

New World Warblers - 3

By Bruce Poulter

Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Setophaga caerulescens*)

The white patch at the base of the primaries is diagnostic in all plumages of this distinctive warbler, formerly *Dendroica caerulescens*, of northern deciduous forests. The male, with its black face, throat and flanks is unmistakable. The female is completely different and very dull, but also distinctive. Its breeding areas include the Great Lakes area east to Nova Scotia and also the Appalachian Mountains. A medium to long distance migrant, it winters almost exclusively in the West Indies. The male warbler is featured on six stamps, two of which, from Montserrat (15 cents, 1985) and British Virgin Islands (40 cents, 2005) are included here



Black-throated Green Warbler (*Setophaga virens*)



The adult male of this common warbler, formerly *Dendroica virens*, is easily identified by a combination of black throat and upper breast and olive-green ear-coverts broadly surrounded with bright yellow. It breeds in North America from extreme eastern British Columbia east to Newfoundland and New England, and south to the Appalachians. It winters from south Florida and south-eastern Texas south through Central America to Panama and also to the

West Indies. It features on one stamp, that from St. Pierre & Miquelon (0.47€, 2008)

Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora cyanoptera*)

This fairly common warbler, formerly *Vermivora pinus*, breeds in eastern USA and southern Ontario. This range is, however, slowly moving north as the Blue-winged replaces the closely related Golden-winged Warbler. It winters mainly in Central America from southern Mexico south to Costa Rica. The adult male has a yellow head, black streak through the eye and two white wingbars. These features are shown clearly on the stamp from Grenada (\$2, 2009), where it is labelled by its former scientific name.



Canada Warbler (*Cardellina canadensis*)



This common warbler, formerly *Wilsonia canadensis*, is a denizen of the northern and Appalachian forests breeding in deciduous and mixed forest with dense undergrowth. It is a long-distance migrant, wintering mainly in South America. Perhaps the male's most prominent feature is the necklace of black streaks across its yellow breast. These are clearly shown on Canada (46 cents, 2000), the ideal country to issue the stamp!!

Cape May Warbler (*Setophaga tigrina*)

In its breeding plumage the adult male of this warbler, formerly *Dendroica tigrina*, has distinctive orange-chestnut ear-coverts with rich yellow surrounds. Populations of the warbler vary in response to the periodic outbreaks of Spruce Budworm. When there is a plague of these budworms, the warblers raise far more young than in non-plague years. A long distance migrant, it breeds in northern North America and winters mainly in the West Indies. The adult male is featured very nicely on two stamps, namely St. Pierre & Miquelon (0.47€, 2011) and British Virgin Islands (60 cents, 2005). On the latter stamp the warbler is given its former scientific name.



Cerulean Warbler (*Setophaga cerulea*)

Named for the colour of its nape and upperparts (cerulean = deep-blue), this warbler (formerly *Dendroica cerulea*) is very much a treetop bird. It is easy to overlook because of this habit, but its buzzy song often gives it away. Locally common, it breeds in south eastern North America and winters far away in western South America as far south as western Bolivia. Its only appearance on stamps is from Nevis (60 cents, 2005) who issued it to commemorate the Bicentenary of Audubon's Birth.



Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Setophaga pensylvanica*)

In breeding plumage the combination of yellowish crown, black eye-stripe and chestnut breast sides make this warbler (formerly *Dendroica pensylvanica*) quite distinctive. It is one of the few warblers that have benefited from forest clearance as it is a bird of young second growth. A common bird, it breeds in central-eastern North America and winters mainly in southern Central America. It features on two stamps from Mozambique (66 metical, 2016) and Cook Islands (75 cents, 1985) – neither of which country 'hosts' a new world warbler!



Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)

This common, often abundant, warbler is found in marshes, reedbeds, wet grassy fields and shrubs bordering these habitats. The male is easily identified by the broad black mask across its forehead and backwards through its face. It breeds throughout North America south of the tundra and winters in the southern part of its breeding range south through Central America and the West Indies. It features on eight stamps, among them Antigua & Barbuda (50 cents, 1990), Cuba (65 centavos, 1996) and St. Pierre & Miquelon (0.75€, 2008)

