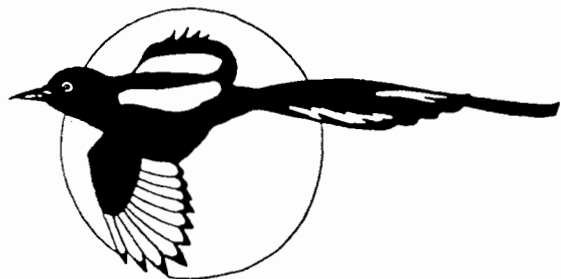

C.F.O. Journal

The Colorado Field Ornithologists' Quarterly





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CONVENTION '93

THE 1993 CONVENTION

Dave Silverman
P.O. Box 362
Rye, Colorado 81069

C.F.O.'s annual Convention at Craig, Memorial Day weekend, 1993, was attended by 72 people. Nine were non-Colorado residents from five different states. Our Convention continues to attract interest beyond Colorado borders.

Special thanks to Steve Bouricius and Linda Vidal who made most of the Convention's arrangements. The weather also cooperated making the Sunday evening picnic and compilation very successful and fun. At that time our list was over 150 bird species and 3 moose. More species were added on Monday's field trips.

If this year's Convention had a theme, it was Colorado Grouse. The Division of Wildlife (DOW) made the greatest contribution to this theme. DOW personnel Jim Haskins and John Toolen led us to Sage and Sharp-tailed Grouse on their leks despite the lateness of the season. Clait Braun, also with DOW, presented our banquet program complete with slides of all Colorado Grouse.

Thanks also to our other field trip leaders: Coen Dexter, Hugh Kingery, and Norm Barrett. Coen led large groups of people to Brown's Park Wildlife Refuge on Sunday and a trip for birders headed toward Grand Junction on Monday. Hugh Kingery directed coverage of breeding bird Atlas blocks. Exploring a new block usually produces interesting birds. My group was surprised to find a Red-eyed Vireo and Purple Martins near Hayden. Norm led a Monday trip to Kremmling Cliffs.

The speakers at our Saturday afternoon paper session were much appreciated. Susan Blackshaw, Ron Ryder, and Duane Nelson stimulated a lot of interest and questions on their respective subjects of bird-banding, ibis and Piping Plovers. Dan Bridges summarized his work on Colorado owl populations--a project involving a great deal of Dan's time.

Next year our Convention will move across the state to Trinidad near the New Mexico border. I have already received suggestions for field trips, programs and offers of help. It is not too early to volunteer if you are familiar with the Trinidad area. Speakers and field trip leaders are the most urgent needs. We have never had a Convention in Trinidad so we hope new experiences and birds will attract a good attendance. *See you there!*

CONVENTION '93

C.F.O. BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS May 29, 1993

David Pantle
1782 Locust Street
Denver, Colorado 80220

The C.F.O Board met at 1:00 p.m. on May 29, 1993, during the 31st Annual Convention in Craig. Present were Dave Silverman, Steve Bouricius, David Pantle, Raymond Davis, Beth Dillon, Coen Dexter, Linda Vidal, Mona Hill, Bill Prather and Brandon Percival.

1. **Minutes.** Minutes of meeting of February 13, 1993, as corrected, were approved.
2. **Financial.** There was extensive discussion whether the annual dues of \$12.00 should be increased. Dues produce only \$1.00 per year over the cost of the *C.F.O. Journal*. The Convention will break even or make a small profit. C.F.O. wants to be able to continue to make contributions to groups like C.B.O. and the Breeding Bird Atlas. The expense of the library exchange for the *C.F.O. Journal* is about \$400 per year. After all anticipated expenses for the year are paid, C.F.O. will have a cash cushion of approximately \$3,500.00.

Davis and Steve recommended that C.F.O. wait another year before any dues increase to see how well finances are going. A new membership brochure prepared by Linda and Steve has been printed and will be distributed and may attract more members. It was concluded that since C.F.O. is breaking even, dues will not be increased.

3. **C.F.O. Journal.** A member had suggested that the journal be divided into two sections, one popular and the other scientific. The Board concluded that no change is needed, and that this should be left to Mona Hill and the Editorial Board.

4. **C.F.O. Official Records Committee.** Bill Prather reported that the 1992 records are being circulated to committee members. If an initial vote is not unanimous, he intends to recirculate that record with the comments of members from the initial review, and to request a second vote, and if that vote is not unanimous to request a face to face meeting of the committee members. Board members pointed out that the Bylaws do not require a unanimous vote even to add or delete a species from the state list, that a majority vote is provided for (Records Comm. Rules, XI.B.). The Board by unanimous vote confirmed the appointment by Dave Silverman of Paul Opler and Rich Levad as members and Bill Prather as Chairman of the Records Committee. (The Board meeting was recessed at 2:00 p.m. for the Papers Session and resumed at 4:00 p.m. for another hour.)

5. **Liability Insurance.** Dave Silverman distributed information about an example of umbrella coverage which local Audubon chapters can obtain for \$300 or less a year. On his recommendation, discussion was tabled until the next meeting as to whether C.F.O. should purchase liability insurance.
6. **1994 Annual Convention.** It was agreed that the next convention will be held in Trinidad. It will be the first weekend in June (June 3-5) as some members have indicated that other commitments conflict too much with attending a convention on a major holiday weekend.
7. **Publication of C.F.O. Logo.** Someone has requested permission to publish the C.F.O. logo in a proposed book about the logos of various organizations. Dave Silverman asked David Pantle to review their proposed consent form, consulting with Vic Zerbi if necessary.
8. **Officers and Directors.** The Board nominated Dave Leatherman for re-election and Brandon Percival (of Pueblo West) and Kim Potter (of Arvada) for election as Board members. The present officers were nominated to serve another year. There was discussion of the need to complete preparation of a mission statement for C.F.O., to assign specific duties to each board member, and to prepare a director's notebook which each director could pass on to their successor. Dave asked each officer and director to send him a letter outlining their present functions and what they are willing to do for C.F.O. and for the next convention. He will then draft a proposed mission statement.
9. **Colorado Division of Wildlife Long-Range Convention.** CDOW has scheduled an all-day meeting on Saturday July 10 at the Denver Convention Center to discuss its long-range plan. It had been suggested that C.F.O. should have one or more representatives attend and that C.F.O. should pay any registration fee. The Board authorized Steve Bouricius and one other member selected by Dave Silverman to attend, with C.F.O. to pay any entry fee not exceeding \$30 for each person.
10. **Price of C.F.O. Printed Materials.** 3,000 copies of an updated checklist have been printed. It was agreed that they will be sold for \$.25 each, and that the President can give away up to 1,000 per year without any charge (for example to give out for C.F.O. fieldtrips, meetings, and to prospective members). The price of the 1987 edition of the Latilong Study was reduced from \$5 a copy to \$2.50. The Secretary was authorized to sell surplus copies of the *C.F.O. Journal* (in excess of an inventory of 25 copies of an issue) to persons attending the Annual Meeting for \$1.00 each. Sales at other times or of journals not surplus will continue to be for \$3.00 each.
11. **Annual Business Meeting.** At the Banquet that evening, attended by 70 persons, officers and directors were elected by unanimous vote of the members present. Elected as officers for the next year, to hold office until the next Annual Convention, were Dave Silverman, President, Steve Bouricius, Vice President, David Pantle, Secretary, and Raymond Davis, Treasurer. Dave Leatherman, Brandon Percival, and Kim Potter were elected as directors for terms expiring in 1996.

CONVENTION '93

ABSTRACT OF PAPERS

BIRD BANDING

Susan R. Blackshaw
2809 Hearthwood Lane
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80917

Bird banders are volunteers with U.S. Fish and Wildlife. They're required to possess Federal and State permits in order to capture and band birds. To qualify for a permit, one can first "apprentice" with other banders or a Bird Observatory, and so gain identification, handling and techniques experience. Then, the bander formulates a project for his area and submits the idea to the Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL) in Laurel, Maryland.

First and foremost, one needs to know birds. The equipment needed for bird banding isn't too extensive or expensive. The BBL supplies bands, along with report forms, postage-paid envelopes and a manual. The bander must purchase traps or nets, poles, band pliers, and all other necessities. Record-keeping is probably the most critical part of banding. We can't guess at a bird's identity; annual Federal and state reports must be exact.

We band birds to gain information. When a banded bird is recovered at another point on the planet, we can learn something about its travels. We can learn how long it lives, how fast it moves in migration. While banding raptors in Florida, I captured a red-tailed hawk banded by Bill Clark in West Virginia some 13 years before. In November of 1987, at my raptor luring station, I caught a young peregrine wearing Danish bands from Greenland. She'd been banded there in July by Chris Schultz in a joint project with the Danish government. Some of my Florida birds have been recovered in Canada and the NE U.S.

Presently I'm involved in an innovative program recommended by the BBL. Sponsored by the Institute for Bird Population Studies in California, MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship) advocates "constant effort mist-netting" stations, with careful standardization and commitments of at least 5 years. Point counts are also a vital part of the MAPS effort. Banders open nets only once every 10 days during breeding season, banding breeding birds and their fledged young. Through subsequent returns, we can more accurately assess population trends. Once the 12 MAPS periods are completed at the end of August, migrant banding may be conducted to help evaluate the breeding success of birds to the north of our stations.

If you're interested in learning more about bird banding, contact the Colorado Bird Observatory in Brighton, Colorado.

CONVENTION '93

ABSTRACT OF PAPERS

PIPING PLOVERS

Duane Nelson
1619 Ford Street
Golden, Colorado 80401

My topic was scheduled to be the use of predator exclosures around Piping Plover nests. Predator exclosures are wire mesh cages that are three feet high, with a circumference of 22 to 30 feet, with two inch wide by four inch high openings that allow the plovers to incubate their eggs while keeping out most large predators. They have enhanced breeding success of Piping Plovers in colonies on the east coast. They were used successfully in Colorado for the first time in 1992 and are being used around all 1993 nests.

In light of the proposed status change of the interior population of Piping Plovers from threatened to endangered, I felt that it was more appropriate to give an overview of their status in Colorado, based on my studies which began in 1990 for the Colorado Bird Observatory. There are only about 2,100 nesting pairs in the U.S. and Canada, with an annual decline of almost 10 percent a year. Without intensive monitoring and management, Piping Plovers are in imminent danger of extinction, possibly within the next 40 years.

Piping Plovers are known to nest in Colorado only on the shores of a few reservoirs near the Arkansas River east of Las Animas, primarily at Nee Noshe Reservoir. Nesting was also confirmed in 1992 at Blue Lake, John Martin Reservoir and Neegrande Reservoir. In 1990, there were eight pairs of Piping Plovers, which produced eight fledged young. In 1991, only three pairs returned to Colorado, with winter mortality the likely cause. All nests failed in 1991. In 1992, four pairs produced six young. Preliminary data from 1993 indicates 7, and possibly 8, pairs. Almost all young from 1992 survived their first winter and at least four of the six were females, helping to balance an excess of males in previous years.

Other factors may lead to increased nesting success in 1993. All known nesting sites are now posted with twine and stronger fencing surrounds active sites. Tickets have been issued for the first time in 1993 when people have ignored signs posting closed areas. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Colorado Division of Wildlife are working on delaying the filling of Nee Noshe Reservoir until Piping Plovers and Least Tern nests have hatched as this is a year with exceptional runoff from heavy winter snows. Additionally,

thousands of cottonwood saplings have been manually cleared to provide habitat at Blue Lake in 1993, since the water level there is so high and not dropping. So far, Least Terns but not Piping Plovers have accepted this altered habitat.

CONVENTION '93

ABSTRACT OF PAPERS

THE STATUS OF WHITE-FACED AND GLOSSY IBISES IN
COLORADO

Ronald A. Ryder

Department of Fishery and Wildlife Biology
Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado

Both the White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi* = WFIB) and Glossy Ibis (*P. falcinellus* = GLIB) occur in Colorado. WFIB are regular nesters in the San Luis Valley (SLV) where they have been known since the 1870's, and where over 400 nests were reported in 1989. GLIB are rare spring visitors; only 4 or 5 documented records are known, all since 1986. Over 500 WFIB fledglings have been banded in Colorado since 1949, mainly in 4 colonies in the SLV but a few in an isolated colony at Latham Reservoir near Greeley. Known recoveries of banded WFIB have been mainly in Mexico and coastal Texas. Over 36,000 wintering WFIB were recorded on the 1992 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) at Crowley, Louisiana. In contrast, the highest GLIB count on a CBC was only 959 at Cocoa, Florida, in 1984. GLIB breeding range now extends from Florida to Maine with wanderings to Newfoundland and the Midwest. The GLIB is probably a relative newcomer to the New World (only nesting since the 1890's), whereas the WFIB is a longtime summer resident of western U.S.A. Only in extreme southeastern Louisiana are the two species believed to nest in the same wetland. No hybrids are known from the wild. With the population explosion of both dark ibises and their great wandering ability, more GLIB are likely to be reported. Extreme care needs to be taken in species identification. Where possible, color photos should be obtained and submitted to the C.F.O. records committee.

CONVENTION '93

C.F.O. CONVENTION FIELD TRIP REPORT

Brandon Percival
835 Harmony Drive
Pueblo West, Colorado 81007

May 29, 1993

1. Breeding Bird Atlas Block Trip lead by Hugh Kingery.
2. Sage & Sharp-tailed Grouse Trip to Hayden and Breeding Bird Atlas Block lead by John Tollen.

May 30, 1993

1. Breeding Bird Atlas Block Trip lead by Hugh Kingery.
2. Browns Park NWR lead by Coen Dexter & Brenda Wright.
3. Sage & Sharp-tailed Grouse Trip to Hayden and Breeding Bird Atlas Block lead by John Tollen.
4. Owling Trip to Rabbit Ears Pass lead by Dan Bridges.
5. Owling Trip around Craig lead by John Tollen.

May 31, 1993

1. South to the Douglas Mountains and Grand Junction Area lead by Coen Dexter & Brenda Wright.
2. East to Rabbit Ears Pass and Kremmling lead by Norm Barrett.

Species Reported for the C.F.O. Convention Weekend (164):

Pied-billed Grebe	Gadwall
Eared Grebe	American Wigeon
Western Grebe	Canvasback
American Bittern	Redhead
Great Blue Heron	Ring-necked Duck
Great Egret	Lesser Scaup
Snowy Egret	Bufflehead
Cattle Egret	Common Merganser
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Ruddy Duck
White-faced Ibis	Turkey Vulture
Canada Goose	Bald Eagle
Green-winged Teal	Northern Harrier
Mallard	Sharp-shinned Hawk
Northern Pintail	Cooper's Hawk
Blue-winged Teal	Northern Goshawk
Cinnamon Teal	Swainson's Hawk
Northern Shoveler	Red-tailed Hawk

Ferruginous Hawk	Purple Martin
Golden Eagle	Tree Swallow
American Kestrel	Violet-green Swallow
Prairie Falcon	Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Blue Grouse	Bank Swallow
Sage Grouse	Cliff Swallow
Sharp-tailed Grouse	Barn Swallow
Virginia Rail	Gray Jay
Sora	Steller's Jay
American Coot	Scrub Jay
Sandhill Crane	Pinyon Jay
Killdeer	Clark's Nutcracker
American Avocet	Black-billed Magpie
Spotted Sandpiper	American Crow
Long-billed Curlew	Common Raven
Common Snipe	Black-capped Chickadee
Wilson's Phalarope	Mountain Chickadee
California Gull	Plain Titmouse
Caspian Tern	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Rock Dove	White-breasted Nuthatch
Band-tailed Pigeon	Brown Creeper
Mourning Dove	Rock Wren
Western Screech-Owl	Bewick's Wren
Great Horned Owl	House Wren
Common Nighthawk	Marsh Wren
Common Poorwill	American Dipper
White-throated Swift	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Black-chinned Hummingbird	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	Mountain Bluebird
Red-naped Sapsucker	Townsend's Solitaire
Downy Woodpecker	Hermit Thrush
Hairy Woodpecker	American Robin
Northern Flicker	Gray Catbird
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Northern Mockingbird
Willow Flycatcher	Sage Thrasher
Hammond's Flycatcher	Cedar Waxwing
Dusky Flycatcher	Loggerhead Shrike
Gray Flycatcher	European Starling
Cordilleran Flycatcher	Gray Vireo
Say's Phoebe	Solitary Vireo
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Warbling Vireo
Western Kingbird	Red-eyed Vireo
Eastern Kingbird	Orange-crowned Warbler
Horned Lark	Virginia's Warbler

Yellow Warbler	Song Sparrow
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Lincoln's Sparrow
Black-throated Gray Warbler	White-crowned Sparrow
Townsend's Warbler	Dark-eyed Junco
MacGillivray's Warbler	Bobolink
Common Yellowthroat	Red-winged Blackbird
Wilson's Warbler	Western Meadowlark
Yellow-breasted Chat	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Western Tanager	Brewer's Blackbird
Black-headed Grosbeak	Common Grackle
Blue Grosbeak	Brown-headed Cowbird
Lazuli Bunting	Northern Oriole
Green-tailed Towhee	Scott's Oriole
Rufous-sided Towhee	Pine Grosbeak
Chipping Sparrow	Cassin's Finch
Brewer's Sparrow	House Finch
Vesper Sparrow	Pine Siskin
Lark Sparrow	Lesser Goldfinch
Sage Sparrow	American Goldfinch
Lark Bunting	Evening Grosbeak
Savannah Sparrow	House Sparrow

C.F.O. FIELD TRIP LEADERS

If you would like to lead a field trip in your area of special interest, please write or call Steve Bouricius at (303) 747-2367. The C.F.O. welcomes the opportunity to co-sponsor field trips with other organizations. Deadline for inclusion in the next *C.F.O. Journal* is September 1.

COLORADO PARTNERS IN FLIGHT

Pat McClearn
444 Cherry Street
Denver, Colorado 80220

"Silence of the Songbirds." The title of a June, 1993, article in National Geographic suggests an alarming possibility. Colorado Partners in Flight's efforts are aimed at preventing the catastrophe that title implies. The numbers of neotropical migratory birds are declining rapidly in the western hemisphere. This article briefly describes programs in Colorado developed to address the problem.

Initiated by Denver Audubon Society, Colorado Partners in Flight (CPIF) was born as the Colorado Bird Conservation Coalition in November, 1990. The national Partners in Flight - Aves de las Americas Program began about the same time. In November, 1991, the Coalition changed its name to Colorado Partners in Flight to become part of the international endeavors getting underway.

A broad coalition of individuals, nongovernmental organizations, state and federal agencies, CPIF's mission is to promote and enhance conservation and management efforts for Colorado birds. CPIF's vision statement follows:

Colorado Partners in Flight will be a partnership of organizations, agencies, and individuals that assures the existence of all native bird species and the communities and ecosystems upon which they depend, coexisting with people in an ecologically and economically sustainable environment. This will be accomplished through open and coordinated research, inventory, monitoring, conservation, and education efforts in Colorado and throughout the range of Colorado birds.

What prompted this major cooperative venture? More than 330 species of birds, including waterfowl and wetland birds, make their annual migrations across the Americas, breeding in the north, wintering in the south, and traveling during the spring and fall. For eons, the change of seasons has been marked by the songs of the thrush and the soaring of hawks. In recent years, however, the sounds of spring have grown more silent and the skies more empty of these colorful migrants.

According to a Bureau of Land Management publication describing BLM's "Winging into the Future" strategy, "Neotropical migration probably began between 10 and 30 million years ago when a largely subtropical climate in North America was gradually replaced by a colder and distinctly seasonal climate . . . As many as two to five billion birds fly south from the temperate zone each winter."

What has happened to cause the decline in the numbers of forest-dwelling migratory birds? In eastern North America in the decade 1978-1987 a one to three percent annual decrease has been identified. While many researchers are working to pinpoint the reasons more precisely, the following factors all play a part. Forest fragmentation on the northern breeding grounds, deforestation of wintering habitats, pesticide poisoning and the cumulative effects of habitat changes are major areas of investigation.

There is a groundswell of concern across international borders over the decline of migratory songbirds. A September, 1992, National Training Workshop on the Status and Management of Neotropical Migratory Birds, held in Estes Park, attracted almost 1,000 participants. Representatives from U.S. federal and state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, industry, academia, and at least three foreign countries attended. All 50 states were represented. Technical workshops and poster sessions covered various aspects of the protection and management of neotropical migratory birds and their habitats.

A key response to the problem is represented by the organization **Partners in Flight - Aves de las Americas, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Program**, which began in 1991. It was formed following a workshop where participants came to this consensus: Neotropical migrants were in trouble, and something needed to be done about it. The program has received major support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Most states have Partners in Flight chapters and many have developed educational pieces describing their local problems and efforts. These publications include "Neotropicals in Trouble: How do we assure the survival of our migratory songbirds?" by Dr. Gary Graham, Madge Lindsay and Kelly Bryan, published by Texas Partners in Flight, and "Birds of Two Worlds: Tropical birds of the Midwest," published by the Midwest Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Program. State wildlife agencies across the nation are also giving more and more emphasis to nongame species as a direct result of this program.

The number of organizations and agencies participating in Colorado Partners in Flight continues to grow. A sampling of those involved includes the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Denver Audubon Society, Colorado Bird Observatory, Denver Field Ornithologists, and these federal agencies: Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service and the National Park Service.

In Colorado, two special projects are underway. Denver Audubon Society (DAS) has made a "West Mexico Connection" with the Laboratorio Natural Las Joyas, an Institute of the University of Guadalajara, located in the Sierra de Manantlan International Biosphere Preserve in the states of Jalisco and Colima. DAS Goals are to provide equipment and financial aid to the Laboratorio to further its management and educational efforts. Leo Eisel chairs the West Mexico Connection Committee.

The Western Songbird Conservation Network is a complementary project of Colorado Bird Observatory (CBO), under the leadership of Mike Carter, executive director. This effort targets western Mexico's bird resources and is engaged in an ongoing inventory of species and identification of the needs of parks and resource management efforts. Both projects welcome inquiries, offers of assistance, or donations to help fund their projects. The DAS phone number is (303) 696-0877 and CBO's number is (303) 659-4348.

Colorado Partners in Flight is adopting a strategic plan to direct its activities. Goals of the CPIO subcommittees are focused as follows:

Information and Education Subcommittee: To gather, develop and disseminate information promoting the conservation of Colorado birds.

International Subcommittee: To facilitate and promote identification, conservation, and management of avian habitats shared by Colorado neotropical migratory birds in Mexico and central and south America.

Inventory and Monitoring Subcommittee: (A) To develop and maintain lists of Colorado bird species classified by habitat use, population status, seasonal problems, and limiting factors. (B) To coordinate existing and new inventory and monitoring activities for bird populations and habitats.

Management Subcommittee: (A) To develop and encourage management programs to enhance Colorado bird conservation. (B) To monitor and evaluate progress and accomplishments of management and conservation programs in Colorado and provide results to Colorado Partners in Flight and managers.

Research Subcommittee: To serve as a research clearing house among Colorado land managers, field researchers, interested organizations, including federal and state agencies and nongovernmental organizations, and funding and support organizations.

The problem is challenging, but the commitment and enthusiasm to tackle it are there. Says Dick Roth, Neotropical Migratory Bird Program Manager for the U.S. Forest Service, "Federal and state agencies, plus the nongovernmental organizations, are working together on this issue in a more cooperative manner than I have ever experienced. It is happening on the national and regional level, as well as here in Colorado. This holistic approach helps all of us to address this serious concern more effectively."

What can C.F.O. members do to aid in these efforts? You can become more aware of the issue and give active support to those efforts which make a difference. Support of the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas work and other inventory projects would be welcomed. The Colorado projects mentioned above need participants as well as funds.

For more information about CPIO, contact any of the federal agencies mentioned in this article, Gary Skiba at the Colorado Division of Wildlife, or Stephanie Jones, CPIO's contact for this year.

Stephanie Jones
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 25486

Many publications deal with the problems discussed above. Several are mentioned below. You may wish to contact Hugh Kingery, director of the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas, to request a brochure listing Colorado neotropical migrants and birds which breed in Colorado. Phone: (303) 370-6336 or (303) 291-7305.

Resources

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FOUNTAIN CREEK REGIONAL PARK COLORADO SPRINGS WILDLIFE AREA (HANNA RANCH)

We would appreciate any updates to the bird species lists of both these areas. This year, 1993, we are beginning a more intensive study of CFWA including baseline studies (by areas), point counts, banding and nesting surveys. The D.O.W. will publish an updated bird checklist (1994/1995) using the above information and any other contributions. Sightings from previous years are also very useful.

Toni Brevallier
2616 Ashgrove Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80906-3709
(719) 540-5653

George Maentz
F.C.R.P.
320 Pepper Grass Lane
Fountain, CO 80911
(719) 520-6745

BOOK REVIEW

A Birder's Guide to Wyoming
by Oliver K. Scott

Joe TenBrink
6801 East Mississippi, #A302
Denver, Colorado 80244

Anyone who birds Wyoming would be remiss not to have this book with them. It is the first really comprehensive guide to all Wyoming's birding areas.

The credentials of the author could hardly be more impressive. Dr. Scott learned his birding skills under the tutelage of none other than Ludlow Griscom and was editor of the "Rocky Mountain Region" for Audubon Field Notes from 1949 to 1971. He started Wyoming's first Audubon chapter.

The first two-thirds of the book lists 19 separate areas covering the entire state. Each area is meticulously described listing which species of birds are to be expected. The directions are excellent, with maps (executed by C.F.O. member Cindy Lippincott) that are clear and uncomplicated.

I especially liked Dr. Scott's entertaining style. He not only gives the pertinent details, but injects many humorous anecdotes.

The last third of the book consists of the annotated checklist. Again this is not merely a list of birds and where they are likely to be found. There is a paragraph for each species. One need only read the paragraph to find the arrival and departure time of migrants which nest in the state, and the times when migrants pass through the state. Therefore, the need for graphs such as those we are accustomed to in the Lane/Holt Birder's Guides are eliminated. The author includes many interesting experiences he and others had with certain birds.

Very common, common, uncommon, rare, accidental and casual are the abundance codes used. While these would seem inadequate, the commentary gives the reader a good sense of numbers.

The binding is a loose-leaf form which allows the book to stay open at a desired place. The back cover with its large map extends about four inches and is designed to double as a book mark. Thick, quality paper is used and the book will afford long service. A bargain at \$14.95. (Plus \$3.50 S&H.) From:

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**WHITE-EYED VIREO NEST:
CONTROVERSY IN COLORADO**

**Inez Prather
13810 WCR #1
Longmont, Colorado 80504**

Early in May of 1992, northeastern Colorado birder Joe Himmel visited his sister in Arkansas. There he enjoyed a day of birding with the Arkansas Audubon Society in Fayetteville. Being a former music professor, Joe is particularly aware of bird songs. One bird that often sang from thickets that day was the White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*). Not expecting to hear this song in the near future, he returned to Greeley.

Spring of 1992 in eastern Colorado was unusually mild and early. On May 14th Joe was birding Riverside Reservoir. He heard a familiar (but unexpected) song, that of the White-eyed Vireo! He hurried to view the bird. According to Colorado Birds, by Andrews and Righter only 10 state records had been accepted through 1991. This Riverside bird was a very significant sighting for Colorado. The next day Joe visited the Crow Valley Recreation Area. There he saw J.B. Hayes and the two began to bird together. Again Joe heard the increasingly familiar song. A White-eyed Vireo was at Crow Valley! Joe and J.B. thought that there might be two vireos, but they were not sure. That afternoon another observer, Joe Mammoser, confirmed two White-eyed Vireos at Crow Valley.

What happened over the next two weeks will be a subject of continuing controversy in Colorado birding circles over the years to come. The facts are simple enough. As early as May 17th a vireo was seen carrying nesting material. By May 20th the two vireos were actively building a nest. It was the first known nesting attempt by White-eyed Vireos in Colorado. Duane Nelson gave a cautionary message on the Denver Field Ornithologist Rare Bird Alert tape saying, "Please do not disturb these birds which have not attempted to nest in the state previously." Yet, by May 27th the two birds had deserted their nest and were not seen again. The question that Colorado birders must consider is whether they are in part responsible for the birds' nesting failure.

Birders were thrilled when the two vireos elected to nest at Crow Valley. Crow Valley is situated in the northeastern part of Colorado, near the town of Briggsdale. It is an island of deciduous trees and shrubbery in the vast sea of short-grass prairie known as the Pawnee Grasslands. Native vegetation growing along the intermittent channel of Crow Creek includes plains cottonwood, plum, peachleaf willow, coyote willow, box-elder, snowberry, and currants. Planted trees in this recreation area include Siberian elm, green

ash, Russian olive, Rocky Mountain juniper, and honeylocust. The recreational area is administered by the U.S. Forest Service and consists of five separate facilities: a group picnic area, a group camping area, a family campground, an education site and a ball field. The U.S. Forest Service estimates that the Crow Valley Recreation Area covers 10 acres.

During spring and fall Crow Valley hosts numerous birders who have found its trees to be a migration trap. The number of birders visiting Crow Valley increased in the Spring of 1992 as many Colorado birders added the White-eyed Vireo to their state list. But other people come to Crow Valley. School groups come to spend a day or to camp over night. Large groups of 200 or more can use the group picnic area and they may also camp overnight. It is a popular area. The weekend after the White-eyed Vireos began building their nest was Memorial Day weekend, considered by Forest Service personnel to be the busiest weekend of the year. One 200-person group used the ball field for its activities. A Greeley Audubon group used the educational site. Several schools brought large classes of students and of course birders, picnickers, campers, photographers and other outdoor recreationists were present. Estimates of over 500 people a day seem within reason for this weekend and possibly as many as 300 persons stayed overnight. Did people pressure scare the vireos away?

The White-eyed Vireo is not necessarily a shy bird. It is often found nesting in brushy hedges and thick vegetation in the southeastern United States. It will locate its nest in busy suburban areas in fairly crowded conditions. Although the shrubbery is dense in parts of Crow Valley, the areas of vegetation are not particularly large. Southwest of the campground in a very small stand of shrubbery, the two vireos built their nest about 2 feet from the ground in a box-elder tree. Several birders noted that boisterous students, eager birders, hopeful photographers, and casual hikers all visited the southwest corner of Crow Valley that weekend. One observer noted that the paths leading to the nest wore deeper and deeper into the grass. To be sure most birders, photographers, and bystanders tried to be considerate of the birds, but one observer said that some people came to within five feet of the nest. Some photographers acted responsibly while others moved in for longer periods at very close ranges. Was the people pressure too great and too steady?

Another factor that should be mentioned is the weather. When the birds began building their nest, the area temperatures were in the 80's during the day and the 50's at night. Memorial Day weekend saw the daily highs and the nighttime lows plummet. Greeley's high that Monday, May 25th, was 55 degrees and the low was 47 degrees. On May 26th the low at Crow Valley was 36. The birds were not seen on the 27th when Crow Valley's low was 34 and its high was 41. Several small towns just north of Crow Valley had measurable snowfall. This weather change must be considered. Obviously the birds attempted to nest far beyond their normal range. Conditions may have

been less than ideal.

Why did the White-eyed Vireos leave? It could have been the weather. It could have been the crowds. It could have been photographers or it could have been birders. It could have been any or all of these reasons. One argument is as likely as another, and even the actions we take to prevent future nest disturbances can carry their own controversies.

Birders could ask the U.S. Forest Service to limit large groups at the campgrounds at Crow Valley but for some people, such as high school students, a camping experience can create a learning opportunity that cannot be duplicated. Birders could denounce bird photographers and bird photography, but photographs can provide valuable documentation of scientific interest as well as bring new converts to nature study. National Geographic photographer Frederick Kent Truslow (1970) wrote of the numbers of people who, by his photography, had been directly influenced to take up new outdoor activities. And, in moments of discouragement, birdwatchers might even decide that their pastime itself is worthless, but birding is still a relatively sane and inexpensive activity in an insane and expensive world. Most birders have at least been made more environmentally aware and respectful of their world through their observations. Birders could do all these things and the White-eyed Vireos might still have deserted their nest.

Birders should never develop tunnel vision as they observe one beautiful, but small part of our natural world. Birders owe it to their natural world to protect all of its wonders. They owe it to others to let them enjoy the beauty of nature with them. But, birders can still lift up the protection of birds as an obligation that is intrinsic to our avian pursuit. Perhaps the following suggestions made by several observers who were at Crow Valley and who were concerned for the White-eyed Vireos should be considered.

1. Birders should decide a bird's welfare is more important than their own comfort and a bird at any time should not be placed under undue stress because of human intrusion.
2. Nesting and incubating birds should be given every consideration and possibly left completely alone during nest-building and incubation. Perhaps nesting rare and sensitive species should be left unreported by bird hotlines.
3. Photographers and birders should be careful not to attract people's attention to roosting areas or nests if they suspect the new observers will not respect the birds' territory.
4. Birders should urge natural resource agencies to limit or to close certain areas during the nesting season if it is obvious that nesting species are being disturbed, even though birders will be limiting their own access to these areas.

But a code of ethics can be easily rationalized when birders are desperate for a new species on their list or a cover photograph. More than a code of ethics, birders need confidence in themselves. Confidence that they can leave an area without seeing or photographing a bird, inwardly assured

that there will be other days and other birds. Birders must be confident that they possess birding excellence, whether they see the bird of the moment or not.

Perhaps no White-eyed Vireos will be nesting in Colorado in the near future, but this spring enormous numbers of other birds will build nests and attempt to raise young in our state. These birds don't care what binoculars or field guides or cameras birdwatchers carry into the field. But the ethics and self-respect birders carry within them can make a difference in determining the future of these birds.

My thanks to Hugh Kingery, Dave Leatherman, the U.S. Forest Service, Joe Himmel, Joe Mammoser, Duane Nelson, Bill Prather, Bob Rozinski, Chuck Preston of the Denver Museum of Natural History, and Odie Bliss of the Colorado Climate Center for their help in preparing this article.

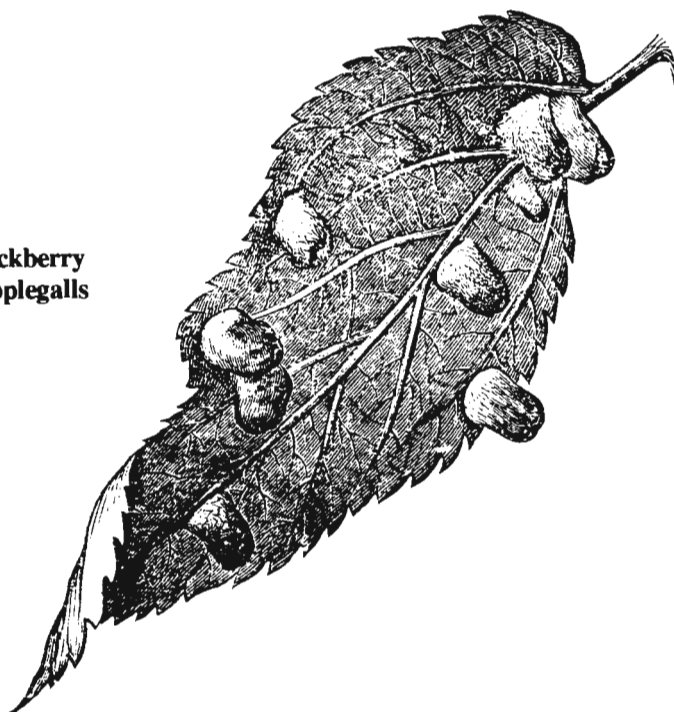
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**Hackberry
Nipplegalls**



BIRD PREDATION ON HACKBERRY PSYLLIDS IN A NORTHERN COLORADO CEMETERY

David A. Leatherman
2048 Whiterock Court
Fort Collins, Colorado 80526

Introduction: This report summarizes bird predation on the insect family Psyllidae at Grandview Cemetery, Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado for the period 1 January, 1988 through 31 December, 1992.

During the past four years, a total of 290 visits were made to Grandview Cemetery for the purpose of general bird observation. These visits averaged about one hour in length. Because visits prior to 1988 had established a general predator-prey relationship between birds and hackberry psyllids, any such activity noted during more recent visits was given particular attention.

Background: Psyllids, also called "jumping plantlice," are tiny insects (0.08-0.20 inches in length) which resemble miniature cicadas. There are at least seven species (*genus Pachypsylla*) in North America which feed on hackberry trees (*Celtis*). These hackberry-feeders form galls, a gall being defined as "an abnormal growth of plant tissues, caused by the stimulus of an animal or another plant" (Borrer, Triplehorn and Johnson 1989).

Grandview Cemetery was established in 1887. Due to early planting efforts, tree maintenance and time, its well-kept 40 acres now support a mature urban forest. The dominant overstory trees are arranged in patchy fashion, with the more prominent species being American elm (*Ulmus americana*), plains cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*) and Colorado blue spruce (*Picea pungens*). Understory vegetation primarily consists of bluegrass (*Poa spp.*), woody shrubs--particularly lilac (*Syringa spp.*), mapleleaf viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera spp.*), and Japanese privet (*Ligustrum japonicum*), as well as several species of small trees planted since 1975.

At least five hackberry trees (*C. americana*) over 30 feet tall also grow in the cemetery. Hackberry is native, or is at least naturalized, along drainages in extreme northeastern Colorado and is a widely planted ornamental elsewhere in the state at elevations below 6000 feet.

Local Psyllid Biology and Observations: Both the hackberry nipplegall psyllid (*P. celtidismamma*) and the blistergall psyllid (*P. celtidisvesicula*) heavily infest Grandview Cemetery hackberries during most years. This was established by an examination of leaf-gall types and by a large collection of adults on 28 September, 1988. Species determinations were made by Dr. Boris Kondratieff of the Colorado State University Department of Entomology. In this sample, Dr. Kondratieff found both nipplegall and

blistergall psyllids.

Both insects form monothalamous galls (one insect per gall), which appear as pale, raised bumps (nipplegall psyllid) or dark, rectangular, flattened blisters (blistergall psyllid). A typical infestation of nipplegall psyllids produces 2-10 galls per leaf. Fifty or more blistergalls may occur per leaf. Both types can, and often do, occur on the same leaf.



Adult hackberry
nipplegall psyllid
(about 10X)

Adults of the two species are impossible to distinguish from a distance and are even difficult to separate under microscopic examination. In this paper during discussion of bird predation on adult psyllids outside galls, no distinction is made between the two psyllid species. They are assumed to be taken by birds primarily on the basis of their relative abundance, and not prejudicially on the basis of morphology or behavior (apart from emergence date).

The general life cycle of both the nipplegall and blistergall psyllid is as follows: Adults emerge from galls in fall and overwinter in bark crevices and other protected places. In spring adults fly to expanding and/or unfolding leaf buds and lay eggs. Nymphs invade leaf tissue and develop within the resultant galls from late spring through summer. Finally, adults emerge from galls in fall and the cycle is repeated.

Thus, the adults of both the nipplegall and blistergall psyllid are emerging from galls in large numbers in fall and returning to leaf buds in somewhat smaller numbers (due to winter mortality) in spring to mate and lay eggs. Both periods of heavy activity and vulnerability outside galls occur within the spring and fall migration periods for many passerine bird species.

Birds were observed feeding on spring adult psyllids outside galls as early as 15 April (1991) and as late as 24 May (1990), with most observations of this type occurring the first week in May.

In fall, birds were observed feeding on psyllids (either late-instar nymphs still inside galls or adults outside galls) as early as 23 August (1992) and as late as 9 October (1990), with most observations of this type occurring during the last two weeks of September through the first week of October. The birds in this study period obtained psyllids by six methods:

Type 1: Gleaning active adults from all substrates (particularly bark,



Late-
instar
psyllid
nymph
(10X)

buds and leaves of hackberry, but also from the ground and headstones).

This was the most common method and usually involved rapid pecking while perched on the outer few feet of branches. (See discussion of Yellow-throated Warbler.)

Type 2: "Flycatching" for flying adults

Because psyllids are so small, this type of feeding usually involved only short flights of a few feet.

Type 3: Extracting late-instar nymphs and/or adults from within nipplegalls

This method involved simply biting off the top of the gall, extracting the insect and dropping the excised section of gall. In many cases the leaf was also severed from the branch. Thus, ground evidence of this method consisted of leaves with a few gall tops missing, plus a scattering of gall tops near the fallen leaves.

Type 4: Extracting late-instar nymphs and/or adults from within blistergalls

With this method, the bird (particularly a chickadee) usually pulled a leaf from its twig and stood on the leaf, with a foot on each edge. Then the contents of individual blistergalls were extracted, each with a single swift peck. The leaf was then released to fall to the ground. Fresh evidence would appear as prematurely fallen leaves with 5-15 peck marks, each peck centered on a blistergall. Holding these leaves up to the sky made the rather inconspicuous peck marks clearly evident.

Type 5: Gleaning overwintering adults from sites on hackberry

Usually this involved careful probing and prying among bark scales and crevices. No doubt other arthropods discovered were consumed along with the psyllids, but the disproportionate amount of bird activity in hackberry makes it highly likely psyllids were the primary attraction.

Type 6: Gleaning overwintering adults from sites on non-host tree species (usually in close proximity to hackberry)

Same general discussion as Type 5--usually this was in spruce but occasionally was performed amid ground litter and along the letters carved into headstones.

SUMMARY OF PSYLLID PREDATION BY BIRD SPECIES, FEEDING METHOD AND SEASON

SPECIES	FEEDING METHOD (BY SEASON)*
Downy Woodpecker	1(F)
Northern Flicker	1(F) 5(W)
Black-capped Chickadee	1(S,F) 4(F) 5(W) 6(W)
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1(S,F)
Brown Creeper	1(F) 5(W) 6(W)

Golden-crowned Kinglet	5(W)	6(W)
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1(S,F)	2(F)
Orange-crowned Warbler	1(S,F)	2(S,F)
Virginia's Warbler	1(S)	2(S)
Yellow Warbler	1(S)	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1(S,F)	2(S,F)
Townsend's Warbler	1(F)	2(F)
Blackburnian Warbler	1(F)	2(F)
Yellow-throated Warbler	1(S)	
Wilson's Warbler	1(F)	2(F)
Western Tanager	1(F)	
Indigo Bunting	1(S)	
Chipping Sparrow	1(S,F)	
House Finch	1(S,F)	3(F)
Pine Siskin	1(S,F)	4(F)
American Goldfinch	1(S)	
Evening Grosbeak	3(F)	

- *S = spring (March-May)
 F = fall (August-October)
 W = winter (November-February)

Note: No psyllid predation was observed during 14 summer visits (June-July), but it is suspected feeding types #3 and/or #4 occasionally are utilized during this season by Black-capped Chickadees, Pine Siskins and House Finches.

Discussion: Hackberry psyllids, during their two periods of adult activity, would appear to be an important local food source for both resident and migrant insectivorous birds.

To illustrate an extreme in this regard, the Yellow-throated Warbler seen 15 April, 1991 was observed consuming a conservatively-estimated 50 psyllids per minute for a period of five hours. In other words, this individual bird consumed perhaps 15,000 psyllids in less than one-half of the daylight hours available during one spring day.

In the cemetery from late November through February, overwintering psyllids are significant contributors to the diets of certain winter resident birds. As is typical of the bird species involved, such feeding is often done in mixed flocks.

Observations to date indicate the cemetery's hackberry psyllids have been eaten by 22 bird species: 5 residents; 12 neotropical migrants (2 eastern vagrants and 10 which breed in Colorado); and 5 winter residents (all of which breed in Colorado but not normally in Grandview Cemetery). The psyllid-eating species come from 8 families.

Summary: The implications of these relationships are many. Hackberry psyllids are primarily thought of as gall-forming pests by the general public and some professional arborists. They are the target of considerable

insecticide spraying, much of it doing little to reduce gall formation because of improper timing. The galls normally amount to no more than an esthetic blemish, and as indicated here, the causal insects can fulfill a valuable ecological role. Thus under normal circumstances, spraying or other treatments directed at hackberry psyllids do not appear justified. Only when large numbers of adults accumulate on window screens or enter homes (as they sometimes do), is a mechanical treatment like vacuuming or soap spray worthy of consideration. Hackberry survives well in Colorado at low elevations and makes a good choice in situations where attracting birds and fox squirrels is a goal. With the increased interest in wildlife plantings and backyard habitat programs, this tree warrants favor. In addition to the psyllid-eating species, American robins, cedar waxwings, Bohemian waxwings, Townsend's solitaires, northern flickers, and (alas) European starlings are known to eat the drupes ("berries") in Colorado. No doubt other bird species eat these fruits at times. Fox squirrels eat the buds, phloem, and fruits of hackberry, as well as consuming nipplegalls (analogous to method #3) in early fall.

Acknowledgements: The author wishes to thank the Grandview Cemetery staff and grounds crew, particularly Cemetery Supervisor Philip Carpenter, for assistance during my visits. I also greatly appreciate the efforts of Dr. Myron Baker, Dr. Boris Kondratieff and Dr. Ronald Ryder in reviewing a preliminary manuscript.

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BREEDING BIRD ATLAS UPDATE

Hugh Kingery
869 Milwaukee Street
Denver, Colorado 80206

Confirm the Missing Birds

With two seasons left for the Breeding Bird Atlas, we have identified fourteen species which have nested in Colorado but which we have not confirmed (in the Atlas records) during the Atlas period. We invite any C.F.O. members who can provide breeding information on any of these species for any year, 1987-1994, to send it to the Atlas or to me.

The species break down into several categories:

1. Definitely breeding but details not yet in our Atlas database:

Great Egret

2. Most certainly breeding, but no confirmation; hard to confirm:

Forster's Tern
Greater Roadrunner*
Chimney Swift
Red-bellied Woodpecker

3. Probably breeding; rarity makes confirmation difficult:

Chestnut-sided Warbler	No. Cardinal
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10
11	11
12	12
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93	93
94	94
95	95
96	96
97	97
98	98
99	99
100	100

4. Possibly breeding:

Least Bittern Rose-breasted Grosbeak

5. Probably not breeding:

Broad-winged Hawk
Marbled Godwit
Vermillion Flycatcher

Another group of species have nested during the Atlas period, but have not confirmed breeding in Atlas priority blocks:

Double-crested Cormorant
Little Blue Heron
Barrow's Goldeneye
Franklin's Gull
Black Tern
Spotted Owl
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
Carolina Wren
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher
Bendire's Thrasher
Field Sparrow.

Also in this last category is a species which the C.F.O. Records Committee has declined to certify for inclusion on the Colorado list because of

doubts of its origin--but she has nested with a Swainson's Hawk for at least three summers:

Red-backed Buzzard.

[In March 1993 this bird returned to its Gunnison mountain valley with the Swainson's Hawks for its seventh summer here.]

Fill in the Gaps

Atlas species maps of common birds like Downy Woodpecker and Black-capped Chickadee show that our Atlas protocol distorts some distributions. By our random selection of the southeast portion of each topographic map, we miss the Arkansas River from Las Animas to Holly. Consequently Atlas blocks in that vicinity omit species restricted to the Arkansas riparian zone. The lack of confirmations for cormorants in priority blocks--even though it nests in several locations in the state--also results from that block selection.

Field work this summer will fill in some of these gaps (May Atlas trips found Downy Woodpeckers in three Atlas blocks near Lamar), but others may remain missing. It may be that some actually are missing--like chickadees along the Arkansas and to the south. However Duane Nelson has seen Black-capped Chickadees in Lamar.

The block selection also missed almost all of the wetlands in the San Luis Valley; we have received a very thorough report of those wetlands (though in non-priority blocks) from Tasha Kotliar of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Another category for which we solicit information is rare breeding species. Atlas work has confirmed Ovenbird breeding, but only in Al Hay's Indian Hills block. Our inventory of owls (other than Great Horned) is less than it should be. We have a paucity of reports of Bobolinks, Canvasbacks, Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Scott's Orioles, Black-necked Stilts, American Redstarts, and Ladder-backed Woodpeckers.

Consequently we invite Atlasers and other non-Atlasers to share information with us on breeding birds in non-priority blocks, **IF** the non-priority blocks contain species which we miss in the priority block and probably in nearby blocks.

These reports will appear on the final Atlas maps, and go into the Atlas species database, although the Atlas statistics will not use them. Send information on these species to the Regional Coordinator. If you need more information or are not familiar with the Atlas procedures, contact me. I will furnish you with the necessary forms (and try to locate your observations on our map system) so that you can complete field cards and provide the other pertinent data.

***Editor's Note:** Recently confirmed by Alan Versaw in Table Mesa block, N.W. Baca County.

**A MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICIAL C.F.O. RECORDS COMMITTEE
CHAIR**

Bill Prather, 13810 WCR 1, Longmont, CO 80504

For better or worse I am now chairperson of the Official C.F.O. Records Committee and I would like to discuss my opinion of how this committee works. When a record is submitted, it is circulated to all the members of the committee. If we get more than one report of the same occurrence, they all get the same number and are considered one record. The committee members vote "A" (the report adequately describes a naturally occurring bird or birds), "B" (the report describes a different species than is reported or the evidence shows the bird(s) is not naturally occurring), "C" (the report does not have enough information to determine the species/or the origin of the bird(s)), or "no opinion" (I can't decide or I can't vote because this is my own report). If there is not complete agreement among the committee members, the report will be recirculated with the votes and comments from each member. Before this is done, we may get more information from the original reporter, opinions from outside experts and other information. If agreement is still not reached, the report will be discussed and a final vote taken.

Obviously, a lot can go wrong between the original sighting and the final vote. All the necessary field marks may not have been seen, the report may not adequately state what was actually seen, the committee members may misinterpret the report, and the committee members' own prejudices and limitations may play a part. I am certain than a lot of good records have not been accepted and a few bad records have been accepted. For this reason I don't consider any decision final; any record can be reviewed considering new information. If you feel your record did not receive fair treatment, please resubmit it and state what information you think was overlooked or ask another person who saw the bird to submit a new report.

To observers I would like to say make the report as good as you can--put down everything you saw and carefully state how you separated similar species, especially common species. The committee members can only decide based on what is reported. Both a House Finch and a Scarlet Tanager could be described as red birds so state exactly what you mean.

To committee members I would like to say try to put yourself in the observer's position and believe the report--many reports that are not absolutely professional are correct. Many people who see birds do not write professional reports. To everyone I would like to say remember this is not a life and death matter. The birds certainly don't care if they are identified and counted correctly. They would probably prefer to be left alone. Let's all try to have fun birding and not take it too seriously.

The list of species we would like reports on follows. Also any sighting out of the normal area or season can be reported. Look in Colorado Birds by Andrews and Righter to see what is normal. The surest way to get your sighting considered is to send it directly to me. Hugh Kingery will pass on reports that he thinks I have not received but that just puts an extra burden on him and delays the whole process. I have had people tell me that reports sent to the museum have been lost. If you have submitted a report and think it

may have been lost, please contact me. *Good birding!*

Birds we would like documentations on:

Red-throated Loon	American Woodcock	Bendire's Thrasher
Yellow-billed Loon	Red Phalarope	Sprague's Pipit
Red-necked Grebe	Pomarine Jaeger	Phainopepla
Brown Pelican	Parasitic Jaeger	White-eyed Vireo
Olivaceous Cormorant	Long-tailed Jaeger	Yellow-throated Vireo
Anhinga	Common Black-headed Gull	Philadelphia Vireo
Magnificent Frigatebird	Little Gull	Blue-Winged Warbler
Little Blue Heron	Mew Gull	Golden-winged Warbler
Tricolored Heron	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Lucy's Warbler
Reddish Egret	Glaucous-winged Gull	Cape May Warbler
White Ibis	Great Black-backed Gull	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Glossy Ibis	Black-legged Kittiwake	Hermit Warbler
Wood Stork	Ross' Gull	Black-throated Green Warbler
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	Ivory Gull	Blackburnian Warbler
Trumpeter Swan	Arctic Tern	Yellow-throated Warbler
American Black Duck	Marbled Murrelet	Pine Warbler
Garganey	Ancient Murrelet	Prairie Warbler
Eurasian Wigeon	White-winged Dove	Palm Warbler
Harlequin Duck	Inca Dove	Bay-breasted Warbler
Black Scoter	Groove-billed Ani	Cerulean Warbler
Am. Swallow-tailed Kite	Snowy Owl	Prothonotary Warbler
Red-shouldered Hawk	Spotted Owl	Worm-eating Warbler
Gyr Falcon	Barred Owl	Swainson's Warbler
Ruffed Grouse	Lesser Nighthawk	Louisiana Waterthrush
Yellow Rail	Whip-poor-will	Kentucky Warbler
Black Rail	Magnificent Hummingbird	Connecticut Warbler
King Rail	Blue-throated Hummingbird	Mourning Warbler
Purple Gallinule	Anna's Hummingbird	Hooded Warbler
Common Moorhen	Eastern Wood-pewee	Canada Warbler
Whooping Crane	Alder Flycatcher	Painted Redstart
Lesser Golden-plover	Black Phoebe	Hepatic Tanager
Piping Plover	Vermilion Flycatcher	Scarlet Tanager
Eskimo Curlew	Dusky-capped Flycatcher	Henslow's Sparrow
Hudsonian Godwit	Carolina Wren	LeConte's Sparrow
Ruddy Turnstone	Sedge Wren	Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Red Knot	Gray-cheeked Thrush	Golden-crowned sparrow
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	Wood Thrush	Eastern Meadowlark
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Varied Thrush	Bronzed Cowbird
Ruff	Long-Billed Thrasher	Brambling
		Purple Finch

And any bird not on the official C.F.O. state birdlist. If you need a copy or if you need documentation forms, please contact me.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD
WINTER SEASONAL REPORT
(December 1992 - February 1993)

Bill Prather
13810 Weld County Road #1
Longmont, Colorado 80504

This is the last seasonal report that I'm scheduled to write as I am taking over the chair of the C.F.O. Official Records Committee. This does not mean that you should stop seeing and reporting birds. Coen Dexter is taking over the seasonal reports and I expect he will do a much better job than I have. Send reports to your regional reporter or to Hugh Kingery. Look in *Colorado Birds* by Andrews and Righter to see what needs to be documented and be sure to write complete documentations for the Records Committee.

Each species is followed by a statement on its status in winter. This information was taken, sometimes in abbreviated form, from *Colorado Birds*. I included dates, places and observers for all species considered less common than "Rare" and places only for "Rare" species. Numbers in parenthesis after places indicate number of individuals seen in each occurrence. For example, (5,2) means there were 2 reports from the area with 5 seen the first time and 2 the second. More common species were included only if observers noted trends in populations or reports of exceptional numbers. All reports were taken as reported; I made no judgments (it is possible, however, I made mistakes in the data). * indicates I received documentation from the observer. The Records Committee will evaluate each record on the documentation that was sent in and a report will be published in a later *C.F.O. Journal*. Thanks to all who sent in reports, the regional compilers, Hugh Kingery, Duane Nelson, Phil Hayes and Kurt Hebner for helping get all this information together.

The season was marked by lots of snow in the mountains but generally mild conditions in the lower elevations. A lot of species wintered farther north and in greater numbers than usual. The Baikal Teal and Long-billed Thrasher were very exciting finds and made for interesting discussions on origins and identification respectively. No one would have thought we would have Inca Doves, Palm and Pine Warblers winter in Colorado and 3 Lesser Black-backed Gulls at the same time would have been unthinkable before this year. It was good to see a lot of reports of Long-eared Owls and Northern Goshawks as there has been concern about those species. It was a fun season!

Common Loon very rare winter resident on eastern plains, casual in western valleys, accidental in mountain parks. 1 until 12/6 at Highline Res. State Park (Coen Dexter, Rich Levad); 1 in Pueblo 12/5,12 (Cliff Smith, Pearle

Sandstrom-Smith, Brandon Percival), 1/1 (Dave Johnson); 1 at Hamilton Res. 12/2 (Dave Leatherman)

Pied-billed Grebe rare winter resident on eastern plains and in western valleys. Reported from Grand Junction (many until 12/12, 7 until 12/28); Silverthorne (12/19-1/2); Pueblo (5-16 wintered); Boulder (December and January); Denver area (several reports - up to 6)

Horned Grebe rare winter resident on eastern plains. Reported from Pueblo (2,4); Golden; Hamilton Res. (up to 77); Boulder

Eared Grebe very rare in early winter on eastern plains, casual in western valleys, accidental in mountain parks. 11 in Pueblo 12/12 (Mark Janos, Brandon Percival); 1 on Denver Christmas Count 12/19

Clark's Grebe casual winter resident on eastern plains near foothills. 1 in Pueblo 12/24, 2/20 (Brandon Percival); 1 2/20 in Vineland Quadrangle (Lindsay Lilley, Brandon Percival)

White Pelican several observations of birds spending the winter - most are injured and unable to migrate. 1 on Denver Urban Christmas Count 1/1

Double-crested Cormorant very rare winter resident on eastern plains, casual in western valleys (Mesa County), accidental in mountains. 1 west of Grand Junction 12/12 (Rich Levad); 2 12/6 and 1 until 12/12 in Pueblo (Mark Janos, Brandon Percival); up to 6 wintered at Valmont Res. near Boulder (Bill Kaempfer, Dave Bolton); 1 E. of Northglenn 1/11,13 (Jack Reddall, Ted Cooper)

Trumpeter Swan casual fall and early winter migrant on eastern plains, accidental in western valleys and mountain parks. 4 at Lake Henry 2/28 (Lindsay Lilley, Mark Janos*); 5 seen in Mack and Debeque area several times 12/4-1/16 (Coen Dexter, Rich Levad); 2 that were transplanted to southeastern Wyoming and chased out by poachers were seen on the Colorado River near Radium 11/30-12/5. 1 was killed but the other was seen as late as late January. A sad story about people's impact on birds

Greater White-fronted Goose rare winter resident on eastern plains. Reported from Canon City (5-7); Union Res. (15); Johnson's Pond (6); Sloan's Lake; Lower Latham Res. (3)

Snow Goose rare winter resident in western valleys and on eastern plains away from Arkansas Valley where it is abundant. Reported from Grand Junction area (10 on 12/4-5, 5 on 12/20, up to 80 2/20-28); Boulder; Berthoud; Ft Collins area (2); Denver area (50)

American Black Duck casual winter resident on eastern plains. 1 in Pueblo 12/13-1/1 (Mark Janos*); 1 in Holly 12/27 (Mark Janos*); 1 in Ft. Collins had its hind toes removed indicating it had been in captivity.

Cinnamon Teal fairly common spring migrant, migrants usually begin appearing in February. 1 near Grand Junction 1/28 (Rich Levad)

Baikal Teal no previous accepted records. 1 female was present in the Evergreen area 11-28 to 1/23. (Bill Brockner*, Mark Janos* and many observers.)

Canvasback reported from Boulder (December); Longmont; Hamilton Res
Redhead rare winter resident (may be fairly common very locally) in western valleys and on eastern plains. Reported from Grand Junction area (15-20 in December and February); Boulder (December and February); Longmont area; Denver area; Hamilton Res. (up to 300), Pueblo 358 in late February

Greater Scaup rare local winter resident. Reported from Clifton; Grand County; Pueblo area (up to 7); Wheatridge; Golden

Oldsquaw very rare mid-winter resident on eastern plains. 1 in Pueblo 12/12-2/14 (Mark Janos, Brandon Percival); 2 wintered at Hamilton Res. (Dave Leatherman and many observers); up to 5 wintered on the South Platte E. of Northglenn (Kim Potter, many observers); 1 E. of Golden 1/2/93 (Robert Spencer)

White-winged Scoter rare fall migrant and casual winter resident on eastern plains. 2 wintered at Hamilton Res. (Dave Leatherman and many observers)

Common Goldeneye fairly common to common winter resident. 3100 at Pueblo Reservoir on 12/19 an exceptional number (Mark Janos)

Barrow's Goldeneye rare winter resident. Reported from Mesa (8,2,1); Silverthorne (3); Eagle, Pueblo (up to 3), Wheatridge (2), Golden (2)

Hooded Merganser rare winter resident in western valleys, mountain parks and on the eastern plains. Reported from Grand Junction area (10-12 wintered); Salida; Pueblo area (up to 50); Boulder (several wintered); Hamilton Res. (2)

Ruddy Duck rare winter resident in western valleys, the San Luis Valley, and on the eastern plains near foothills. Reported from Grand Junction area (6 total on 4 dates); Pueblo (up to 2); Hamilton Res.

Osprey no adequately documented winter records. 1 at McPhee Reservoir near Cortez 2/11 (Lucille Bainbridge); 1 NE of Boulder 12/12 (Jim McKee)

Northern Goshawk rare to uncommon resident in mountains, rare winter resident in western valleys, mountain parks, and on eastern plains. Reported from Grand Junction area (2 birds on 4 dates); Pueblo; Chatfield Res.(2); E. of Lyons; Boulder; Ft Collins; N. of Morrison; Riverside Res.

Swainson's Hawk no adequately documented winter records. 1 was reported on the Cortez Christmas Count - no details were submitted

Merlin rare to uncommon winter resident. "Very difficult to find this winter" around Ft Collins area (Dave Leatherman)

Peregrine Falcon very rare winter resident. 2 on Colorado River near Grand Junction 12/20 (Coen Dexter); 1 in Thornton 1/3 (Larry Malone); 1 NW of Boulder 12/25 (Kat Bennett); 1 S. of Lyons 12/4 (DW King)

Gyr Falcon casual winter resident. 1 at Walden Ponds E. of Boulder 1/19 (Joe TenBrink)

Virginia Rail rare winter resident in western valleys, the San Luis Valley, and on eastern plains near foothills. Reported from Clifton Marsh (8-12 wintered); Colorado River near Grand Junction; Eagle; Pueblo; Vineland Quadrangle

Greater Yellowlegs casual winter resident. At least 3 wintered on Colorado River near Grand Junction (Coen Dexter); 1 on Denver Christmas Count 12/19
Dunlin accidental in winter. 2 at Cherry Creek Res. State Park 12/1-1/31, 1 remained until 2/27

Franklin's Gull casual in winter on eastern plains. 1 in Pueblo 2/14 (Mark Janos)

Bonaparte's Gull casual in winter at Pueblo Reservoir (becoming regular?). 30 on 12/5 (Cliff Smith, Pearle Sandstrom-Smith) declining to 1 on 12/12 (Mark Janos, Brandon Percival) on Pueblo Reservoir

Mew Gull accidental in winter on eastern plains. 1 on Pueblo Reservoir remained until 12/6 (Mark Janos, Brandon Percival)

Thayer's Gull apparently a rare winter visitor on eastern plains. Reported from Pueblo; Cherry Creek Res.; Boulder

Lesser Black-backed Gull accidental in fall and winter. 1 adult at Pueblo Res. 2/7 (Mark Janos*); 1 adult at Lake Henry 2/27 (Brandon Percival, Dave Silverman*); 1 subadult at Baseline Res. 2/20-3/1 (David Ely*, Steven Feldstein*); it was joined by a 2nd winter Lesser Black-backed Gull on 2/27

Glaucous Gull rare winter resident on eastern plains. Reported from Pueblo; Aurora; Boulder

Inca Dove no previous winter records. 2 that were originally seen in the fall stayed until 1/4 and 1 remained through the season at Vineland, Pueblo County (Brandon Percival* and many observers); 2-3 remained in Lamar until 12/18; 1 remained in Lafayette until 12/16

Common Barn Owl very rare in winter on eastern plains, casual in western valleys, and accidental in the San Luis Valley. Reported from Grand Junction area (8-10); Boulder

Long-eared Owl rare resident but may be locally uncommon around winter roosts. Reported from Fruita (7-10 wintered); Monte Vista, Lake Isabel; Rocky Mountain Arsenal (up to 10); Boulder area; Lyons; Wheatridge (7); Bonny Res.

Red-headed Woodpecker very rare in early winter and accidental in mid-winter. 1 first year bird stayed all winter at Fountain Creek Regional Park (Toni Brevillier)

Red-Bellied Woodpecker very rare in winter on eastern plains away from breeding areas in extreme northeast. 1 wintered at Penrose (Hilda Bakke and other observers); 1 wintered in Ft Collins (Gil Finley)

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker very rare winter resident (many more reports in recent years). Reported from Beulah; Lyons; Ft. Collins; Denver; Pueblo (2); Golden; Lakewood

Williamson's Sapsucker casual in winter. 1 in Pueblo 1/2 (Mark Janos); 1 on Boulder Christmas Count 12/20

Blue Jay fairly common resident on eastern plains, very rare visitor to mountains and western valleys, increasing. 1 at Monte Vista 12/7 (John Rawinski)

Bewick's Wren accidental in winter on northeastern plains. 1 S. of Ft. Collins mid January to early February (Kevin Cook)

Winter Wren rare winter resident on eastern plains, casual in foothills and lower mountains and in western valleys. 1 at Kittredge 1/4 (James Huntington); reported from Boulder

Hermit Thrush very rare in early winter and casual in mid-winter. 5 on Grand Junction Christmas Bird Count 12/20; 1 on Redlands 1/9 (Coen Dexter)

Northern Mockingbird rare winter resident. Reported from Olney Springs; Pueblo

Sage Thrasher very rare winter resident. 50 to 100 wintered in Pueblo area (Cliff Smith, Pearle Sandstrom-Smith and other observers); 1 on Denver Christmas Count 12/19

Brown Thrasher rare winter resident on eastern plains. Reported from Beulah; Pueblo; Ft. Morgan

Long-billed Thrasher only 1 previous record for the state. 1 at Chatfield State Park from 1/6 to 2/13 (Urling Kingery*, Hugh Kingery, and many observers)

Pine Warbler accidental in winter. 2 immatures wintered in Boulder (Steve Feldstein* and many observers)

Palm Warbler no previous winter records. 1 remained in Boulder until 1/6 (Steve Feldstein* and many observers)

Ovenbird accidental in winter. 1 in Wheatridge 12/1-2/11 when killed by a cat (Patty Echelmeyer)

Northern Cardinal rare on eastern plains. Reported from Holly (pair)

Green-tailed Towhee 1 SW of Berthoud 12/19 (Kathy Hartman); 1 on Denver Christmas Count 12/19

Rose-Breasted Grosbeak accidental in early winter. 1 wintered in Golden 12/1-2/12 (Barbara Boland)

Field Sparrow casual in winter on northeastern plains near foothills, accidental in western valleys. 1 at Highline Reservoir State Park 1/9 (Coen Dexter)

Lark Bunting winter status unclear - flocks probably winter in southeastern Baca County, casual on northeastern plains and accidental in western valleys. 250 in southeastern Baca County 2/16 (Scott Seltman); 1 near Fruita 1/9 (Coen Dexter); 2 near Ft. Morgan 12/2 (Joe Rigli)

Fox Sparrow accidental in winter in western valleys (*schistacea*), rare on eastern plains (*zaboria* or *iliaca*). 1 in McCoy 12/23 (Margaret Ewing); 1 at Chatfield 1/28 (Joe Roller)

Lincoln's Sparrow casual in mid-winter in western valleys and on eastern plains near foothills. 1 in Kittredge 12/31 (Mike Rogers); 1 in Holly 12/27 (Mark Janos); 1 S. of Lyons 1/29 (DW King)

Swamp Sparrow rare winter resident on eastern plains, very rare in western valleys. 2 on Grand Junction Christmas Count 12/20, 1 on 1/3,30 and 2 on 2/5 on Colorado River near Grand Junction (Coen Dexter, Rich Levad); other

reports from Pueblo area; Holly (2); Boulder; Lyons; Cherry Creek Res.

White-throated Sparrow rare winter resident in western valleys and on eastern plains, very rare in foothills, lower mountains and mountain parks. Reported from Salida (2); Pueblo; Penrose; Boulder; Lyons; Ft Collins; Denver; Arvada

Golden-crowned Sparrow very rare winter resident on eastern plains, casual in mountains, and accidental in western valleys. 1 NW of Grand Junction 1/28 (Coen Dexter); 1 at Red Rocks Park 1/1-2/24 (Larry Norris and many observers)

Harris Sparrow fairly common to common winter resident on extreme eastern plains, uncommon to base of foothills, rare in western valleys, very rare in mountains. Reported from Grand Junction area (2 individuals)

Snow Bunting irregular winter resident in northern half of state, generally rare. Only report was 5 on the Pawnee National Grasslands

Bobolink uncommon to common local summer resident - no previous winter records. 1 north of Cortez about 1/20 (Mary Ellen Brubacker*, Robert Brubacker*)

Eastern Meadowlark accidental on eastern plains except at Red Lion State Wildlife Refuge. 2 E of Cope 1/21 (Karleen Schofield)

Yellow-headed Blackbird rare winter resident in western valleys and on eastern plains. Reported from Grand Junction area, Greeley area; Timnath; Orchard

Rusty Blackbird rare winter resident on eastern plains, accidental in western valleys. 1 at Clifton Marsh 12/1-2 (Coen Dexter, Rich Levad); 1 in Eagle 2/8 (Jack Merchant); reported from Orchard

Great-tailed Grackle now rare to uncommon very local winter resident. Reported from Grand Junction (8); Kremmling; Pueblo (2)

Common Grackle rare winter resident on eastern plains, casual in lower mountains, accidental in western valleys. 1 east of Grand Junction 1/8,11 (Coen Dexter); 1 wintered in Evergreen (Bill Brockner); 1 in Eagle 12/13 (Jack Merchant); 1 on Lake Isabel Christmas Count; 2 in Pueblo 1/30 (Dave Silverman); 8 in Holly 12/27 (Mark Janos); 1 in Orchard 1/11 (Jack Reddall)

Brown-headed Cowbird rare winter resident in western valleys and on eastern plains. Reported from Grand Junction area (10-12 on 5 dates); Pueblo area (up to 2); Holly (4); Orchard

Purple Finch rare in fall, winter and spring in lower foothills and adjacent plains from Larimer County to Pueblo County. 1 female in Pueblo 2/20 (Brandon Percival*, Lindsay Lilley); 1 or 2 females at Red Rocks Park 1/1-2 (Larry Norris, Bill Lisowsky*, Paula Lisowsky*)

**C.F.O. FIELD TRIP, April 25, 1993
WELD COUNTY SHOREBIRDS AND WATERFOWL**

**Bill Prather
13810 WCR 1 Longmont
Colorado 80504**

We gathered at Jim Hamm Pond, east of Longmont, and began to search for common, unusual and rare birds. We had excellent light at our back so we could study the ducks, shorebirds and gulls on the pond easily. After thoroughly scoping everything on the pond, we took a quick walk around the north side to see what passerines were around. As we were returning, someone looked up and saw 72 Ibis coming in for a landing. We all held our breath and they settled in. We carefully scoped each but we did not find a rare Glossy Ibis in the group. Still everyone was thrilled by the excellent close look at these interesting birds. Moving over to Union Reservoir, we added to our list with a variety of ducks and grebes. On the east side a large group of swallows was flying and perching on telephone wires. We easily identified 5 species and got all the looks we wanted, a great sight! Moving to the south side we saw an Osprey on a post. As we approached it laboriously flew to a farther post carrying something. The leader claimed the prey being carried was a bird - probably a Magpie but people with sharp eyes and good optics quickly determined it was a large carp with a still-flapping tail. A report of a Little Blue Heron drew us towards Walden Ponds east of Boulder. On the way a couple of stops added birds to our list including Wood Duck and Black-crowned Night-Heron. Although we didn't see the Little Blue Heron, birding at Walden was good and we added more species including a beautiful Hooded Merganser. The leader then seemed to become obsessed with finding a great group of shorebirds so we embarked on a circuitous route through Boulder and Weld and Larimer Counties, stopping at numerous ponds and lakes. We added a number of water and other birds to our list but we didn't find the sought-after shorebirds. Finally John Barber said he had seen some great shorebird habitat at Windsor Reservoir a few days before so the survivors of the trip headed there. And there they were! - Marbled Godwits and a good group of "peeps." We pulled out the scopes and with the afternoon sun at our backs we could easily identify Least Sandpipers, Western Sandpipers in their rusty nuptial plumage, a Semipalmated Sandpiper, and Semipalmated Plovers. It was a marvelous end to the trip. We ended up with about 85 species on our list and we had an excellent time. Please join us on our next C.F.O. field trip.

CASTLEWOOD CANYON NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL TRIP
February 26, 1993

Dan Bridges
1925 South Vaughn Way, #207
Aurora, Colorado 80014

To test the theory that at least some owls call more frequently or near the full moon in the Spring, I went to Castlewood Canyon, southeast of Denver near Franktown, on February 5 during the full moon. At an elevation of 6,300 feet, Castlewood Canyon is one of the lowest Saw-whet localities in Colorado. At higher elevations, Saw-whets don't call until March and April and rarely call during the summer. I heard 1 Northern Saw-whet Owl and 1 Great Horned Owl call. No tape was used.

The scheduled C.F.O. trip for Saw-whets was on February 26 with only a sliver of a moon. We heard at least 3 different Saw-whets and possibly as many as 5 or 6 different Saw-whets call. Using tape, one bird flew into a pine above us; but we did not realize it until it flew out. A second bird called very close to us. When I tried to get it to come closer, it got frightened and flew away. Finally a third bird kept calling and calling; and we managed to track it down so all could see it with night lights. There were 4 days of bad weather preceding February 26 which was a fairly pleasant night. It would appear that a good Spring hunting night was more important to the Castlewood Canyon Saw-whets than the phase of the moon.

On March 8 with a full moon, but a cloudy night, I played Saw-whet tape in Castlewood Canyon but got no response. This has not been documented but I think it is likely that the Saw-whets use Castlewood Canyon as a wintering area from October through February and had already started to move toward higher breeding areas.

GRAND JUNCTION OWLING TRIP REPORT
March 13, 1993

Rich Levad
2924 Ronda Lee Road
Grand Junction, Colorado 81503

A genially mixed group of 32 C.F.O. members and Grand Valley and Roaring Fork Auduboners (18 East Slope, 5 Roaring Fork, 12 Grand Valley, 22 C.F.O.) enjoyed spectacular success finding the owls of the Grand Valley on the afternoon of March 13. Driving west of Grand Junction, the caravan of ten cars stirred the locals' curiosity as the participants stood by (and in) the road peering into the cottonwood trees at Western Screech-owls. The group

viewed birds at three roost holes. The pair of owls snuggling together in the last hole evoked a number of astute scientific observations ("Isn't that sweet! How precious!")

The group then viewed a Barn Owl huddled back in the shadows of its burrow in the bank of an arroyo. Long-eared owls were next on the agenda. The trip leaders tried to weasel out of their responsibility by suggesting that the wintering birds may well have moved out of the valley by mid-March. They were relieved when Brenda Wright flushed one for the waiting group and ecstatic when she called over to them, "There's a female here on a nest." A scope was set up 25 feet from the bird. The bird considerably faced the glass and blinked her big yellow eyes as viewers took their turns. All were properly amazed that Brenda had spotted the bird, so effectively was it camouflaged.

This observation seems to revise significantly the understanding of the Long-eared Owl's status in the Grand Valley. We now suspect that these birds are residents rather than uncommon winter visitors and very rare breeders as we had previously believed.

At dusk a Great Horned Owl flew in and hooted back at the group's tapes. From there it was on to supper, followed by a trip to the Grand Mesa to look for the small montane owls. This trip was marked by congeniality rather than discovery, with the entertainment provided by the birders ("Oh, we have plenty of gas!") rather than by the birds.



**Long-billed Thrasher at Chatfield State Park,
January 13, 1993.**

Photo by Hugh Kingery.

LONG-BILLED THRASHER WINTERS AT CHATFIELD

Hugh E. Kingery
869 Milwaukee Street
Denver, Colorado 80206

An active and persistent Long-billed Thrasher stayed at Chatfield State Park for at least six weeks this winter. Discovered January 4, 1993, its last appearance came on February 13.

On a ski tour along Plum Creek in Chatfield State Park January 4, 1993, Urling, my wife, noticed a bird feeding in leaf litter on some clear ground under a spreading cottonwood tree.

"There's a thrasher," she said. I looked and said, "No, it's a Fox Sparrow." She was right, of course. But it wasn't an orangey Brown Thrasher. It had a gray face, and the back was rusty brown. It also had a down-curved, blackish beak.

We watched it for a half hour, and reported its presence to that night's meeting of the Denver Field Ornithologists. The members greeted the report with skepticism. Only four showed up the next morning to look for the bird.

The group saw it that day, and on January 11 Urling and I found it again. By then we had studied the field guides for diagnostic marks. We still had not completely persuaded anyone, including ourselves, of the bird's identity. This day we examined the bird closely and leisurely, and I took a series of photographs. The following day Urling and I examined specimens at the Denver Museum of Natural History.

The photographs and the specimens convinced us that this bird was indeed a Long-billed Thrasher. It had all the field marks of the Long-billed, and lacked the field marks of its only rival, the Brown Thrasher [See appendix].

It fed in leaf litter, usually under cottonwoods or wild plums where the snow cover had disappeared. The bird fed with remarkable vigor. It tossed leaves six inches into the air and six inches behind it, then searched for food. People could find the bird by listening for the noisy scratching.

A large number of people observed the bird--perhaps as many as 100. It stayed in the same vicinity for its six-week sojourn, and most observers succeeded in finding it.

Long-billed Thrashers occur regularly up the Rio Grande to Del Rio and north to San Antonio. American Birds reports that observers began, in 1986, to find them away from the Rio Grande Valley. One banded November 2, 1986 in Austin was recaptured January 12, 1987. Spring birds occasionally stray to Austin and Victoria. Up the Rio Grande beyond Del Rio, a few birds appeared in Big Bend National Park in April and May, 1988-1990, plus one November 17, 1991.

A major departure from their normal range came in Midland (125 miles north of the Rio Grande and 150 miles north of Big Bend), where one-two pairs returned four summers, 1987-1990. Nesting apparently was never confirmed. Then in 1992 a pair nested at Kickapoo State Natural Area, about 25 miles northeast of Del Rio.

We have no way of knowing whether or not weather influenced this bird to come to Plum Creek. For two months prior to our finding the bird, Denver had experienced cold weather. Light snow (1-2 inches) fell on January 4, two days before we saw it. We last saw the bird on February 13, and as far as we know, no one saw it after that date. A cold spell began on February 14, and on February 16 the temperature dropped to 8 below zero.

See the Appendix for our comparison of the Long-billed and Brown Thrasher specimens at the Museum.

Literature Cited

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Variations from Expected Field Marks of Brown Thrasher

Bill: Lower mandible of the Brown Thrasher should be yellow half way to 2/3 of the way out from the base; this bird's bill was all black. Brown's bill has only a hint of curvature; this bird had a noticeably decurved bill and is thinner than a Brown's bill.

Eye: Brown's is yellow; this bird's eye usually appeared orange, though in some lights it was orange-yellow.

Face: Immature Browns apparently have a contrasting orange-brown cap and gray face; on this bird the demarcation between rust on the top of the head and the gray face was diffused. The Brown should have an orange-brown neck; this bird's neck was gray, almost across the nape.

Back: Brown's back should be bright orange-brown; this bird's back was a dull, rust-brown essentially the same color as the wings and tail. This color also diffused into the gray of the neck and face.

Breast: Brown's breast should have a beige or buff color, at least on the sides and under tail coverts; this bird's was entirely white. Streaks on the Brown should appear brownish; this bird's were black (probably because of the contrast with the white breast).

Examination of Specimens

Urling and I examined specimens of Long-billed and Brown Thrashers at the Denver Museum of Natural History. We looked at all 13 Long-billeds and about 30 Browns.

Breast: Base color of the Colorado specimen at the Museum is a cream tone; two others from Texas also have a creamy tone; the other Texas specimens have very white breasts.

Streaks: Vary in size; are heavier on sides than in center of breast. Spots which form the streaks appear brownish black to black. The streaks seem heavier, darker.

Most have a base color of pale orange or light beige.

Streaks similar in size to Long-billed; on sides, streaks tend toward a rusty color.

In fact, the streaks seem about the same color on both species, but the Long-billed's look blacker because of the white breast color; the beige or orange tone to the Brown's breast makes the streaks appear browner.

Bill: We measured (somewhat crudely) the bills of several specimens of both species:

24134	Female	2.3 cm	24822	Female	2.2 cm
25037	Female	2.2 cm	28035	Female	1.9 cm
			38117	Female	2.1 cm
24133	Male	2.2 cm	25345	Male	2.2 cm
25036	Male	2.4 cm	24129	Male	2.4 cm

The bills of the Long-billeds appear longer because their bills are not as stout as the Browns, and the lower mandible is thinner and more decurved. It also looked as if the bills on the Long-billed are attached to the head at a different angle; they point down compared to the Brown, which are straighter and which point more or less directly out.

Bill shape: Bill appears longer because it's thinner, and because it is decurved.

Bill color: Usually lighter at the basal half or so of the bottom only. From the side the bills appeared all black.

Bill straighter and thicker than Long-billed.

Consistently, the base of lower mandible is yellowish for 1/2 to 2/3 of the length, bottom and side. This mark is visible from the side. One specimen had an all black bill.

Head shape: I don't know if you can determine head shape from skins, though it would seem possible since skins still have the skulls. Long-billed seems to have a steeper forehead than the Brown; this may explain, partially, the different angle of the bill.

Back: None shows strongly contrasty shades, head to back to tail. Color is a brown-rust, a distinctively different color from the orange color of Browns.

Back/tail contrast: faintly visible in daylight on some specimens, but not obvious on any. The texture of the tail feathers differs from that of the back feathers, which may give a two-toned impression.

Wing bars: Variable

Under-tail coverts: White; both streaked and unstreaked.

Tail: Some slightly brighter than backs (see above) on the top.

Underside gray.

No contrast except maybe between wing tips--Primaries--(gray) with tail.

All specimens were a warm orangey brown.

Variable

White; most unstreaked; some have streaks.

Same orange-brown as back and wings.

Underside shows a tinge of orange-brown.



**Immature Female Pine Warbler, Boulder
Colorado, December 15, 1992.
Photo by Dave Leatherman.**

**PINE AND PALM WARBLERS IN BOULDER
DURING 1992/1993 WINTER**

**Steven Feldstein
673 Walden Circle
Boulder, Colorado 80303**

On the afternoon of November 20, 1992, in Boulder, a small olive-brown and yellow bird appeared outside my office window in a group of Scots pines. A snowstorm had just started, and I assumed this bird had come to these trees for both warmth and cover. As I was at work, I did not have my binoculars available and the bird was initially too distant to identify to species. However, the size, color, and behavior of the bird indicated to me that it was a warbler, and not a Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), which is the only warbler that is expected in Colorado in late fall. After about one minute, the bird flew to a tree branch just 4 ft. from my window. It remained at that distance for about one minute. I could see its unstreaked, olive brown upperparts, dull white supercilium, two dull white wing bars, fairly bright yellow breast and sides also without any streaking, dull white belly, and uniformly black legs. These field marks enabled me to eliminate the possibility that this bird was either an immature Bay-breasted (*D. castanea*) or Blackpoll Warbler (*D. striata*), and to quickly identify the bird as a Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*). Furthermore, the absence of streaking on its sides suggested that the bird was an immature male. After one minute of observation, the bird flew to a distant location. I immediately telephoned the Colorado Bird Report but assumed this bird was simply a late migrant and neither I nor any other birders would see it again.

Four days and two snowstorms later, I met several birders in the parking lot next to my office. Included in this group were Duane Nelson, Bill Prather, and Bill Kaempfer. They were all searching for the Pine Warbler which had been seen the previous day by John Prather. He found the bird along Boulder Creek about 400 yards from my office. However, on this day, none of us saw the bird.

The Pine Warbler then started to appear almost daily. Sometimes, it would come together with a Yellow-rumped "Myrtle" Warbler. The bird always showed up between 10:00 a.m. and noon, when my office window received direct sunlight. The warbler would usually slowly creep along branches of nearby trees and often appear to feed on something at the base of groups of needles in one Scots pine. The needles on this particular tree were much duller than those of the surrounding trees, and I assumed that it might be diseased. Although I could not see what the bird was eating, it was later suggested to me by Dave Leatherman that the Pine Warbler could be eating aphid eggs or scale insects.

By November 30, a bright sunny day, I had become accustomed to the daily presence of this Pine Warbler. It was on this day that another warbler showed up just outside my office window. I had initially assumed that I was again seeing the Pine Warbler, but its entirely yellow underparts, olive-brown upperparts with a slight rufous tinge to its crown, bright yellow supercilium, very faint wing bars, yellowish-green rump, and incessant tail wagging immediately indicated to me that I was looking at a different bird, a Palm Warbler of the eastern subspecies *Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea*. This bird rested on a branch of the dull Scots pine for about five minutes at a distance of 4 feet from my window.

For the next two weeks, I would see both warblers on most days. Sometimes the warblers came together and at other times separately. The Pine Warbler would feed and rest in the trees and the Palm Warbler would rest in the trees and feed on the ground. Furthermore, word of the presence of these two warblers spread, and every day I saw several birders looking for these birds. However, both warblers were tough for most people to find, and many birders had to make as many as five or six trips until both birds were seen.

On December 15, also a sunny day, a large group of birders had come to see the warblers. I joined this group in searching for the warblers. Eventually, we found a Pine Warbler and got to watch it perched in a tree just five or six feet away. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed watching this Pine Warbler at a distance too close to focus one's binoculars. However, I was a little troubled by this bird. It resembled the Pine Warbler that I had been seeing every day except that its underparts were entirely dull white. This indicated to me that we were looking at an immature female Pine Warbler. The likelihood of two Pine Warblers together in Colorado just a few days before the winter solstice just seemed too unlikely, and I started to wonder whether the Pine Warbler that I originally identified as a male, may indeed be this female. However, about two hours later I vindicated myself, as a male and female Pine Warbler appeared together outside my office window, and they were perched side by side, only about three inches apart. This relaxed pair of warblers was then joined by the Palm Warbler which sat on a nearby branch preening itself. I enjoyed watching these three warblers together for about five minutes. Unfortunately, no other birders were present at this time.

All three warblers were subsequently seen on most days, including the Boulder Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 19. The Pine Warblers represented the second Boulder CBC record and the Palm Warbler the first Boulder CBC record.

Toward the end of December, the warblers were seen less frequently. On January 3, I saw the Palm Warbler for the last time. I continued to see both Pine Warblers about once every three or four days, and most of the time the two birds were together. Other birders found these birds at widely scattered locations, often as far as 400 yards away from my office along Boulder Creek, or even across Arapahoe Street at King Soopers feeding in a dumpster.

The last dates upon which I observed the male and female Pine Warblers were April 2 and April 12, respectively. I hope these two warblers will successfully migrate northeastward to their species breeding range. It will certainly be interesting to see if either of these two birds return to Boulder next winter.

Pine Warbler is listed as being casual in fall and accidental in winter by Andrews and Righter (1992). In Boulder County, there are 5 fall records and 1 winter record since 1982 (Alexander and Gillian Brown, private communication). The first specimen was collected in Boulder on Dec. 11, 1964 (Bailey and Niedrach, 1965). However, none of these references list any record of Pine Warblers spending the entire winter in Colorado.

Andrews and Righter (1992) list Palm Warbler as a rare fall migrant in Colorado and indicate no winter records for this species. In Boulder County, there are 4 fall records of Palm Warbler since 1982 (Alexander and Gillian Brown, private communication). A specimen for Palm Warbler does exist for Colorado (Bailey and Niedrach, 1965). Furthermore, Andrews and Righter state that there are only two sight records of bright yellow birds that most likely pertain to the eastern subspecies *d. p. hypochrysea*. Assuming that this bird is accepted by the C. F. O. Records Committee (as for the two Pine Warblers, extensive documentation

by the author and photographs by Dave Leatherman have been submitted), this bird will represent the first winter record of Palm Warbler in Colorado and the first fully documented individual of the eastern subspecies.

When one notes the large snowfall amounts and cold temperatures during the winter of 1992/1993 in Boulder, both the occurrence of these warblers and the overwintering of the two Pine Warblers is somewhat surprising. The following snowfall and temperature data was provided to me by Klaus Wolter of the University of Colorado. The four months consisting of the period from November 1992 to February 1993 had the second lowest mean temperature for that time period this century. In addition, November 1992 had the second largest total snowfall for that month this century. Also, there was a persistent snow cover present from mid-November through mid-January. I assume that it is the diverse diet of Pine Warblers that allowed the two individuals to survive through this particularly rough winter. On the other hand, as Palm Warbler has a less varied diet, this individual may have indeed perished.

The occurrence of the eastern subspecies of the Palm Warbler in Colorado is quite interesting. According to Bent (1922), the migratory route of the two subspecies of Palm Warbler cross each other during migration. The eastern subspecies breeds in eastern Canada and winters along the Gulf coast of the U. S. and Mexico. However, the western subspecies *d. p. palmarum* breeds in central Canada and winters in Florida and the West Indies. Thus, it is rather surprising that the subspecies with the more distant wintering range from Colorado is by far the more likely one to be seen in Colorado.

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Immature Male Pine Warbler, Boulder,
Colorado, December 15, 1992.
Photo by Dave Leatherman.

**SOME FEEDING OBSERVATIONS OF PINE WARBLERS
WINTERING IN BOULDER, COLORADO**

**David A. Leatherman
2048 Whiterock Court
Fort Collins, Colorado 80526**

Following Stephen Feldstein's initial report on 20 November 1992 of wintering Pine and Palm Warblers near his Boulder office, I made several visits to see these birds. The following summarizes feeding observations made between 15 December 1993 and 8 March 1993.

Initial reports by Feldstein and others indicated the birds frequented Scots pine, particularly those with dense clusters of needles. There they seemed most interested in the area of the fascicles or needle bases. Suspecting the target to be eggs of aphids in the genus *Cinara*, I spent over an hour unsuccessfully searching for these insects. I believe observations on 26 February show the actual prey item in these initial reports to have been pine tortoise scale insects, *Toumeyella sp.*

On 21 February, while searching with friends for the warblers, Joe Mammoser initially observed the immature female pine warbler fly out of a dumpster on the west side of the Antipasto Restaurant at 3100 Arapahoe. The dumpster contained a wide assortment of garbage but I remember noting a small clump of bean sprouts in the corner nearest where the warbler flushed.

The appearance of the bird fleeing the dumpster was much darker than the bird seen in November and December. Rather than being light gray on the belly, chest, throat and about the head, this bird was a sooty gray to gray-black in those areas. It was so dark that I initially thought it represented a third individual pine warbler. Reflection on the dumpster incident led us to believe perhaps the bird was just stained. I still believe this to be the case.

On 26 February, the immature male was found within the dumpster on the Kentucky Fried Chicken establishment just east of the Park Place complex on Arapahoe. I could not tell what the bird was eating. The female was quite nearby on the flat roof of a building eating either fallen Siberian elm seeds or turning over seeds and old leaves for arthropods.

Later the male was photographed eating a bean sprout on the ground under the Antipasto Restaurant dumpster. It also went inside the dumpster for undetermined items.

Also on the 26th, I was able to confirm both birds consuming nymphs of the pine tortoise scale on Scots pines. Both trees where this was observed were along the north edge of buildings of the University of Colorado's East Campus on Marine Avenue. The scales were concentrated on branch growth produced the previous year (1992 growing season).

Other food items or feeding sites observed on the 26 February and

other visits were as follows: boxelder tree sap oozing from branch crotches or the cut ends of pruned branches; the crowns of silver maples particularly near the flowers; amid the foliage of Colorado blue spruce; amid the foliage of Austrian pine; amid the foliage of Douglas-fir; amid the foliage of Mugho pines; amid the branches of pin oak infested with Kermes scales (*Kermes* sp.); on the ground under the above trees and on concrete surfaces at the base of building walls. In general I was surprised at the percentage (estimated at 10-15%) of foraging which took place on the ground.

The darkened plumage apparent on the birds in late winter until their departure in early April is probably caused by the interaction of two factors. First, the dumpster feeding no doubt adds grease to the feathers which could become soiled. The concentration of the darkened areas on the birds' underparts and about the head lends support to this idea. Secondly, fungi called sooty mold commonly grow on excrement ("honeydew") produced by plant sap sucking insects. Trees with heavy populations of pine tortoise scales, including those in which the birds were observed feeding, support a very heavy mold growth. It is likely the warblers contact this mold with their feathers while foraging. Greasy feathers would likely turn a darker color as a result. It is not known whether preening and exposure to normal water sources can eliminate this staining but it would appear that only molting would completely restore normal coloration.

In summary, pine warblers are reported to have a varied diet. Pine warblers within their normal range rely heavily on vegetable matter in the form of pine seeds and consume quantities of insects, particularly during the breeding season. The Boulder birds, during an unusually harsh winter, appeared to exploit many available food sources and relied heavily on certain items in food dumpsters including bean sprouts and consumed large quantities of pine tortoise scales.



Stained Immature Female Pine Warbler
Boulder, Colorado, February 21, 1993.
Photo by Dave Leatherman.

BAIKAL TEAL IN COLORADO

Winston William Brockner
5965 South Hertzman Drive
Evergreen, Colorado 80439

On 28 November 1992, a "strange" looking duck showed up on an open pond next to Bear Creek, approximately 3.7 miles west of Evergreen, Jefferson County, Colorado. The location is about 7,500 feet above sea level. The duck was first reported to Sylvia Brockner, on 1 December 1992, by Mrs. Sue Roux. From the notes Sylvia made about the bird, and discussions with me, I felt that the bird was a female Baikal Teal (*Anas formosa*).

Instantly, we took off (1 December 1992) and upon arrival, Sue Roux pointed to a pond alongside Bear Creek. There, on a snow bank, aloof from Mallards, was a female Baikal Teal. Fortunately, I had recently received the "Special Reprint," of the August, 1992, "Birding" magazine, from the American Birding Association. The reprint covered "Field Identification of Teal in North America, - Part II" by Greg D. Jackson. This article became a very valuable reference and guide.

With 8x42 B&L Elite binoculars, I first studied the teal. The most obvious and outstanding field mark was the large white round spot on the face, at the base of the bill. The bird was about the size of a Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*), but seemed to be more "broad-shouldered" riding on the water. The throat was whitish and the breast was spotted brown. From the belly to under the tail was white. The scapulars stood out prominently, long and brownish-edged with a narrow border of cream color. The not too prominent speculum did have a showy white border and was rusty above. The hind toe on both grayish legs was intact. The teal usually remained away from the Mallards with which it travelled. It was not too approachable, and at a certain threshold it would fly or paddle further away. It did like to come up on land and walk and rest in the snow. Lake Baikal, in Siberia, where the teal was first discovered in 1775, is at 1,360' above sea level. From photographs of the Lake Baikal area that I have studied, the Evergreen ecology matches it well.

The female Baikal Teal was further confirmed by Duane Nelson and Dick Schottler, on 12 December 1992, after it had left its discovery site. They found the teal on Bear Creek, in downtown Evergreen. Subsequently, the bird moved eastward on Bear Creek to the village of Kittredge. The duck frequented open water on an 8 mile stretch of Bear Creek, from Kittredge to west of Evergreen. The teal disappeared on 23 January 1993. Well over 700 birders saw this rarity. However, it must be strongly emphasized that this record has NOT been reviewed by the C.F.O. Official Records Committee. Search is still going on to determine if this is a wild bird or an escapee. Final status of this record must await ruling by the Committee.

C.F.O. MEMBERSHIP LIST

- Allison, Marilyn. 12747 East Cornell Avenue, Aurora, CO 80014
Andrews, Robert. 14390 E Marina Dr #412, Aurora, CO 80014 303-751-5553
Arapahoe Community. College Library, P.O. Box 9002, Littleton, CO 80160
Arndt, Idabelle. P.O. Box 1049, Berthoud, CO 80513 303-532-3977
Audubon Park Co. 49 Main, Drawer W, Akron, CO 80720 303-345-2063
Ausfahl, Roberta. 5985 S. Logan, Littleton, CO 80121 303-798-0552
Barber, John F. 1700 Clearview Ct., Fort Collins, CO 80521 303-484-9791
Barrett, Norman. P.O. Box 758, Kremmling, CO 80459 303-724-9284
Bell, Alan. 330 S. 42nd St., Boulder, CO 80303 303-499-0551
Black, Mary J. 9172 E. Amherst Dr. Apt F, Denver, CO 80231 303-750-0902
Blackshaw, Susan. 2809 Hearthwood Lane, Colorado Springs, CO 80917 719-596-5254
Bleck, Virginia. 548 Columbine St., Denver, CO 80206 303-320-6130
Bonnell, Ann. 6377 W. Geddes Dr., Littleton, CO 80123 303-979-6211
Boulware, Eugene. 1633 S. Siesta Ave., W. Covina, CA 91790 818-338-7484
Bouricius, Debbie. 3412 C Road, Palisade, CO 81526 303-434-5918
Bouricius, Steve. 50152 Hwy. 72, Peaceful Valley, Lyons, CO 80540 303-747-2367
Boyer, Roberta. 6256 Fenton St., Arvada, CO 80003 303-424-4528
Braun, Clait E. 1409 Patton, Fort Collins, CO 80524 303-424-2836
Brevillier, Toni. 2616 Ashgrove St., Colo. Springs, CO 80906 719-540-5653
Bridges, L. W. Dan. 1925 South Vaughn Way #207, Aurora, CO 80014 303-755-7665
British Library. Acquisitions Unit SRIS, Boston SPA, Wetherby LS23 7BQ, ENGLAND
Brockner, Winston W. 5965 South. Herzman Dr, Evergreen, CO 80439 303-674-4851
Brown, Dr. Alexander. 4560 Darley Ave., Boulder, CO 80303 303-494-3042
Brown, Robert T. & Lea Ann. 730 East Redwood Court, Highlands Ranch, CO 80126 303-791-6204
Cardinal, The Ohio. 520 Swartz Rd., Akron, OH 44319 216-745-2178
Carlton, Dr. Robert. 2939 Chelton Rd., Colo. Spgs, CO 80909 719-635-1526
Carney, Frederick. 1914 Overton Pk Ave, Memphis, TN 38112 901-726-1394
Carter, Dr. William. P.O. Box 804, Ada, OK 74821 405-332-8843
Carter, Mike. 10745 Clermont St., Thornton, CO 80233 303-452-1042
Carter, Ronald D. 261 Wave, Laguna Beach, CA 92651 714-497-1162
Cassel, J. Frank. 83 W. Boulder St., Colo. Springs, CO 80903 719-636-2817
Catterson, Paul F. P.O. Box 729, Evergreen, CO 80439 303-674-6265
Childress, Gloria. 7125 County Rd. 203, Durango, CO 81301 303-247-4272
Cohen, Irwin & Adelaide. 3038 S. Gray St., Denver, CO 80227 303-985-1655
Colborn, Theo. 101 North Carolina Ave, S.E. #405, Washington, DC 20003 202-547-6491

- Coleman, Caroline Hill. 1701 N.W. 24th St., Gainesville, FL 32605 904-372-9087
- Collins, Walter. 1425 Sierra Dr, Boulder, CO 80302 303-447-8537
- Colo. Div. of Wildlife. Research Center Library, 317 W. Prospect, Fort Collins, CO 80526
- Conover, Gary. 1907 Cascade Ln, Colo. Springs, CO 80906 719-632-6217
- Crafton, S.C., & Nancy R. 2011 Oakland Ave., Pueblo, CO 81004 719-564-2996
- Cringan, Dr. A. T. 1200 Stover St., Fort Collins, CO 80524 303-493-9138
- Crowder, Brad. P.O. Box 2572, Evergreen, CO 80439 303-236-8394
- Curry, Jr., Mr. & Mrs. E.D. P.O. Box 6009, Colo. Spgs, CO 80934 719-634-7303
- Davis, Dr. William A. 1155 W. Giaconda Way, Tucson, AZ 85704
- Davis, Marvin. 308 Lewis Lane, Oxford, MS 38655 601-234-1773
- Davis, Raymond. P.O. Box 481, Lyons, CO 80540 303-823-5332
- Davis, Tim. 11241 Parliament Way, Parker, CO 80134 303-841-6163
- DeMuth, Roberta K. 7505 W. Yale, #2302, Denver, CO 80227 303-988-3004
- Dengel, R. Banks & Bette. 135 Mary Reed Rd, Baden, PA 15005 412-266-3520
- Denver Museum of Natural History Library. City Park, Denver, CO 80205
- Denver Public Library-CEN. US03629902, P.O. Box 173820, Denver, CO 80217
- Dexter, Coen. 175 Sunset Cir., Palisade, CO 81526 303-464-7971
- Dickson, Bob & Johnie. 55 Villa Dr, Pueblo, CO 81001 719-542-5847
- Dillon, Beth. 1225 W. Myrtle, Fort Collins, CO 80521 303-484-2836
- Dionigi, Virginia. 2949 University Ave., Longmont, CO 80503 303-776-2609
- Dirckx, Ferdinand & Joann. 240 Jade St., Broomfield, CO 80020 303-469-0405
- Dooley, Sharon. 4441 Driftwood Pl., Boulder, CO 80301 303-530-1851
- Downing, Helen. 371 Crescent Dr., Sheridan, WY 82801 307-674-7052
- Dunphy, Gerald J. 2385 Kenwood Dr., Boulder, CO 80303 303-494-0948
- Edge, Jake & Marilyn. 3125 Folsom St., Boulder, CO 80304 303-541-9374
- Eggerling, M. 2525 S Dayton Wy #2303, Denver, CO 80231 303-369-6134
- Elliott, Bill & Margaret. 879 S. Alkire St., Lakewood, CO 80228 303-986-1184
- Enright, Fran. 83 Long View, Evergreen, CO 80439 303-674-2657
- Erthal, Norman. 7761 Everett Way, Arvada, CO 80005 303-424-6747
- Espasito, Tony. % A.S.A.P. (Circle), 1600 W. 24th St., Pueblo, CO 81003
- Evans, Gail. 9674 E. Powers Dr., Englewood, CO 80111 303-771-5118
- Evans, Robert D. 994 Timberlane, Boulder, CO 80304 303-449-5063
- Ewing, Margaret C. Box 293, McCoy, CO 80463 303-653-4410
- Feldstein, Steven. 673 Walden Circle, Boulder, CO 80303 303-499-9883
- Finch, Warren I. 455 Dover St., Lakewood, CO 80226 303-233-3372
- Fink, M.D. William L. 1225 Columbia Dr, Longmont, CO 80503 303-776-7395
- Flageolle, Terry. 7541 King St., Westminster, CO 80030 303-428-2571

- Fleming, Bob & Juv. 2039 Crestvue Circle, Golden, CO 80401 303-279-8122
- Foland, Marjorie. 6738 Lakeview Dr, Boulder, CO 80303 303-494-5289
- Foothills Audubon. Terry McCue, Box 946, Boulder, CO 80306 303-772-1854
- Fox, Mrs. Maynard. 10412 El Capitan Circle, Sun City, AZ 85351
- Friesen, Gregg. 515 E. 4th, Newton, KS 67114 316-283-4721
- Fritz, Rose. 1816 Cypress Lane, Newton, KS 67114 316-283-6685
- Fulker, Wilber. 627 Pleasant St., Colorado Springs, CO 80904 719-634-6461
- Gent, Peter R. 55 S. 35th St., Boulder, CO 80303 303-494-1750
- George, Dan. 7844 S. Lamar Ct., Littleton, CO 80123 303-979-2787
- Giesen, Ken. Colo. Div. Wildlife, 317 W. Prospect, Ft Collins, CO 80526 303-484-2836
- Gillespie, Bill. 2007 Ridgewood, Fort Collins, CO 80526 303-482-3177
- Griest, Mary. 125 County Rd.#69, Box 2512, Lyons, CO 80540 303-823-6182
- Griffiths, Dave & Carolyn. P.O. Box 86, Hettinger, ND 58639 701-853-2446
- Grosshuesch, Marie & John Mead. 11816 W. Bowles Cir, Littleton, CO 80127
- Gulbenkian, David & Martha. 2475 Garland St, Lakewood, CO 80215 303-235-0456
- Gustafson, Edward A. 5091 Bel Estos Dr, San Jose, CA 95124
- Gustafon, Robert & Nancy. 679 Brentwood Dr, Palisade, CO 81526
- Hackney, Walter. 14426 D. E. Hawaii Cir, Aurora, CO 80012 303-750-2823
- Hageman, Glenn & Jeane. 448 S. Leyden St., Denver, CO 80224 303-322-6589
- Haglund, Kris. Denver Museum/Natural History, City Pk, Denver, CO 80205
- Hallock, Dave. 2478 Eldora Rd., Nederland, CO 80466 303-258-3672
- Halsey, Laurens. 1009 Forest Park Dr., Lewisville, TX 75057 214-221-0472
- Hannay, Evan & Ives. 3841 S. Juniper Cir, Evergreen, CO 80439 303-674-8725
- Harris, Susan. 12402 Maria Circle, Broomfield, CO 80020 303-465-4254
- Harrison, Joseph G. 1163 Winslow Cir., Longmont, CO 80501 303-772-3481
- Hart, John. Hartwood Natural Resource Consults, 690 Gulick Rd, Haslett, MI 48840 517-655-1321
- Harwood, Betty. 16400 W. Belleview, Morrison, CO 80465 303-697-4695
- Hassemer, Mrs. Helen. 10605 W. 9th Pl, Lakewood, CO 80215 303-232-7994
- Hawkins, Kathy. 6860D E. Mississippi Ave, Denver, CO 80224 303-757-0809
- Hawksworth, Dave. 2207 Scarborough Ct, Ft Collins, CO 80526 303-484-0918
- Hay, Alan G. 6361 Brooks Drive, Arvada, CO 80004 303-422-0239
- Hayes, J. B. 1517 W. Briarwood Ave., Littleton, CO 80120 303-798-9683
- Hayes, Philip T. 9555 W. 59th Ave., #249, Arvada, CO 80004 303-425-5448
- Hebner, Stacy Lyon & Kurt. 359 S. Taft Ct, Louisville, CO 80027 303-673-0943
- Hemenway, Dr. & Mrs. Garth. 735 Grape Street, Denver, CO 80222
- Hendricks, Mrs. P. 1228 S Saratoga Ave, Springfield, MO 65804 417-887-3010
- Hendricks, Paul. Sutton Avian Research Ctr, P.O.Box 2007, Bartlesville, OK 74005 918-336-7778
- Henwood, Mike. 525 Rado Drive, Grand Junction, CO 81503 303-241-3371
- Hering, Mrs. C. Louise. Golden West Manor, 1055 Adams Cir. #1118,

Boulder, CO 80303 303-939-0502

Higgins, Ann. 1210 Whitehouse Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Hill, Betty. Route 5, Box 320, Rye, CO 81069 719-489-2126

Hill, Dean & Mona. 3410 Heidelberg Dr, Boulder, CO 80303 303-494-8135

Himmel, Joe. 1848 14th Ave., Greeley, CO 80631 303-352-0288

Hoke-Hatch, Nancy. 1155 Elm Street, Denver, CO 80220 303-377-6328

Holitz, F. James. 1719 Daisy Court, Broomfield, CO 80020 303-466-2742

Holley, Janet. 749 Bear Creek Drive, Ft. Collins, CO 80526 303-223-9039

Holt, H. 2001 W 92nd Ave, #716, Fed Hgts, Denver, CO 80221 303-429-1698

Holub, Jr., Edmund J. 6612 S. Field Ct, Littleton, CO 80123 303-979-2194

Howe, William H. 12009 Dove Circle, Laurel, MD 20708

Hurmence, Joel. 1625 Azalea Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80526 303-484-8987

Hurst, Tory. 5336 S. High Rd., Evergreen, CO 80439 303-674-7926

Hutton, Diane. 3601 S. Mobile Way, Aurora, CO 80013 303-366-0951

Hyde, Barbara. 2831 Mountain View, Longmont, CO 80503 303-776-1650

Iowa State University. Library Serials Dept., Ames, IA 50011

Jackson, Irving C. 8925 Francis Place, Lakewood, CO 80215 303-233-2171

Jackson, Dr. Nick. 1301 Kamira Drive, Kerrville, TX 78028 512-257-2052

Janos, Mark. 10 Sedum Court, Pueblo, CO 81001 719-384-8672

Jickling, Bob. 310 Skylark Way, Boulder, CO 80303 303-499-4977

Johnson, Dave. 1920 Greenwood, Pueblo, CO 81003 719-545-5548

Johnson, Dr. John C. 1313 S. Homer, Pittsburg, KS 66762

Johnson, Mildred. 1330 Calabasas Ct, Fort Collins, CO 80525 303-226-3905

Jones, Steve. 1197B Bear Mountain Drive, Boulder, CO 80303 303-494-2468

Jones, Tina. 4400 Bo Mar Drive, Littleton, CO 80123 303-759-9701

Jorgensen, Twyla. 1004 Morgan St., #1, Ft Collins, CO 80524 303-482-6481

Joyce, Robert. 2227 Glenn Summer Rd, Colo. Spgs, CO 80909 719-634-0787

Justice-Waddington, Jan. 1809 E. Tufts, Englewood, CO 80110 303-781-8804

Kaempfer, Bill. 4770 Harrison Ave., Boulder, CO 80303 303-939-8005

Kamby, Norma. 4100 Jay Street, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033 303-421-5961

Karo, James. 1621 Cedar Ridge Dr NE., Albuquerque, NM 87112 505-294-2777

Kellner, Mr. & Mrs. J. 8612 W. Hinsdale Pl, Littleton, CO 80123 303-985-0552

Kennedy, P. Dept. Fishery & Wildlife Biology, Colo. State Univ. Ft Collins, CO 80523 303-491-6597

Kent, T. H. 211 Richards Street, Iowa City, IA 52246 319-337-5231

Ketchen, Michael. 4506 Ridge Drive, Pueblo, CO 81008 719-545-2020

King, Peter & Louise. 7 Chase Ln, Colo. Springs, CO 80906 719-623-9329

Kingery, Hugh & Urling. 869 Milwaukee St, Denver, CO 80206 303-333-0161

Kladder, Nyla. 2344 S. Broadway, Grand Junction, CO 81503 303-245-7867

Klaver, Ellen. P.O. Box 69, Niwot, CO 80544

Knaak, Jill. 6152 Dudley Court, Arvada, CO 80004 303-424-2193

Knight, Dr. Richard L. Dept. of Fishery & Wildlife Biology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523 303-491-6714

Korte, Adam. 1946 Clover Ct., Grand Junction, CO 81506 303-242-3779

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- Kozan, Jo Ann. P.O. Box 62, Lafayette, CO 80026 303-665-6781
- Kuenning, Ruth & Walter. 1228 N. Farragut Ave, Colo. Spgs, CO 80909 719-473-1600
- Kuesel, Tim L. 7263 Beech Ct., Arvada, CO 80005 303-420-6806
- Lambeth, Ron. 624 Yucca Drive, Grand Junction, CO 81503 303-245-4082
- Leatherman, David. 2048 Whiterock Ct, Ft Collins, CO 80526 303-484-5445
- Leighton, Hope. 2607 Sixth Street, Boulder, CO 80304 303-442-7458
- Lentz, Randy. 456 Logan Street, #306, Denver, CO 80203 303-777-7107
- Levad, Richard. 2924 Ronda Lee Rd, Grand Junction, CO 81503 303-242-3979
- Lewis, Jr. Norman. 852 S. DeFrame Way, Lakewood, CO 80228 303-988-5544
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- Lilly, Jr. R. Lindsay. 55 Posada Drive, Pueblo, CO 81005 719-543-4040
- Lippincott, Cindy. P.O. Box 6599, Colo. Springs, CO 80934 719-835-2473
- Lisowsky, Bill. 2919 Silverplume Dr, Fort Collins, CO 80526 303-225-6827
- Litz, Steve. 3380-D 34th Street, Boulder, CO 80301 303-442-7549
- Lohr, Susan Allen. Box 1757, Crested Butte, CO 81224 303-349-7231
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- Mammoser, Joseph. 2919 Worthington Ave, Ft Collins, CO 80526 303-223-2187
- Manci, Karen Marie. 506 Wabash Street, Fort Collins, CO 80526 303-225-0150
- Marsh, Susan. 111 Emerson Street, #844, Denver, CO 80218 303-377-5380
- Martin, David E. 9330 W. 90th Drive, Broomfield, CO 80021 303-422-9143
- Martin, Doug. 172 St Vrain Tr, Box 293, Jamestown, CO 80455 303-459-3510
- Maynard, John & Virginia. 1320 Indian Oaks Pl, Manitou Spgs, CO 80829 719-685-9793
- McConkey, Edwin. 3590 Berkley Avenue, Boulder, CO 80303 303-499-1686
- McGinley, Kathleen. 961 Lakeside Dr #303, Grd Junc, CO 81506 303-242-2973
- McKinnon, Dr. George E. 127 Lehigh Ave, Pueblo, CO 81005 719-564-1868
- McPherson, Wayne. 12320 Bradshaw Rd., Peyton, CO 80831 719-749-2083
- Means, Ann. 2009 Del Norte, Loveland, CO 80538 303-669-0004
- Menough, Scott. Wild Birds Unlimited, 2720 S. Wadsworth Blvd, Denver, CO 80227 303-987-1065
- Merchant, John S. P.O. Box 291, Eagle, CO 81631 303-328-6349
- Mery, Dr. A.M. & Ina S. 809 Cambridge Dr, Altus, OK 73521 405-477-3920
- Miller, Bob & Judy. 291 Old Y Road, Golden, CO 80401 303-526-0872
- Mills, Charles H. P.O. Box 145, Ogden, AR 71853 501-898-3483
- Mollhoff, Wayne J. 342 S. 4th Street, Albion, NE 68620 402-395-2528
- Montgomery, Robert & Marty. 5031 S. Florence Dr, Englewood, CO 80111 303-771-4572
- Moran, D.M.D. Thomas E. 1306 E. Sherwood Dr, Grand Junction, CO 81501 303-243-9745
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Myers, Todd A. 31638 Conifer Mountain Drive, Conifer, CO 80433

Nelson, Duane. 1619 Ford Street, Golden, CO 80401 303-277-9748

Niemann, Sally. 4971 WC Rd. 32, Longmont, CO 80504 303-535-4959

Nikas, Mark. 2820 9th Place SW, Loveland, CO 80537 303-635-0687

Oliver, Harold & Betty. 2787 S. Perry St, Denver, CO 80236 303-936-6902

Opler, Dr. Paul A. 5100 Greenview Ct, Ft Collins, CO 80525 303-226-4293

Pantle, Mr. & Mrs. David. 1782 Locust St, Denver, CO 80220 303-333-8352

Parker, Tom. 12706 Meade Street, Broomfield, CO 80020 303-466-6471

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Pliler, Vivian. 13197 E. Exposition Drive, Aurora, CO 80012 303-364-6662

Plooster, Suzi & Myron. 7420 Spring Dr, Boulder, CO 80303 303-494-6708

Potter, Kim M. 6639 Ingalls Street, Arvada, CO 80003 303-421-5122

Prather, Bill & Inez. 13810 Weld Cty Rd 1, Longmont, CO 80504 303-776-2191

Prather, John. 13810 Weld County Rd 1, Longmont, CO 80504 303-776-2191

Pratt, Richard. 4196 S. Pennsylvania, Englewood, CO 80110 303-788-0604

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Randolph, Donna. 1309 E. Amherst Ave, Denver, CO 80210 303-756-8775

Rawinski, John & Elizabeth. 3431 County Rd. 27, Monte Vista, CO 81144
719-852-5941

Reddall, John W. 4450 S. Alton Street, Englewood, CO 80111 303-771-5308

Remington, Tom. 317 W. Prospect, Fort Collins, CO 80526 303-484-2836

Rice, Patricia. 10306 Holme Lacey Ln., Austin, TX 78750 512-335-7269

Righter, Bob. 2358 South Fillmore, Denver, CO 80210 303-692-8529

Rigli, Joe. 6877 County Rd. 14, Fort Morgan, CO 80701 303-432-5200

Robinson, Andrea. Rt 1, 17200 County Rd. P, Cortez, CO 81321 303-565-8398

Roller, Dr. Joe. 13040 W. 16th Drive, Golden, CO 80401 303-233-4476

Root, Terry. Sch. of Natural Res., Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48019

Roske, Warren. 752 Ridgeside Drive, Golden, CO 80401 303-526-9725

Rust, Mart & Carolyn. 245 Jade Street, Broomfield, CO 80020 303-466-5737

Ryder, Dr. Ronald. Dept. of Fishery & Wildlife Biology, Colorado State
University, Ft Collins, CO 80523 303-491-6547

Sandstrom Smith, Pearle. 2823 5th Avenue, Pueblo, CO 81003 719-543-6427

Scheu, Judy. 5768 S. Stonebridge Way, Morrison, CO 80465 303-697-6144

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- Schock, Mary Jane. 2695 S. Winona Court, Denver, CO 80219 303-922-3144
- Schofield, Karleen. 33 Yates Street, Denver, CO 80219 303-936-8661
- Schottler, Dick. 25 S. Indiana Place, Golden, CO 80401 303-278-8035
- Schreier, Bill. 1643 S. Yukon Street, Lakewood, CO 80232 303-988-3603
- Schupp, Jr. Donald L. 11586 Southington Lane, Herndon, VA 22070
- Scientific Information Institute for. Attn: Maureen M. Handel, 3501 Market St, Philadelphia, PA 19104 215-386-0100
- Sell, Aaron. P.O. Box 621621, Littleton, CO 80162 303-722-0430
- Seltman, Diane & Scott. RR 1, Box 36, Nekoma, KS 67559 913-372-5411
- Senner, Stanley E. 1038 Spencer Street, Longmont, CO 80501 303-499-0219
- Sharkey, William H. CIGNA **E* A129, Hartford, CT 06152
- Silverman, David. P.O. Box 362, Rye, CO 81069 719-489-3565
- Simonson, Gary. 1906 3rd Ave S. #21, Minneapolis, MN 55404 612-872-6803
- Skalicky, Jack. 4385 Brookfield Drive, Boulder, CO 80303 303-499-6164
- Slater, Jennifer. 1610 S. 8th, Lamar, CO 81052 719-336-3505
- Smith, Andrew. 3606 Widgeon Way, Eagan, MN 55123 612-688-6467
- Smith, Arthur. 409 W. Mayfield Dr, Grand Junction, CO 81503 303-242-8916
- Smith, Pauline. 13605 W. 7th Avenue, Golden, CO 80401 303-237-0160
- Snider, Patricia. 2435-C 45th Street, Los Alamos, NM 87544 505-662-3530
- Snyder, Mildred O. 161 Del Mar Circle, Aurora, CO 80011
- Soderberg, Todd. 742 Bent Avenue, Akron, CO 80720 303-345-2797
- Spencer, Robert A. 4430 Gladiola Street, Golden, CO 80403 303-279-4682
- Sperl, Frances. 7605 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80221 303-426-4267
- Spoelman, Jean-Marie. 4629 Diaz Drive, Fremont, CA 94536 415-797-0265
- Staatz, Mortimer. 13435 Braun Road, Golden, CO 80401 303-279-6169
- Stachowiak, Steve. 14846 E. Caspian Place, Aurora, CO 80014 303-750-3422
- Stevens, Jeanne. 4560 Lark Bunting #5A, Ft Collins, CO 80526 303-223-0560
- Stransky, Richard. 533 County Rd. #219, Durango, CO 81301 303-247-8138
- Strother, Tom. 6025 Wheaton Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76133 915-292-6371
- Swanson, Gustav. 900 Worthington Circle #127, Fort Collins, CO 80526
- Taggart, Nancy M. 918-C Fontmore Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80904
- Takamine, Joyce. 1191 1st Street, Los Alamos, NM 87544 505-662-2276
- TenBrink, Joe. 6801 E. Mississippi #A302, Denver, CO 80224 303-320-4858
- Thompson, Janeal. 325 Ohio, P.O. Box 487, Walsh, CO 81090 719-324-5473
- Toolen, John. Colorado Division of Wildlife, 711 Independent Ave, Grand Junction, CO 81505 303-248-7175
- Traylor, Helen E. 2352 Broadway, Grand Junction, CO 81503 303-243-1570
- University of California. Biosciences Library 01, Berkeley, CA 94720
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- Van Zandt, Tom & Ridi. 2025 Alpine Dr, Boulder, CO 80302 303-443-9418
- Vanderpoel, John. 4009 Troon Drive, Uniontown, OH 44685 216-699-0130
- Versaw, Alan. 403 Maplewood Dr, Colo. Springs, CO 80907 719-598-7130
- Vidal, Linda. 1305 Snowbunny Lane, Aspen, CO 81611 303-925-7134
- Voiles, Richard. 480 Pennwood Circle, Englewood, CO 80110 303-761-9279
- Waddington, Mary. 3994 S. Lincoln St, Englewood, CO 80110 303-781-7020
- Wagers, Marianna. 624 Countryside Dr, Ft Collins, CO 80524 303-484-9678
- Wainright, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur. 150 S 36th St, Boulder, CO 80303 303-494-8933
- Walker, Bill. P.O. Box 1589, Estes Park, CO 80517 303-586-5451
- Walker, David W. 5435 S. Mohawk Rd, Littleton, CO 80123 303-694-6004
- Ward, Neil. 1061 Elizabeth Street, Denver, CO 80206 303-321-9123
- Ward, Susan E. 907 9th Street, Boulder, CO 80302 303-449-6686
- Watts, Jim & Rosie. 518 A Street, Penrose, CO 81240 719-372-6679
- Webster, Lois E. 780 Geneva Street, Aurora, CO 80010 303-364-0301
- Wells, Schuyler & Alice. 321 Jasmine St, Denver, CO 80220 303-320-7711
- Werner, Susan. P.O. Box 1213, Conifer, CO 80433 303-697-8548
- W. Foundation. Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo, CA 93012 213-208-8003
- Wheeler, Ruth. 3340 West 37th Avenue, Denver, CO 80211 303-455-3924
- Wheelock, Sylvia. 1016 Short Street, Canon City, CO 81212 719-269-3719
- White, Anthony W. 5872 Marbury Road, Bethesda, MD 20817 301-229-1641
- Whitson, Bob. 2333 Bluff Avenue, Boulder, CO 80304 303-447-2565
- Willcockson, Lynn. 2698 S. Niagara St, Denver, CO 80224 303-757-7000
- Williams, Neal. 3512 N. Tejon, Colorado Springs, CO 80907 719-471-1746
- Williams, Richard M. 216 Teresa Drive, Evergreen, CO 80439 303-238-7728
- Wilson, Robert. 5150 S. Pennsylvania St, Littleton, CO 80121 303-781-8026
- Winn Roberta. P.O. Box 6416, Woodland Park, CO 80866 719-687-6194
- Winternitz, Barbara. 28 Garden Dr, Colo. Springs, CO 80904 719-634-6785
- Wireman, Michael. 274 Granite Dr, Sunshine Canyon, Boulder, CO 80302 303-449-1258
- Witmer, Mark. Section of Ecology Systematics, Corson Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853 257-1657
- Wood Christopher. 4445 S Van Gordon Wy, Morrison, CO 80465 303-973-2161
- Woodward, Ronda. 16490 W Belleview Av, Morrison, CO 80465 303-697-9032
- Woolf, Marvin B. 2190 Linden Avenue, Boulder, CO 80304 303-449-9740
- Wudell, Al. 5133 W. Geddes Circle, Littleton, CO 80123 303-979-8224
- Yaeger, John J. 3303 Morris Avenue, Pueblo, CO 81008 719-542-6515
- Yaeger, Mark. 221 So. Union, Pueblo, CO 81003 719-545-8407
- Yarberry, Scott. 1669 S. Garland Court, Lakewood, CO 80232 303-989-9945
- Zerbi, Victor. 1118 Red Mountain Dr, Glenwood Spgs, CO 81601 303-945-6017
- Zoological Record BIOSIS, U.K. Garforth House, 54 Micklegate, York, North Yorkshire, YO 1 1LF

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