors can be found at: http://birds.audubon.org/programs/cbc/cbc-regional-editors or in the latest CBC issue of American Birds on-line under Regional Summaries. Sign up at: http://www.birds.audubon.org/mmdat/cbc-photo-contest and then email them directly to your regional editor along with this form.

Any questions e-mail us at: cbcadmin@audubon.org
Eastern Bluebird; NMOV; Taos, NM; Taos County; Male=3, Female=1

These individuals were observed by Robert Templeton and Tom Jackman. At first we were using binoculars and then switched to scopes.

There was a mixed flock actively moving between trees/shrubs on the south, a 2-foot wide stream and marshy area (Rio Fernando) in the middle and a barbed-wire fence on the north. We were looking west into the sun.

The birds were about 150-200 ft away (measured later on Google Earth). It was heavily overcast and snowing fairly hard when we started observing the male bluebirds that we knew were either Western or Eastern. Because of the backlit, overcast, snowy conditions we were not able to clearly resolve the throats of the males, though we both had the sense they were Easterns. We both changed to scopes. Even with scopes, the poor light prevented us from clearly resolving the throat detail.

This went on for about 15 minutes. Eventually, the snow stopped and the sun’s shape was visible through the clouds. When the 3 males flew to the fence on the north side of the field (less backlit), it was now easy to observe the lack of any blue on the throat and a partial rufous band extending towards the back of the neck. We basically both saw these features at the same moment and agreed without doubt that these were Eastern, not Western Bluebirds.

During the period of poor visibility, I repeatedly saw an individual that at first appeared to me as a drab Lazuli Bunting (very white belly). Knowing that it was not a Lazuli, but not having experience with female Eastern Bluebirds, I kept puzzling over the ID of that bird. It was not until that evening, studying the National Geographic Field Guide that I realized that I had observed a female Eastern Bluebird.

Nearby winter records:
NMDI (Count center 16 miles SW of NMOV center): EABL recorded 5 out of 18 years.

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