

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* at Parque Ambiental de Vilamoura: a species new to continental Portugal

Mariquita-de-mascarilha *Geothlypis trichas* no Parque Ambiental de Vilamoura: uma nova espécie para Portugal Continental

Ray Tipper & John Hodson

A ringing group from the West Midlands region of the United Kingdom has visited and ringed in the Parque Ambiental de Vilamoura, Loulé, Faro for a short period each autumn since 2007. The four visits, each of approximately one week in length, have all occurred in the month of October, although in 2009 ringing commenced on 30 September. A total of 4,799 birds of 64 species has been ringed, the highest trip total being 1,312 in 2008 and the lowest 1,016 in 2010 (Henderson 2010). Individual species' numbers varied from year to year almost certainly reflecting, at least to some extent, the different timings of the trips. Nevertheless, in all years migrants were well represented by Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*, Willow Warbler *P. trochilus*, Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*, Eurasian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*, Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*, European Robin *Erithacus rubecula* and Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*, while of the regular resident species notable numbers of Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*, Sardinian Warbler *S. melanocephala*, Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild* and Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra* were ringed (Henderson 2010). In 2010 the group, comprising Fergus Henderson, Claire Dovey, George Henderson, John Hodson, Cloe Loo, Shaun Micklewright, Simon Roberts and Jane Sedgeley arrived at Vilamoura on 18 October and set up their nets early that afternoon. On the final net-round of the day a Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* was extracted from one of the nets and was held overnight. That evening Fergus Henderson contacted an astonished Peter Dedicoat who relayed the news to as many local birders as possible but only three, Peter Dedicoat, Ray Tipper and Thijs Valkenburg, in addition to the ringing group, were present the following morning when the bird was 'processed' and released.

The following description was prepared from field notes and photographs:

Size & structure

A rather small (approximately the same size as a Subalpine Warbler *S. cantillans*), distinctly stocky New World wood warbler with a rather short, thick-set neck and short, rounded wings and tail.

Plumage

Head and upperparts brownish-olive, remiges darker with pale tips, proximal half of tail brighter green, a patch of paler feathering above and behind the eye, lores and a broad line from below the rear of the lower mandible back towards the ear-coverts mottled black. Tips of rectrices noticeably pointed, wings short and rounded. Fairly wide, pale eye-ringing, lower crescent whiter than upper. Throat and upper breast bright lemon yellow fading to buffish underparts with pale yellow ventral region.

Bare parts

Short, pointed bill, blackish culmen, tip and bottom edge of lower mandible with contrasting pale cutting edges forming a wide, dull pinkish central stripe. In photographs, the eyes appear black. Legs and feet flesh-coloured.

Voice

No call was heard

Age & sex

The poorly-formed facial mask is diagnostic of a 1st winter male. Pointed tips to the rectrices also establish it as a first year individual.

The bird was retrapped on 19 October but otherwise was not seen again. This record not only represents the first Common Yellowthroat but also the first North American passerine ever to be seen in continental Portugal and has been accepted by the Portuguese Rarities Committee (Muchaxo *et al.* 2011).

RESUMO

No dia 18 de Outubro de 2010 foi capturado e anilhado um exemplar de mariquita-de-mascarilha *Geothlypis trichas* no Parque Ambiental de Vilamoura. Este corresponde ao primeiro registo desta espécie para Portugal Continental.

REFERENCES

- Henderson, F. 2010. *Results of a ringing expedition to the Parque Ambientale, Vilamoura, Portugal 18 October – 24 October 2010*. Unpublished report.
- Muchaxo, J., P. Alfrey, J. Jara, R. Matias, C.C. Moore, J.L. Santos & R. Tipper 2011. Aves de ocorrência rara ou acidental em Portugal. Relatório do Comité Português de Raridades referente ao ano de 2010. *Anuário Ornitológico* 8: 3-52.



Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*, 1st winter male, Parque Ambiental de Vilamoura, 19 October 2010 (R. Tipper)