

REPORT OF HOODED WARBLER (*WILSONIA CITRINA*) IN
NEVIS, WEST INDIES

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Abstract. --- Ian Hart observed and photographed, at a close distance and in hand, a single adult male Hooded Warbler, at his residence at Tanglewood, Golden Rock, St. George Gingerland Parish, Nevis, The Federation of St. Christopher and Nevis, West Indies, in early April 2014.

Key words. --- Hooded Warbler; *Wilsonia citrina*, Caribbean, Nevis.

HOODED WARBLER (*WILSONIA CITRINA*)

AOU (1998: 561-562), Dickinson (2003: 764), and Clements (2000: 613) do not show Hooded Warbler occurring on the island of Nevis, West Indies. Raffaele *et al* (1998: 413 & 487) acknowledges this species as 'a vagrant in the Lesser Antilles south to St. Vincent'.

NEVIS

Nevis is a compact oceanic island of volcanic origin with an area of circa 93 km² (circa 36 square miles), situated in the northern Lesser Antilles. Politically it is a portion of the two island country, The Federation of St. Christopher and Nevis. The island rises gradually from the shore to a central peak of circa 985 meters (circa 3232 feet) and exhibits a range of natural and secondary habitats which include: elfin woodland, montane forest, palm brake, grassland, coastal scrub, dry woodland, and farmland (Robinson and Lowery 2000). The island is generally in a state of arrested natural biological succession, caused by human introduced non-native alien mammalian animal species. Island wide denudation of the once natural vegetation began in the early Colonial Period for the production of indigo, cotton, and sugarcane and culminated in mono-crop sugarcane grown under the agra-industrial plantation system which was dependent upon the labor of enslaved persons, first from Ireland and ultimately from Africa in great numbers.

THE RECORDED SIGHTING

Ian Hart, in early April 2014, first observed a single adult male Hooded Warbler perched in a slight bush outside his Nevis residence. The bird proceeded to fly into his open Caribbean style residence where it became frightened and proceeded to fly into a glass window. The bird was stunned by the impact with the window and Ian Hart proceeded to pick up the bird in his hand where, upon some degree of recovery, it stood up on his hand for a protracted period of time and was photographed (Figures 1-4 below). Ian Hart subsequently assisted the bird to a branch on the same slight bush where it had been originally first observed. The bird was subsequently photographed in that slight bush (Figures 1-4 below) prior to its airborne departure.

A checklist of bird species previously reported on Nevis, compiled by the late Jim Johnson, the island resident biologist, up and until his death in 2010, and the website (www.birdsofstkittsnevis.com), created and maintained by Michael Ryan of the nearby island of St. Kitts, both suggest that the species has previously been seen on the island of Nevis.

This observation was part of the efforts of the Nevis Ornithological Society to document all of the species of birds to be found solely on the island of Nevis (and proximal Booby Island). Historically bird species listings have artificially conjoined the two geologically and ecologically separate and distinct islands (the island of St. Christopher (St. Kitts) and the island of Nevis): An example would be the 'Locality Checklist' within Raffaele *et al* (1998: 453-495). The Nevis Ornithological Society is also attempting to: 1) systematically review and evaluate reported bird sightings on the island of Nevis, as well as Booby Island, with a high degree of academic rigor; and 2) provide a central repository for those accepted reports that are solely for the island of Nevis and Booby Island.

A fuller significance of this sighting remains undetermined. Combined with past and future records, fuller patterns may become clearer. As in this case, and in the future, increasing numbers of bird watchers and researchers in the field, on comparatively remote and under frequented islands, for sustained periods of time, may account for increasing numbers of documented reports.



Figures 1-4: Photographs of a single adult male Hooded Warbler by Ian Hart, Nevis, West Indies, in early April 2014.



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