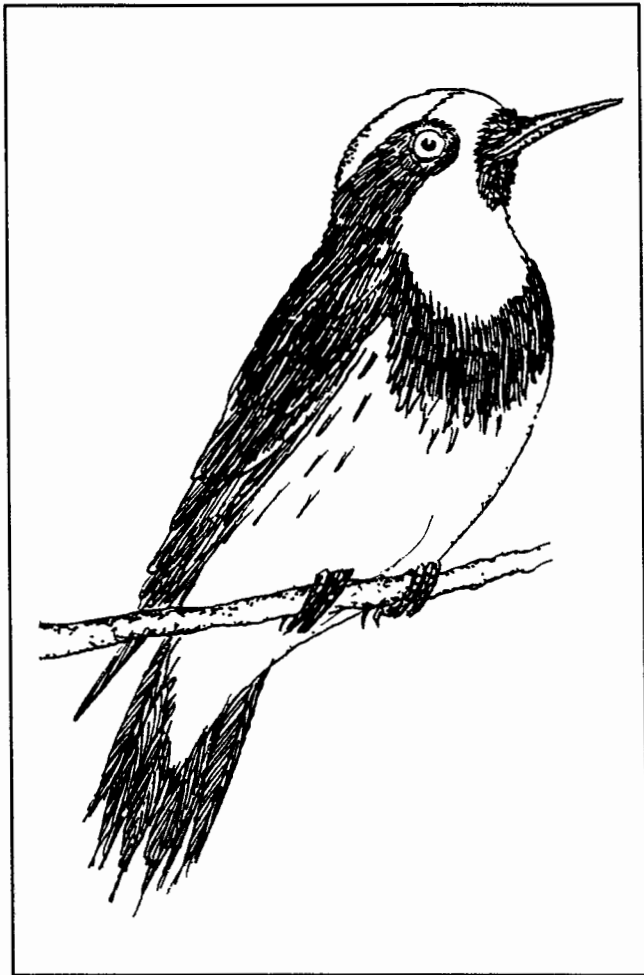
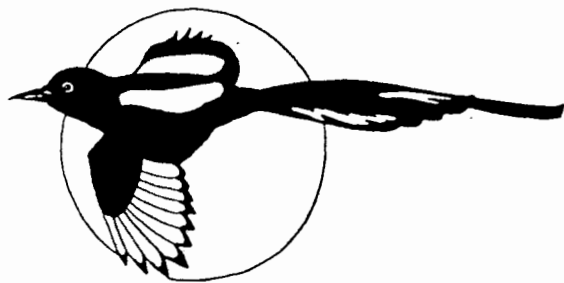

C.F.O. Journal

The Colorado Field Ornithologists' Quarterly





C.F.O. JOURNAL (ISSN- 1066-7342) is published quarterly by the Colorado Field Ornithologists, 1826 Flora Ct., Canon City, CO 81212. Subscriptions are through annual membership dues. Second Class Postage paid at Canon City, CO 81212. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: *C.F.O. Journal*, PO Box 481, Lyons, CO 80540

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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

As my first year as Editor comes to an end, there are a few people I need to thank for propping me up. Mona Hill has been my role model and technical confidant. Dave Silverman and Steve Bouricius have provided many helpful suggestions and encouraged authors to submit articles. My wife Joan has put up with me and done a great job of getting the "guts" of each issue into the word processor. But most of all I would like to thank David Pantle for his constant attention to detail and constructive mode of operation. He has gone beyond the call to continue the task of mailing the Journal amidst a personal move from Denver to Canon City. You probably did not even notice the stickers he personally hand-placed on the cover of each copy of the last issue. They allowed it to get mailed, despite an oversight on my part.

We are overdue for a published list of new members. I am informed this is supposed to appear in the third issue of the year. Oh well. Look for it in the January issue of 1995. Don't forget to renew your membership for 1995. Contact Raymond Davis if you have a question about your status. As always, I need good articles and special photographs.

I hope you find the mix of articles in this issue as enjoyable as I do. Who was the first CFO president? What are the details of the Lake Dorothy Acorn Woodpecker discovery? Which birds were found on the Rigli Ranch this past September? How many hummingbirds does Steve Bouricius have at his place, anyway? What special birds were seen during Spring 1994? Was the Baikal Teal record accepted? Why don't shorebirds look the way the book says they should? Which species should be documented for the Records Committee? How many Barn Owls are estimated to live in extreme western Colorado? If you want answers to these questions and more, read on.



**COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS
PAST PRESIDENTS**

- MAY '65-66 THOMPSON G. MARSH**, Denver. Formal organization began at 3rd Annual Convention.
- MAY '66-67 DR. PAUL R. JULIAN**, Boulder.
- MAY '67-68 DR. MEREDITH MORRIS**, Fort Collins.
- MAY '68-71 LYNN WILLCOCKSON**, Denver.
- MAY '71-72 DR. RONALD A. RYDER**, Fort Collins.
- MAY '72-73 WILLIAM A. DAVIS**, Grand Junction. Resigned 5-19-73, had moved out of state.
- MAY '73 - JUNE '76 DAVID GRIFFITHS**, Pueblo.
- JUNE '76 - FEBRUARY '77 EDWARD CURRY**, Colorado Springs.
- FEBRUARY '77 - JULY '78 MICHAEL MOULTON**, Longmont. Crisis in CFO in 2-77; purpose of club? Journal? field trips? why high turnover of members?
- JULY '78-80 ELINOR WILLS**, Colorado Springs. First woman president.
- JULY '80-81 DAVID ALLES**, Longmont.
- JULY '81-83 TIMMS FOWLER**, Colorado Springs.
- JULY '83-85 CHARLES CHASE III**, Denver.
- JULY '85-87 VIC ZERBI**, Glenwood Springs.
- JUNE '87-89 PETER GENT**, Boulder.
- JUNE '89 - SEPT '91 BILL PRATHER**, Longmont.
- SEPTEMBER '91-92 MIKE CARTER**, Brighton.
- SEPTEMBER '92 - JULY '94 DAVE SILVERMAN**, Rye.

C. F. O. CONVENTION/ANNUAL MEETING HISTORY

- 1963. DENVER.** May 25-26, Denver Museum of Natural History.
Host: Colo. Bird Club (now Denver Field Ornithologists).
- 1964. FORT COLLINS.**
- 1965. COLORADO SPRINGS.** May 15-16. Colorado College.
- 1966. BOULDER.** May 20-22. Host: Boulder Bird Club and University of Colorado Museum (held at CU Campus).
- 1967. ESTES PARK.** May 25-26. Host: Longmont Bird Club.
- 1968. GRAND JUNCTION.** May 25-26. Cafe Caravan. Joint meeting with Western Bird-Banding Association.
- 1969. DENVER.** May 3-4. Voyager Hotel. Host: DFO.
- 1970. FORT COLLINS.** June 18-21. Held at CSU. Joint meeting with annual meetings of Wilson and Cooper Ornithological Societies.
- 1971. WOODLAND PARK.** May 22-23. Held at Manitou Experimental Forest Station. Host: Aiken Society.
- 1972. BOULDER.** May 20-21. Holiday Inn.
- 1973. DURANGO.** May 19-20. Strater Hotel.
- 1974. PUEBLO.** May 18-19. Southern Colo. State College.
- 1975. COLORADO SPRINGS.** May 17-18. Held at Colorado College.
Hosts: Aiken Audubon Society and Colorado College.
- 1976. FORT COLLINS.** June 4-6. CSU.
- 1977. GRAND JUNCTION.** May 21-22. Mesa County Fairgrounds.
- 1978. SYLVANDALE RANCH (LOVELAND).** May 20-21. Host: Foothills Audubon Club.
- 1979. COLORADO SPRINGS.** May 26-27. At Colorado College. Host: Aiken Audubon Society.
- 1980. BOULDER.** May 24-26. Chautauqua Resort.

1981. **ESTES PARK.** June 26-28. YMCA of the Rockies. Joint meeting with Western Field Ornithologists.
1982. **GUNNISON.** June 11-13. Western State College.
1983. **DENVER.** May 27-29. Regis College. "1st Colorado Congress of Field Ornithologists" by CFO, DFO, Denver Audubon.
1984. **GRAND JUNCTION.** May 25-27. Mesa College.
1985. **STERLING.** May 31 - June 3. Northeastern Jr. College.
1986. **COLORADO SPRINGS.** May 17-18. Held at Colorado School for Deaf and Blind.
1987. **BOULDER.** May 9-10. Held at NCAR. Hosts: Boulder Audubon and Boulder Bird Club.
1988. **LAMAR.** May 28-30. Lamar Community College.
1989. **FORT COLLINS.** May 20-21. Holiday Inn.
1990. **PUEBLO.** May 19-20. Holiday Inn. Host: Arkansas Valley Audubon Society.
1991. **DURANGO.** Aug. 30 - Sept. 2 Red Lion Inn. Host: Durango Bird Club.
1992. **DENVER.** Sept. 4-7. Holiday Inn, Northglen.
1993. **CRAIG.** May 28-31. Memorial Day weekend.
1994. **TRINIDAD**



**ORNITHOLOGISTS OBSERVE 37 BIRD SPECIES ON
SEPTEMBER 17, 1994**

**Joe Rigli
6877 County Rd. 14
Fort Morgan, Colorado 80701**

On Saturday, September 17, Joe Rigli led a small group on a field trip in search of fall migrating birds. Areas covered included the Rigli Ranch, Musgrave Farm, San Arroyo Reservoir and surrounding prairies, fields, ponds, creeks and sandhills. In eight hours, 37 different birds were observed and recorded.

Highlights of the day included 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1 Ferruginous Hawk, 1 Burrowing Owl, 2 Empidonax Flycatchers, 2 Western Kingbirds, 1 Rock Wren, 20 Wilson's Warblers, 2 Green-tailed Towhees, 1 Rufous-sided Towhee, 3 Dark-eyed Juncos (Oregon race), and 20 McCown's Longspurs.

Those people participating besides Rigli were Kerry Covelli of Fort Morgan and Anton Kalous of Woodrow. The group toured the "Oasis On The Plains" Museum at the closing of the trip.

TRIP LIST

Green-winged Teal 2	Rock Wren 1
Northern Harrier 3	House Wren 2
Sharp-shinned Hawk 1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet 10
Swainson's Hawk 1	American Robin 3
Red-tailed Hawk 3	Sage Thrasher 3
Ferruginous Hawk 1	European Starling 10
Prairie Falcon 1	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Aud) 3
Killdeer 20	Wilson's Warbler 20
Mourning Dove 15	Green-tailed Towhee 2
Great Horned Owl 2	Rufous-sided Towhee 1
Burrowing Owl 1	Brewer's Sparrow 10
Downy Woodpecker 1	Vesper Sparrow 10
Northern Flicker (Red-shafted Race) 1	Lark Sparrow 1
Empidonax Flycatcher 2	White-crowned Sparrow 3
Say's Phoebe 1	Dark-eyed Junco (Ore) 3
Western Kingbird 2	McCown's Longspur 20
Horned Lark 20	Western Meadowlark 4
Barn Swallow 50	House Sparrow 100
Black-billed Magpie 4	



A DAY OF WONDER

Suzi Plooster

7420 Spring Dr., Boulder, CO 80303

Yes, it's true, some days are better than others, but this one has a lot more to do with birds and sugar water than it does with the amber brew.

One of the best days of the summer happened on July 23, 1994, at the CFO Hummingbird Workshop at the home of Steve Bouricius in Peaceful Valley. The throng had already arrived by the time our car pulled into the driveway. As we stepped onto the sidewalk lined with trees and feeders, we were overwhelmed by the sight and sound of hundreds of hummingbirds. As I looked around, every face wore a beatific smile. Surely this was "birders' heaven!" Birding friends kept saying, "Isn't this wonderful?" And it was.

At different feeding areas around the yard, Steve had placed informative signs telling us about food consumption, life history facts, and other pertinent information to help each of us understand the hummingbirds' lives in this feeding environment. We watched in awe as rufous jewels fought for control of a favored feeder in front of the dining room window. The flash of newly minted copper pennies blazed as the sun touched the whirling bodies. Around other feeders, every perch, sometimes as many as 10 to 12, was filled with perched and feeding Broad-tailed hummers. Every feeder was full of probing bills and tongues, and there must have been 50 feeders. The air was filled with a mighty rush of wings, and even with 50 people talking, the sound of whirring wings was the dominant sound.

Looking past the feeders to the surrounding spruce trees, it seemed as though the trees themselves were moving to the rhythm of the birds. But on closer observation one realized that each tree was filled with perching, preening, buzzing hummingbirds - each tree was a seething mass of bird life.

Feeders at the front porch were the private domain of some Calliope Hummingbirds. Here Jim Karo had taken possession of a favored chair and assisted many with "life" looks at this tiny gem with its flowing crimson collar.

When our senses had been completely saturated with sight and sound and color, we took a short walk with Steve up into the cool depths of Black Gulch. We followed a tiny rivulet up into the forest. There Steve took us in groups of 5 or 6 to view the gossamer thimble nest of a Broad-tailed Hummingbird. While I was there, I watched the mother feed her nestling, which seemed no bigger than a pearl. It was a thrill to see this active nest.

On our way back down to the house, we saw other birds, but today we merely looked and passed them by. Today the jewels of the avian world had blessed us with their presence - probably around 2500 of them. We were filled to overflowing with the displays of flight, the extraordinary flashes of color, and the marvel of their being.

Yes, some days are better than others. This day was not only better, it was so memorable I am sure we will all be telling the wonder of it for years to come. Thanks, Steve, for sharing this day of beauty with us.





BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD

This male fed from a martini glass filled with sugar water on 23 July 94 during the CFO High Country Field Trip at the Peaceful Valley residence of Steve Bouricius.

By Dean Hill

FIRST COLORADO RECORD OF ACORN WOODPECKER

Mark Yaeger
aka Radeaux
221 South Union
Pueblo, CO 81003

When one encounters the totally unexpected, confusion and disbelief can enter the picture. On 20 July 1994 I had been working my Bird Atlas Block on Varela Quadrangle at the Lake Dorothy State Wildlife Area southeast of Trinidad. It had been intermittently foggy and moist all day. When the fog lifted, there were birds all around me, and it turned into a productive day.

While it was temporarily sunny, I was fighting my way through the scrub oak trying to track down a Dusky Flycatcher. I heard a sound. I looked up and saw four "odd plumaged woodpeckers" on the dead pines about ten feet above me. I noticed a bright red crown on these birds and extensive white on their chins and foreheads. They flew off, but I heard tapping on the tree they had just left. I searched and turned up a juvenile Red-naped Sapsucker. I managed to relocate one of the birds on a large dead ponderosa pine. It flew up a little, and I noticed white on its primary feathers. Squint as I might through my binoculars, I could not tell what this bird could be. I first thought it might be a White-headed Woodpecker, but the red on the crown was much more extensive than pictured in the field guide I had with me. Something was different about the area around the eye. At that distance I could not tell what it was without a scope. I could not see the belly or rump on this bird either. I did not consider an Acorn Woodpecker at this time because the field guide I had showed the forehead and chin to be yellow. These birds had more extensive and definite white, plus the red crowns were definitely brighter than in the field guide.

The bird disappeared while I was looking at my field guide, and I could not relocate any of the others. A thunderstorm was approaching. I had to get out of there. The large dead ponderosa had made great lightning rods in the past, as I could see by their scorched appearance. I was disappointed, but it had been a long day. I was wet and tired. I started to rationalize that these were some odd plumaged, albinistic, juvenile Red-naped Sapsuckers. I thought maybe I had not really seen what I thought I had seen. I put it out of my mind.

I stayed out of my mind for a while, as I was very busy with other Atlas Blocks. The next week when I had a moment, I started to look at photos of woodpeckers. I realized I had seen Acorn Woodpeckers! I had not seen all of the field marks, however (the white iris, dark breast band and white rump). This started to gnaw at me, but I could not get back to that area because I had other Atlas Blocks to finish first.

On August 2nd, armed with cameras, scopes and field guides, Pearle Sandstrom-Smith, Cliff Smith and I went back into the area hoping that we might find the birds again. We listened to tapes of Acorn Woodpeckers all the

way down. We arrived at about 10 A.M. at the spot where I had previously seen the birds. We heard a sound similar to the one on the tape, and we spread out and went into the brush. Thirty minutes later, I relocated Pearle but no birds. I looked up toward a distant snag and there they were -- two of the birds. I moved closer and we both got enough of a look to confirm ACORN WOODPECKERS! I saw all of the field marks I had missed before: white rump, breast band, white iris ringed with black feathers and the bill ringed with black feathers. The white patch on the primaries seemed larger than in some field guides. One bird kept returning to a live ponderosa pine near us, and we got a good look at it. We set up a scope. I could see streaking on the flanks and off of the breast band. I could see very little yellow on the birds' chin and none on the forehead. At one point when the bird was in a shadow, the forehead and chin took on a yellow cast. Clif and Pearle got a lot of photos, and amazingly these show more of a yellow tinge on those areas than I saw with my own lenses (eyes, binoculars and scope).

At one point we saw three birds in one tree and heard a fourth. Pearle thought she might have heard a fifth bird and this could be the case. Acorn Woodpeckers are colonial nesters, and sometimes have several broods even into the month of October. Whether these birds are actually nesting on this block remains to be seen. All of the birds I saw were males. Pearle saw one bird with a narrow band of black between the white forehead and red crown. One bird had particularly worn tail feathers, while the others looked fresher. I have read differing accounts of what a young Acorn Woodpecker would look like, from having a bluer iris to brown feathering and a rusty crown. I did not see any of this.

Acorn Woodpeckers were formerly called California Woodpeckers, and Ant Eating Woodpeckers. Their main diet in summer is insects and tree sap. One bird I watched would perch on a limb, chase out after an insect, and return to the same perch, just like a flycatcher. Acorns are stored in holes for fall/winter food, as the birds are sometimes year-round residents. The birds have also been known to store rocks in holes. The purpose of the acorn storage was a matter of debate in earlier years. Apparently they will abandon an area for lack of an acorn crop. I did not notice many acorns on the Gambel oaks in the immediate area where I found these woodpeckers. There may be plenty of acorns within their gathering range. Whether they are even storing acorns in the area remains to be seen. [See photo which follows - ED]

The Lake Dorothy and Fisher's Peak areas had the highest species diversity of any of the 34 Atlas Blocks I worked this year (with the exception of the Trinidad West Block that had urban, riparian, pinyon/juniper and other habitats). Because of the bowl formed by the mesas facing the canyon into New Mexico, it seems like an ideal place to harbor southwestern species that might move northward.

While we were looking for the woodpeckers, we ran into Jim Aragon, the District Wildlife Manager for the Division of Wildlife in the area. He welcomes the publicity from finding a rare bird there and hopes more people will visit the area. I think it would be worthwhile to visit often.

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Baird, S.F., 1905. A History of North American Birds. Little, Brown and Co.

Pearson, T. Gilbert, 1936. Birds of America. Garden City Publishing Co., Inc.

Terres, John K., 1980. The Audubon Encyclopedia of North American Birds. Alfred A. Knoph, N.Y.



ACORN WOODPECKER GRAINERY TREE?

This large, dead ponderosa pine located just west and uphill from the Lake Dorothy Dam appears to have been used as an acorn storage site ("grainery") by Acorn Woodpeckers in years past. No acorns remained on the date of photography, 18August94.

By David Leatherman

The birds were 8 to 9 inches long larger than the Red Naped Sapsucker near them



white rump visible in flight also

The white on the primaries was only visible to me when the bird was in flight. It also appeared more extensive than in some field guides. It was visible from the top and bottom of the wings

Expansive bright red crown extending onto the nape

The white forehead & chin appeared more extensive than in some field guides

black around eye

Conical wood pecker bill-bordered by black feathers

White iris giving the bird a goggle eye appearance (Pearle's words at the time)

In one case I saw yellow at the bottom of the chin near the black bib. In another case when the bird was in shadow the white chin + forehead took on a yellow cast

streaked flanks & the bib became streaked onto the white belly.

white undertail coverts

one bird had particularly worn tail feathers - The other birds were newer looking

The nape, black around eye and back were blue-black iridescent contrasting with non iridescent black wing feathers

The secondaries had white spots on them

Thrush was white

All black tail



ACORN WOODPECKER

Field sketches and notes of a quartet of adults confirmed at Lake Dorothy State Wildlife Area southeast of Trinidad on 2 August 94. While this species has been reported previously in Colorado, its confirmation is perhaps the highlight of 1994.

By Mark Yaeger

NEWS FROM THE FIELD: SEASONAL REPORT SPRING 1994
(March, April, May)

Kim Potter
440 East 7th Street
Rifle, Colorado 81650

This report contains compiled sightings of rare or less common birds as defined by Robert Andrews and Robert Righter in Colorado Birds a reference to their distribution and habitat. The sources of these sightings are from reports sent to Hugh Kingery for the American Birds publication and the Denver Field Ornithologists Lark Bunting. Thank you to the compilers who have taken the time to amass the reports. Your summaries of early and late arrivals, weather conditions, high and low numbers, observed trends and comments are especially helpful.

Thank you to all who sent reports directly or to your regional compiler. Your sightings and reports are valuable. "Documented" rare data may be used in making decisions when revising the status and distribution of the birds in Colorado. An updated list of rare birds for which documentation is sought has been provided by Bill Prather in this issue.

I have made no decisions as to the authenticity of sightings reported. I leave that job to the Records Committee. I would like to apologize if I have missed listing any of your good sightings.

Common Loon - rare spring migrant in western valleys, mountain parks, and eastern plains. Numerous reports statewide. High count 11 near Rifle 4/29.

Red-necked Grebe - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Lake Henry 5/7-26 (Brandon Percival and others).

American White Pelican - rare spring migrant in western valleys. 3 on Colorado River at Loma 4/16 (Coen Dexter). 21 seen migrating n. along Grand Hogback at Rio Blanco 5/3 (Kim Potter).

Great Egret - rare spring migrant on eastern plains, casual in western valleys. Several reports on the plains and 3 in San Luis Valley, Alamosa 5/24-25, including one on nest (Ron Ryder).

Little Blue Heron - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains, casual in western valleys. 1 on Waldon Ponds 5/9 (Bill Prather). 1 at Holbrook Res. 4/24 (B. Percival, Mark Janos).

Tricolored Heron - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Huerfano Res. 4/27 (Pearle Sandstrom-Smith).

Cattle Egret - rare spring migrant on eastern plains, in western valleys and in the San Luis Valley. Reports from San Luis Valley (3pr., 2), Huerfano Res. (1), Fossil Creek w. of Ft. Collins (3) and Lower Latham Res. (10).

Green Heron - rare spring migrant on eastern plains, very rare in western valleys. 1 early report 4/9 Olive Marsh near Pueblo and 1 near Rocky Ford SWA 5/13 (M. Janos). 1 on Redlands Pkwy. Pond 5/8 and 1 at Connected Lakes 5/17 in Grand Jct. area (C. Dexter, Rich Levad). 2 nests found along Poudre River N. of Ft. Collins 4/23, 5/21 (David Leatherman).

Glossy Ibis - accidental spring migrant. 1 at Lower Latham Res. 5/21-22 (David Ely, D. Leatherman, Joe Himmel). 1 adult in San Luis Valley 5/24 (David Manry, R. Ryder).

Tundra Swan - rare spring migrant in western valleys, mountain parks, and on eastern plains. 1 imm. reported at Boulder 3/5.

Greater White-fronted Goose - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Timnath Res. 3/27 (Joe Mammoser). 1 adult at Hamilton Res. 5/1 (R. Ryder).

Snow Goose - rare migrant in western valleys. Many reports from eastern plains, up to 100's reported from northern Colorado.

Ross' Goose - rare to uncommon spring migrant in western valleys, the San Luis Valley, and on the plains. Numerous reports statewide. 1 at Brush Creek near Eagle 3/27, a first record for latilong #10 (Jack Merchant).

Eurasian Widgeon - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains, casual in mountain parks. 1m at C.F. & I. Lakes 3/1-3 (P. Sandstrom-Smith, Clif Smith and others). 1m in Adams Co. 3/19 (D. Ely).

Greater Scaup - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. Reports at Duck Lake in N. Colorado, Baseline Res., Lake Holbrook and Grand Jct.

Oldsquaw - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at College Lake w. of Ft. Collins 3/1 (D. Ely). 2 at Hamilton Res. 3/27 and 4/24 (R. Ryder).

Surf Scoter - casual spring migrant on northeast plains. 1f on a lake s. of Golden Pond in Longmont 5/7 (Jim Kuhn, Barbara Hyde, Mary Greist).

Barrow's Goldeneye - rare spring migrant in western valleys, mountain parks and on eastern plains near foothills. 1 in Wheatridge Greenbelt 3/6, 1m, 1f on Duck Lake 3/16-18 (D. Ely, Dave Hawksworth), 68 in Rifle area 3/3 - 4/19 (K. Potter).

Hooded Merganser - rare spring migrant in western valleys, mountain parks and on the eastern plains, may be uncommon or even common very

locally. Reported from (3) Fort Collins, (1) Longmont and Loveland, (7) Boulder, (6) Wheatridge Greenbelt, (1) Gypsum, (1) El Jebel, and (2) Grand Jct.

Mississippi Kite - very rare in spring, summer and fall on eastern plains away from Baca County and the Arkansas Valley. 2 in Lamar 5/7 (B. Percival & others). 1 in Pueblo 5/9 (Van Truan).

Red-shouldered Hawk - casual spring migrant on northeastern plains. 1 adult at Blende 3/6 (Dick Rothe & others).

Broad-winged Hawk - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 from Mt. Sanitas near Boulder 4/20 (Alex & Gillian Brown). 1 near Lyons (Mike Figgs, D.W. King). 1 on Poudre River N. of Ft. Collins 5/8 (D. Leatherman). 1 imm. Fountain Creek Regional Park 5/15 (M. Janos). 1 at Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs 5/6 (Alan Versaw).

Peregrine Falcon - rare spring migrant-population rebounding in Colorado. 6 reports from Northern Colorado, 3 Denver, 5 Garfield Co., and 1 Colorado City.

Black Rail - casual in spring, early summer and fall. 6 heard in Otero & Bent Counties 5/7 (B. Percival & others).

Sandhill Crane - abundant migrant in San Luis Valley, irregular elsewhere. Mesa Co. breeding 3/17. 1 pr. Unaweep Canyon and 2 pr. Buzzard Creek.

Black-bellied Plover - rare to uncommon migrant on eastern plains, very rare in western valleys. 1 report from Pueblo and 8 from northern Colorado.

Snowy Plover - very rare spring migrant on northeastern plains and in western valleys. 24 at Cheraw Lake 4/9 (M. Janos). 1 at Hamilton Res. 5/15 (R. Ryder).

Semipalmated Plover - rare to uncommon migrant on eastern plains, very rare in western valleys. Early date 4/9, 3 at Cheraw Lake. Several reports including western valleys.

Piping Plover - very rare spring migrant and local breeder. 5 at Upper Queens Res. 5/22 (M. Janos).

Mountain Plover - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 in Baca Co. 4/30 (B. Percival). 5 at Pawnee National Grasslands 4/24 (D. Ely, Jon Bowser).

Black-necked Stilt - rare spring migrant on eastern plains and in western valleys. Numerous reports from eastern plains.

Whimbrel - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. Many reports from the eastern plains. High count 31 at Hamilton Res. 5/5.

Long-billed Curlew - rare spring migrant in western valleys, mountain parks and on the plains away from southeast. 1 near N. Colorado Environmental Learning Center (NCELC) in Fort Collins 4/28 (D. Leatherman). 1 at Hamilton Res. 5/1 (R. Ryder). 1 at Cheraw Lake 4/13 (John Riffe).

Hudsonian Godwit - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Lake Henry 5/13 (M. Janos). 1 at Lower Latham Res. 5/24-25 (R. Ryder). 17 at Little Gaynor Lake in Longmont 5/7 (Kat Bennett).

Red Knot - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Cheraw Lake 5/14 (P. Sandstrom-Smith, C. Smith).

Pectoral Sandpiper - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Upper Queens Res. 5/24 (B. Percival).

Dunlin - very rare migrant in spring on eastern plains. 1 at Cheraw Lake 4/9 (M. Janos).

Stilt Sandpiper - accidental in mountain parks. Early date, 1 at Cheraw Lake 4/14 (M. Janos), also reports from (1) Nelson Res. , (1) Hamilton Res. and (6) Beebe Draw.

Short-billed Dowitcher - accidental spring migrant on eastern plains. 3 Cheraw Lake 4/4 (P. Sandstrom-Smith).

Parasitic Jaeger - accidental fall migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Lake Henry 5/14 (P. Sandstrom-Smith).

Laughing Gull - casual migrant in spring on eastern plains. 1 at Upper Queens Res. 5/22 (M. Janos).

Herring Gull - rare migrant in western valleys. 1 at highline in Grand Jct. area 4/1 (Brenda Wright).

Thayer's Gull - rare winter into spring on eastern plains. 2 at Union Res., 1 at Lake Holbrook and 1 at Adobe Creek Res.

Lesser Black-backed Gull - accidental on eastern plains. 1 at Rist Benson Res. near Loveland 3/9 (Gordon Magruder).

Glaucous Gull - rare in winter in northeastern Colorado. 1 at Horseshoe Res. near Loveland 4/11 (Ann Means).

Caspian Tern - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Pueblo 5/4 (V. Truan). 2 at Horseshoe Res. near Loveland 4/11 (A. Means). 1 at Prospect Ponds E. of Ft. Collins 5/2-5 (D. Leatherman & others). 2 near Wellington 5/15 (Alex & June Cringan).

Common Tern - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Las Animas 5/7 (B. Percival).

Northern Pygmy-Owl - rare resident in foothills and mountains. Reports of nesting from Lyons and Vail. Reports from Lory State Park and Rist Canyon near Fort Collins, and Mount Falcon State Park.

Short-eared Owl - rare to uncommon resident in the San Luis Valley and on the eastern plains. Reported from Berthoud and Two Buttes Res.

Long-eared Owl - rare resident in western valleys, foothills, lower mountains and on eastern plains. 1 found nesting near Fruita. 3 calling near Rifle area 4/6-18.

Northern Saw-whet Owl - uncommon to fairly common resident in foothills and lower mountains. 27 heard calling in Rifle area thru May (K. Potter).

Boreal Owl - rare to locally uncommon resident in higher mountains. 1 calling near Cameron Pass 3/31 (D. Leatherman & others). 2 calling on Grand Mesa 3/30 (R. Levad & others).

Red-bellied Woodpecker - casual migrant on eastern plains. Reports from Bonny Res. (6), and 1 at the Community College in Lamar 5/1 (M. Janos).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - very rare winter resident on northeastern plains near foothills, accidental on extreme eastern plains and in western valleys. 1 report from Lyons 4/1 (Helen Lechliter). 1m and 1f imm. at Grandview Cemetery in Fort Collins 3/2-4 (D. Leatherman).

Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted) - casual in western valleys. 1 at Connected Lakes State Park 3/20 (R. Levad).

Willow Flycatcher - spring migrant in lowlands. 1 at Pueblo 5/5 (Bob Dickson). 2 on Dolores River 5.22 (C. Dexter). 8 at Escalante SWA 5/24 and 4 at Hart's Basin 5/24 (R. Levad).

Black Phoebe - very rare summer resident in Pueblo County. 2 pr. near Uravan 5/21-22 (C. Dexter). 1 at Rifle Falls State Park 5/12 (K. Potter).

Eastern Phoebe - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 in Painted Canyon Atlas block 5/30 (Hugh Kingery). 1 at Pueblo 4/6 (Bob & Johnie Dickson).

Vermilion Flycatcher - occasional migrant in eastern Colorado. 1 pr. at Lake Hasty 5/13 (Chris Wood).

Great-crested Flycatcher - rare on southeastern plains. Several reports from the plains.

Cassins' Kingbird - rare to uncommon and very local summer resident in western Colorado. 3 W. of Glade Park 5/27 and 1 at Pueblo West 4/17 (Mark Yaeger).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1f in Gypsum Valley near Dolores River bridge 5/30 (B. Wright) and 1 in Las Animas

Purple Martin - rare spring migrant in western valleys. 1 at Rifle 5/11.

Carolina Wren - very rare visitor to eastern plains. 1 at Pueblo 3/1 (B. & J. Dickson). 1 at Beulah 3/11-4/14 (Pat Flynn).

Winter Wren - rare winter resident on eastern plains. 1 near Berthoud 5/65 (Mary Muller).

Gray-cheeked Thrush - very rare spring migrant, mostly on northeastern plains. 1 at Lake Henry 5/14 (M. Janos).

Bendire's Thrasher - accidental on eastern plains. 1 at Fowler 4/4 (P. Sandstrom-Smith).

Bohemian Waxwing - irregular winter visitor. 22 at Longmont Res. 5/2 (B. Hyde).

White-eyed Vireo - casual spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Lake Henry 5/8 (M. Janos).

Blue-winged Warbler - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1m at Castlewood Canyon State Park 5/21 (B. Percival).

Golden-winged Warbler - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1m at NeeNoshe Res. 5/1 (M. Janos).

Tennessee Warbler - rare to uncommon spring migrant on eastern plains. Reports from Lake Henry 5/8, Two Buttes Res. 5/24, Hasty Campground 5/12, Bonney Res. 5/15 and Crow Valley Campground 5/6.

Nashville Warbler - rare spring migrant in western valleys, foothills, and eastern plains. Reports from Lake Henry 5/8 and Rocky Ford SWA 5/7.

Northern Parula - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 near Hamilton Res. 5/5 (Jim Sedgwick, Brett Peterson).

Chestnut-sided Warbler - rare spring migrant on eastern plains, casual in western valleys. Reports from Crow Valley Campground, Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Rocky Ford SWA & Hasty Campground.

Magnolia Warbler - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. Reports of 2m in Lamar and 1m in Crow Valley Campground.

Black-throated Blue Warbler - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1m in Fort Collins 5/21 (D. Leatherman).

Black-throated Gray Warbler - rare spring migrant in valleys and plains adjacent to breeding range. Numerous reports from the plains.

Townsend's Warbler - rare spring migrant in western valleys and on plains near foothills. Reported from Hannah Ranch 5/14 and Two Buttes Res. 5/8 and NCELC 4/28-30.

Black-throated Green Warbler - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. Reports from Crow Valley Campground 5/6, Lake Henry 5/9 and Hannah Ranch 5/14.

Blackburnian Warbler - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1m at Fountain Creek Regional Park 5/7-8. 1m at Crow Valley Campground 5/22.

Yellow-throated Warbler - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Hannah Ranch 5/7 (Tom Light, B. Percival).

Prairie Warbler - casual spring migrant on eastern plains. 1m near Idalia 5/18 (Urling & H. Kingery, C. Wood).

Palm Warbler - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. Many reports from Hamilton Res., Dixon Res., Crow Valley Campground and Lake Henry.

Bay-breasted Warbler - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1m in Fort Collins 5/20 (J. Mammoser).

Blackpoll Warbler - rare to uncommon spring migrant on eastern plains. Reported from Fort Collins 5/20, Lake Henry 5/9, Lykin's Gulch 5/1, Hannah Ranch 5/9 and Canyon City 5/30.

Cerulean Warbler - accidental spring migrant (2 records). 1m at Fountain Creek Regional Park 5/15 (Toni Bevilier).

Black and White Warbler - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. Reported from Pueblo, Lake Henry, and Ft. Lyon.

Prothonotary Warbler - very rare spring migrant. 1m in Colorado Springs 5/21 (Jo Romero, T. Brevellier, B. Percival).

Worm-eating Warbler - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Bonney Res. 5/14 (D. Ely & others).

Swainson's Warbler - casual spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Lamar Community College 5/1 (M. Janos).

Ovenbird - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. Reports from Bonny Res. and San Isabel 5/14.

Hooded Warbler - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1m at Lamar Community College 5/22 (B. Percival). 1m at Two Buttes Res. 4/26 (Barry Zimmer).

Summer Tanager - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1m in Fort Collins 5/20 (D. Ely). 3 near Fort Lyon (V. Truan).

Scarlet Tanager - rare spring migrant on eastern plains. 1 at Boulder feeder 3/5 (M. Janos).

Northern Cardinal - rare on eastern plains, accidental in mountains, mountain parks and western valleys. 1m in Baca Co. near Carrizo Creek 3/17.

Painted Bunting - casual spring migrant on eastern plains. 1m first seen 5/28 in Cottonwood Canyon.

Rufous-crowned Sparrow - uncommon resident in mesas of southern Las Animas and southwestern Baca Counties. 8 found in Painted Canyon Atlas Block 5/31 (H. Kingery).

Black-throated Sparrow - rare and local on southeastern plains. 2 south of LaJunta 4/30 (B. Percival). 1 south of LaJunta 5/30. "in appropriate habitat, where I have found them 3 other years, is probably breeding." (M. Janos).

Sage Sparrow - very rare spring migrant on eastern plains along foothills. 1 in Fort Collins 5/6 (J. Bowser). 1 seen below Dillon Dam in Summit Co. 3/24 (H. Kingery). First county record.

Savannah Sparrow - fairly common spring migrant in western valleys, mountain parks, and on eastern plains. Early date 3/25 at Colorado Springs SWA (A. Versaw).

LeConte's Sparrow - casual in spring. 1 at Pawnee National Grasslands 5/6 (T. Carol Agee).

Swamp Sparrow - rare spring migrant on eastern plains, may be locally common. 1 report from Pueblo 4/17.

White-throated Sparrow - rare spring migrant in western valleys and on eastern plains. 2 at Rocky Ford SWA 3/13, 1 near NCELC 4/28 and 1 in Pueblo 3/6.

Golden-crowned Sparrow - casual on extreme eastern plains. 1 at Monte Vista SWA 3/24 (Tim, Mary & Nick Tucey).

Harris' Sparrow - rare in western valleys, very rare in foothills, lower mountains and mountain parks. 5 reports from Pueblo, 2 from Rocky Ford SWA and 1 from Two Buttes Res. 1 at Gypsum 3/14 (J. Merchant).

McCown's Longspur - common to abundant local spring migrant on extreme eastern plains. Much more abundant and widespread this spring than past 6 years, esp. at Rawhide near Nunn and Meadow Springs, per R. Ryder.

Eastern Meadowlark - uncommon resident of Logan & Sedgwick Counties, accidental elsewhere on eastern plains. 1 refund near Dixon Res. 5/13, second consecutive year (D. Ely and others).

Bobolink - rare spring migrant on eastern plains and in western valleys, casual in northern mountains and mountain parks. 1m near Wellington 5/19 and 4 near Walsenburg 5/8.

Orchard Oriole - rare migrant on eastern plains near foothills. 2 reports from Pueblo 5/6, 1 at Bonny Res. 5/14-15, 1 pr. nest building at Crow Valley Campground in late May and 1 in Fort Collins 5/22-27.

Northern (Baltimore) Oriole - accidental in western valleys. Reported from Weld Co., Sterling and Lake Henry.

Evening Grosbeak - irregular resident. No reports from Denver, Boulder, Fort Collins or Pueblo. Only 20 sightings reported from Loveland area, down from 274 in '93. Present by the hundreds in Rifle area in higher elevations, pinyon-juniper forests and in town.





ALBINO HUMMINGBIRD

A total albino is the rarest form of albinism. This exquisite bird, presumably a male Broad-tailed Hummingbird, appeared from 7-11 August 94, in the Livermore (Larimer County) backyard of Darleen Zollinger. It was tolerated by other Rufous and Broad-tailed Hummingbirds but tended to feed more during the middle of the day.

By Mr. Zollinger (gratiously forwarded to CFO by Edwin M. King, President of Fort Collins Audubon)

**A MESSAGE FROM
THE CFO RECORDS COMMITTEE CHAIR**

**Bill Prather
13810 WCR 1
Longmont, Colorado 80504
303-776-2191**

As chairperson of the CFO Records Committee, 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 show 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 that 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. Records submitted to the Denver Museum of Natural History will be rerouted to me, but again, it's just an extra step in the process. If you have submitted a report and think it may have been lost, please contact me. Good birding and keep submitting those reports!

Birds we would like documentation on:

Red-throated Loon*	White-winged Dove
Yellow-billed Loon*	Inca Dove
Red-necked Grebe	Groove-billed Ani
Brown Pelican	Snowy Owl
Olivaceous Cormorant*	Spotted Owl
Anhinga	Barred Owl
Magnificent Frigatebird	Lesser Nighthawk*
Little Blue Heron*	Whip-poor-will
Tricolored Heron	Magnificent Hummingbird*
Reddish Egret*	Blue-throated Hummingbird*
White Ibis	Anna's Hummingbird*
Glossy Ibis*	Eastern Wood-Pewee*
Wood Stork	Alder Flycatcher*
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	Black Phoebe
Trumpeter Swan*	Vermilion Flycatcher
American Black Duck*	Dusky-capped Flycatcher*
Garganey	Thick-billed Kingbird*
Eurasian Wigeon	Carolina Wren
Harlequin Duck	Sedge Wren*
Black Scoter	Gray-cheeked Thrush*
Am. Swallow-tailed Kite	Wood Thrush
Red-shouldered Hawk*	Varied Thrush
Gyrfalcon*	Long-billed Thrasher*
Ruffed Grouse	Bendire's Thrasher*
Yellow Rail	Sprague's Pipit*
Black Rail	Phainopepla
King Rail	White-eyed Vireo
Purple Gallinule	Yellow-throated Vireo
Common Moorhen	Philadelphia Vireo*
Whooping Crane	Blue-winged Warbler
American Golden-Plover*	Golden-winged Warbler
Piping Plover	Lucy's Warbler
Eskimo Curlew*	Cape May Warbler
Hudsonian Godwit	Hermit Warbler
Ruddy Turnstone	Blackburnian Warbler

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper*	Yellow-throated Warbler
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Pine Warbler*
Ruff	Prairie Warbler
Short-billed Dowitcher*	Cerulean Warbler
American Woodcock	Prothonotary Warbler
Red Phalarope*	Swainson's Warbler
Pomarine Jaeger*	Louisiana Waterthrush*
Parasitic Jaeger*	Kentucky Warbler
Long-tailed Jaeger*	Connecticut Warbler*
Common Black-headed Gull	Mourning Warbler*
Little Gull	Canada Warbler
Mew Gull*	Painted Redstart
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Hepatic Tanager
Glaucous-winged Gull*	Henslow's Sparrow
Great Black-backed Gull	LeConte's Sparrow
Black-legged Kittiwake*	Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Ross' Gull	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Ivory Gull	Eastern Meadowlark*
Arctic Tern*	Bronzed Cowbird
Marbled Murrelet	Brambling
Ancient Murrelet	

And any bird not on the official CFO state checklist. If you need a copy or if you need documentation forms, please contact me:

Bill Prather
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Longmont, CO 80504
303-776-2191

*Indicates a very difficult field identification problem, at least in some plumages. Special emphasis should be put on separation from similar species.



THE REPORT OF THE CFO RECORDS COMMITTEE FOR 1992.

We circulated 120 records reports that were received in 1992. There were 119 new records and one significant new report of an already accepted record. The reports were generally very good and all but seven were accepted. A rejected report does not necessarily mean an incorrect identification. In most cases it just means there were not enough details in the report or information available to make a definite decision.

As a result of the reports 2 new species were added to the CFO Official State Checklist: Inca Dove and Thick-billed Kingbird. The record that got the most attention was the Baikal Teal, which was rejected due to our inability to determine the bird's origin.

As a result of changes in the AOU and ABA checklists we again have three Rosy-Finches: Grey-crowned Rosy-Finch, Black Rosy-Finch, and Brown-capped Rosy-finch. With the 4 additions, 2 new species reported and 2 Rosy-Finches, the checklist stands at 449 species.

CFO Records Committee Members who voted on these reports were: Peter Gent (Boulder), Joe Himmel (Greeley), Bill Howe (Laurel, MD), Rich Levad (Grand Junction), Bill Prather (Longmont), Paul Opler (Loveland), Dick Schottler (Golden), and Van Truan (Pueblo). Bill Howe and Van Truan have now finished their terms and we thank them very much for their excellent service. Bob Dickson from Pueblo begins his term with the 1993 records. Thanks very much to all who submitted reports, to Hugh Kingery, Phil Hayes and the Denver Museum of Natural History for forwarding and archiving records, and to all committee members. It's a big job and it took a lot of work on the part of everyone.

Red-throated Loon *Gavia stellata* 1-92-8: One in winter plumage at Cherry Creek Reservoir 1/14/94 to 11/15/94. Report by Mark Janos. Unanimously vote for 16th accepted record.

Yellow-billed Loon *Gavia adamsii* Two records were received and both were unanimously accepted, becoming the 6th and 8th accepted records (the Union Res. record was before the 7th record but submitted and accepted later.)**1-92-50:** One in winter plumage at Union Reservoir 11/9/91 to 11/19/91. Report by John Prather.**1-92-7:** One in winter plumage at Pueblo Reservoir 11/26/92 to 11/29/92. Report by Mark Janos.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena* 2-92-119: One changing from adult breeding to winter plumage at Union Reservoir. Report by Bill Prather. Unanimously vote for 20th accepted record.

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* 3-92-5 One at Neenoshe Reservoir 8/18/94-8/19/94. Report and photographs by Duane Nelson. Unanimous vote for 6th accepted record.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* Reports on 2 records were received and both got unanimous votes for the 26th and 27th accepted records. **5-92-23:** One adult in non-breeding plumage in Pueblo 4/22/94. First discovered by Dave Silverman, report by Mark Janos. **5-92-62:** One 2nd year immature at Chatfield Reservoir 5/22/92, report by Joey Kellner.

Green Heron *Butorides virescens* (new names-changed in 39th supplement to AOU Checklist) **5-92-67:** One in breeding plumage near Aspen in Pitkin Co. 6/2/92. Report by Linda Vidal. Unanimous vote. There are many

state records and this species does not normally require documentation but there are few mountain records.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron *Nyctanassa violacea* 5-92-13 One in juvenile plumage at Lower Latham Reservoir 8/18/1992. Report by Joe Himmel. A good job of separating the field marks from those of the similar juvenile Black-crowned Night Heron. Unanimous vote-there are more than 30 accepted records.

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi* 7-92-53 A flock of about 30 near Silt on 7/13/92. Report by John Ellenberger. Unanimously accepted, there are many records state wide.

Trumpeter Swan *Cygnus buccinator* Reports of two occurrences. 8-92-109: One immature at Pueblo 2/19/92 to 2/22/92. Report by Brandon Percival, photo and additional details by Pearle Sandstrom-Smith. This is a very difficult field identification and committee members would like to have had a lot more details but the majority voted to accept for the 8th accepted record. 8-92-114: Two birds were initially seen 11/30/92 on the Colorado River in Eagle County, one was possibly killed by a hunter and the other was seen as late as 12/10/92. These birds were part of a group that were captured in Idaho, neck-banded and transported to the Green River in Wyoming. Poachers and, possibly, cold weather chased these birds out. The identification was not in doubt because of the bands. Two members voted to reject because of the human interference but the rest voted to accept, 9th accepted record.

Brant *Branta bernicla bernicla* 8-92-91: One in Greeley 3/15/92 to 3/21/92. Accepted with one dissension, 9th accepted record for species, only the third of the bernicla race. Report by Joe Himmel.

Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans* 8-92-73: One at Monte Vista NWR 4/1/92. Report by John Rawinski. Unanimous vote, 10th accepted record for species, 6th of the nigricans race.

Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* 8-92-1: One adult female was seen irregularly in the Evergreen area from 11/28/92 to 1/23/93. Reports were made by Bill Brockner and Mark Janos, Steve Feldstein and Dick Schottler submitted detailed comments and Joe Himmel did a great investigation on the Greeley escapees. This bird received considerable attention and discussion from birders inside and outside Colorado. There was no question of the bird's identity and it had no physical signs of captivity. Arguments against acceptance included the fact that the species is now getting rarer in the wild and there have been few recent Alaskan records, some birds escaped from captivity in Greeley in January 1991, there are many other possible sources of escaped birds. Arguments for acceptance include the lack of bands or clipped toes, the bird's wild behavior, and the similarity of pattern with west coast

records that have been accepted. Rejected in a mixed vote: 3 for acceptance, 2 for rejection, 3 felt there was not enough evidence either way.

American Black Duck *Anas rubripes* Reports received on 2 sightings, both were accepted by large majorities, one member questioned whether these birds were showing natural migration behavior. **8-92-40:** One at Lower Latham Reservoir 9/6/92 and after. Report by Joe Himmel. **8-92-118:** One in Pueblo 12/13/92 to 12/19/92. Report by Mark Janos.

Garganey *Anas querquedula* **8-92-97:** One breeding plumage male east of Boulder 3/21/92 to 4/23/92. Found by Ann Means and others on a Foothills Audubon field trip, reports by Peter Gent and Steve Stachowiak. Majority voted to accept, 2nd accepted record.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope* **8-92-24:** One at Colorado City 3/28/92. Found by Dave Silverman, report by Mark Janos. Accepted by unanimous vote, 16th accepted record, there have been many recent sightings without documentation.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* **8-92-11:** One in Lafayette 10/31/92 to 11/8/92 had a plastic band on on leg and acted very tame. Everyone, including Mark Janos who wrote the report, thought it was an escapee.

White-winged Scoter *Melanitta fusca* **8-92-117:** Two at Clifton 10/31/91 to 11/19/91 were reported and photographed by Coen Dexter. Vote to accept 8-0, there are many records in the state but fewer in the west.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* **10-92-51:** One near Meeker 10/15/92. Report by John Ellenberger. Unanimous vote to accept, there are many records.

Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis* **10-92-71:** One at Colorado Springs State Wildlife Area 5/16/91. Report by Terence Berger. Unanimous vote to accept-unusual locality.

Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus* Reports of two sightings were received. **10-92-104:** One eastern race immature east of Pueblo 1/7/92 to 1/17/92. First reported by Bob Roth whose property it was on, first identified by Bob Dickson, documentations by Bob Dickson and Mark Janos. Vote to accept 8-0, 16th accepted record. **10-92-49:** One observed at Dinosaur Ridge Hawkwatch 4/22/92 by a group of 6 people, Documentation by Tom Parker. The committee members thought the description was suggestive of a Red-tailed Hawk but felt that more details were needed as hawks are extremely variable. We would welcome more reports on this sighting. Vote to reject 8-0, not enough details.

Merlin *Falco columbarius richardsoni* 12-92-35: One at Hamilton Reservoir 8/11/92 Report by Dan Bridges. Unanimous vote to accept-unusual summer record.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* 12-92-98: One at Westcliffe 1/25/92. Report by Pearle Sandstrom-Smith. Unanimous vote to accept-there are many records of this species which is making a comeback.

White-tailed Ptarmigan *Lagopus leucurus* 13-92-84: At least 4 on Pike's Peak 4/28/92. Report by Dan Bridges. Majority vote to accept-this species was introduced on Pike's Peak in 1975.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* 17-92-58: One at Totten Reservoir 7/1/92. Report by Alan Versaw. Unanimous vote to accept, 9th accepted record.

Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* 18-92-85: Two or three seen at Neenoshe Reservoir 4/26/92. Report by Dan Bridges. Unanimous vote to accept, the small Colorado population of this species is being closely watched by the Colorado Dept. of Wildlife and Colorado Bird Observatory, see reports in other issues of *CFO Journal*.

Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica* We received reports on 2 sightings. These could have been the same bird but were reported as 2 different birds by Joe Himmel. Both unanimously accepted, 16th and 17th accepted records. **19-92-89:** One at Lower Latham Reservoir 5/10/92. Report by Joe Himmel. **19-92-21:** One 3 miles south of Lower Latham Reservoir 5/14/92 to 5/18/92. Reports by Joe Himmel and Mark Janos.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus* 19-92-38: One at Lake Holbrook 9/27/92. Report by Mark Janos. Unanimous vote to accept, 26th accepted record.

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis* 19-92-26: One at Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge 7/20/92. Report by Ed Holub. Vote to accept 7-1, first accepted record in July and first in San Luis Valley.

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* 19-92-61: Eight in breeding plumage on White Ranch in Saguache County 5/19/92. Report by Bob Righter. Unanimous vote to accept, there are few spring records away from the eastern plains.

Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus* 19-92-42: Four in juvenile plumage 9/9/92 at Arapahoe National Wildlife Refuge. Report by Bob Righter. Unanimous vote to accept, only the 12th accepted record. This species is probably much more common in Colorado than the number of accepted records would indicate, but all sightings should be carefully

documented due to the difficulty of separating this species from Long-billed Dowitcher.

Red Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicaria* Documentations of two sightings were received, both were accepted by unanimous votes, the 17th and 18th accepted records. **21-92-43** One male in alternate plumage 6 miles north of Firstview in Cheyenne County 5/28/92. Report by Hugh Kingery. **21-92-39** One in winter plumage at Lake Holbrook 10/11/92. Report by Mark Janos.

Long-tailed Jaeger *Stercorarius longicaudus* **22-92-18** One adult at Chatfield Reservoir 5/28/92 and 5/29/92. First found by Mark Nikas and Joe Roller, documentations by those two and Joey Kellner, Dick Schottler, Steve Stachowiak, and Mark Janos, photographs by Joe Roller. Unanimous vote to accept, 3rd accepted record.

Mew Gull *Larus canus* Two records were received, both unanimously accepted, the 7th and 8th accepted records. **23-92-52** One 2nd winter at Union Reservoir 4/28/91, report by John Prather. **23-92-9** One juvenile at Pueblo Reservoir 11/29/92 and 12/6/92, report by Mark Janos.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* Four records were received, all were accepted unanimously, the 4th through 7th accepted records. **23-92-105:** One 2nd winter at Pueblo Reservoir 1/11/92 and at CF&I Lakes south of Pueblo 2/8/92. Reports by Van Truan and Mark Janos. **23-92-110:** One 1st winter at CF&I Lakes south of Pueblo 2/8/92, report by Van Truan. **23-92-90:** One 2nd winter at Cherry Creek Reservoir 2/24/1992, report and drawings by Jack Reddall. This is possibly the same bird as 23-92-105 but 14 days later and over 100 miles north of that record. **23-92-41:** One winter plumage adult at Cherry Creek Reservoir 11/11/92 to 11/15/92, reports by J.B.Hayes and Mark Janos.

Glaucous-winged Gull *Larus glaucescens* Reports of 4 records were received, all were accepted unanimously, the 2nd through 5th accepted records. **23-92-83:** One at Jumbo Reservoir 3/31/89, report by Jack Reddall, becomes the second accepted record. **23-89-20:** One at Cherry Creek Reservoir 4/11/89, report by Jack Reddall, photographs by Harold Holt. This is a new report of a record that was accepted in 1989 on a report by Mark Janos, becomes the 3rd accepted record. **23-92-82:** One at Cherry Creek Reservoir 5/1/90, report by Jack Reddall. **23-92-81:** One at Cherry Creek Reservoir 3/1/92 to 4/1/92, reports by Joe Roller and Jack Reddall, opinion by Rich Stallcup.

Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* **23-92-27:** One at Fountain creek Regional Park 11/2/94, report by Toni Brevillier. This was a difficult description for committee members, the plumage indicates adult or near adult plumage except for the "darkish crescent on the nape" which is suggestive of a younger bird. P.J.Grant's book Gulls states that second winter/adult winter

birds have a "...ill defined, often crescentic, dark gray or blackish ear spot...". Vote was close with 5 voting for acceptance and 3 for not having enough information, 15th accepted record.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini* 23-92-116: One immature at Clifton 9/15/92 and 9/16/92, report and photograph by Coen Dexter. **23-92-115:** One adult at Clifton 9/22/91 to 9/25/91, report and photographs by Coen Dexter. Both were unanimously accepted.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* Two reports were received. **23-92-4:** One at Neenoshe Reservoir 6/9/92, report by Duane Nelson. Unanimous vote to accept, 4th accepted record. **23-92-37:** One at McPhee Reservoir 9/22/92. The committee members felt the details were too sketchy and a request was made for a report from another observer. This has been received and the record will be recirculated.

Least Tern *Sterna antillarum* 23-92-75: One at Blue Lake (Adobe Creek Reservoir) 5/15/92, report by Dan Bridges. Unanimous vote to accept, the species breeds at the location most years.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* Three records were received, all were unanimously accepted, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd accepted records. **25-92-3:** One at Lafayette 11/4/92 to 12/16/92. Originally found by Dave Menough, reports by Duane Nelson and Mark Janos, photograph by Duane Nelson. **25-92-12:** Two at Vineland, Pueblo County 11/15/92 to 1/4/93 and one remained until 2/28/93. Found by Joan Williams, reports by Mark Yaeger and Mark Janos. **25-92-2:** Three at Lamar 11/23/92 to 12/21/1992. Report and photograph by Jennifer Slater.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba* 27-92-100: Eight south of John Martin Reservoir 3/30/91, report by Dan Bridges, unanimously accepted, amazing number for Colorado.

Eastern Screech-Owl *Otus asio* 28-92-102: Two east of Lamar 3/23/91, report by Dan Bridges. Unanimous vote to accept, more information on distribution of this species in state.

Western Screech-Owl *Otus kennicottii* Dan Bridges sent in 3 reports in his effort to map the range of this species, all were accepted. **28-92-99:** One at Rocky Ford State Wildlife Area 2/23/91. **28-92-101:** Two at Las Animas and 1 at Ft Lyon 3/9/91. **28-92-86:** Three south of Pritchett 4/24/92.

Boreal Owl *Aegolius funereus* Dan Bridges sent in 2 reports with more information on distribution and population of this species: **28-92-76:** Four heard on Buffalo Pass, Jackson County 5/23/92, unanimous vote to accept. **28-92-70:** One heard on Ripple Creek Pass, Rio Blanco County 6/7/92, 2 votes to

accept, 6 to reject for lack of details, plus observer stated the call was different than he had heard before.

Northern Saw-whet Owl *Aegolius acadicus* Dan Bridges sent in four reports, all were unanimously accepted: **28-92-106:** Three 2 miles from Ophir Creek Road Junction on Greenhorn Road in the Wet Mountains near San Isabel 9/11/91. **28-92-107:** One 13 miles from Ophir Creek Road Junction on Greenhorn Road near Rye 9/16/91. **28-92-108:** Two 6.8 miles from Ophir Creek Road Junction on Greenhorn Road near San Isabel 9/24/91. **28-92-87:** Two heard on Pike's Peak 4/28/92.

Whip-poor-will *Caprimulgus vociferus* **29-92-6:** One heard by Hugh Kingery and Dick Pratt northwest of Maybell, Moffatt County 5/21-22/92, recorded by Hugh Kingery. Unanimous vote to accept, 9th accepted record, first in western Colorado.

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis* **29-92-25:** One at Highline Reservoir, Mesa County 7/6/92. Report by Jack Reddall. Unanimous vote to accept, 5th accepted record.

Black Swift *Cypseloides niger* Two reports were received. **30-92-63:** About 20 were seen by Joe TenBrink and Kim Potter near Julesburg 5/30/92. Committee members would like to have had more details on separation from Chimney Swifts and Purple Martins but 4 voted to accept, 3 for not enough details and 1 abstained. This is the farthest east accepted record. **30-92-28:** Two near Mancos 7/14/92, report by Alan Versaw. Unanimous vote to accept, first record for Montezuma County.

Magnificent Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens* **31-92-29:** One male at Great Sand Dunes National Monument 7/17/92, report by Alan Versaw. Unanimous vote to accept, 20th accepted record.

Blue-throated Hummingbird *Lampornis clemenciae* **31-92-54:** One southeast of Durango 7/27/91, report by John Prather. This is probably the same bird as 31-91-40 which was seen over a month later and was accepted in 1991 as the 8th accepted record.

Red-headed Woodpecker *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* **33-92-111:** One immature at Lakewood 11/7/92 to 1/93, found and photographed by Jewell and Bill Hendricks, report by Dick Schottler. Unanimous vote to accept, there are few mid-winter records.

Red-bellied Woodpecker *Melanerpes carolinus* **33-92-95:** One adult male west of Grand Junction 11-16-91 to 1/92. Found by Lee Stugen, report and photograph by Coen Dexter. Unanimous vote to accept, first accepted western Colorado record.

Eastern Wood-Pewee *Contopus virens* Two reports, both received unanimous votes to accept, 14th and 15th accepted records. **34-92-55:** One at Colorado City, Pueblo County 7/26/92, report by Dave Silverman. **34-92-46:** One at Picture Canyon, southwest of Campo 10/12/92, report by Karleen Schofield.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* **34-92-56:** Two adults 4/26/92, plus one juvenile 6/21/92 near Beulah. Reports and photographs by Anne Whitfield, report by Brandon Percival. Unanimous vote to accept, 10th accepted record, 4th breeding.

Thick-billed Kingbird *Tyrannus crassirostris* **34-92-10:** One at Waterton, Jefferson County 10/23/92. Reports by Doug Ward and Joey Kellner, drawings by Joey Kellner. Unanimous vote to accept, 1st accepted record.

Carolina Wren *Thryothorus ludovicianus* **42-92-103:** One at Beulah 12/28/91 to 1/22/92. Found at feeder by Ken Wahl, reports by Brandon Percival and Mark Janos. Unanimous vote to accept, there are more than 40 records.

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* **42-92-93:** One at Unaweep Seep near Gateway, Mesa County 1/25/92. Report by Coen Dexter. Unanimous vote to accept, 7th record from western valleys.

Gray-cheeked Thrush *Catharus minimus* **44-92-68:** One at Crow Valley Campground near Briggsdale 5/19/92, report by Norm Erthal. Committee members would have liked more details on separation from the western race of Veery, which is a difficult field problem but the majority voted to accept, 13th accepted record

White-eyed Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* Five records were received, all unanimously accepted, the 8th through 12th records and first breeding record. **51-92-88:** One male east of Riverside Reservoir 5/14/92, report by Joe Himmel. **51-92-20** A pair at Crow Valley Campground near Briggsdale 5/15/92 to 5/26/92 built and then abandoned a nest. Found by Joe Himmel and J.B.Hayes, reports by Joe Mammoser, Mark Janos and Jack Reddall. **51-92-77:** One at Tamarack Ranch State Wildlife Area near Crook 5/20/92 and 5/22/92, report by Dan Bridges. **51-92-14:** One at Pueblo 8/16/92, report by Mark Janos. **51-92-36:** One at Vail 9/18/92, report by Will Risser.

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* Two records were received, both unanimously accepted, the 16th and 17th accepted records. **51-92-80:** One at Barr Lake 4/28/92, report and drawing by Jack Reddall. **51-92-64:** One at Crow Valley Campground near Briggsdale 5/21/92, report by Dick Schottler.

Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora pinus* 52-92-78: One at Castlewood Canyon State Park 5/22/92, report by Jack Reddall. Unanimous vote to accept, 19th accepted record.

Nashville Warbler *Vermivora ruficapilla* 52-92-33: One banded at Fountain Creek Regional Park, Fountain, report by Susan Blackshaw. Unanimous vote to accept.

Chestnut-sided Warbler *Dendroica pensylvanica* 52-92-60: One northwest of Cortez 5/21/92, report by Gerald Flyer. Unanimous vote to accept, very few records from western Colorado.

Cape May Warbler *Dendroica tigrina* 52-92-30: One at Fountain Creek Regional Park 11/24/92, report and drawing by Toni Brevillier. Unanimous vote to accept, 21st accepted record.

Black-throated Blue Warbler *Dendroica caerulescens* 52-92-45: One north of Durango 10/28/92, report by Gloria Childress. Majority vote to accept, first accepted record from western Colorado.

Blackburnian Warbler *Dendroica fusca* 52-92-34: One at Lake Henry 9/26/92, report by Brandon Percival. Unanimous vote to accept, 18th accepted record.

Yellow-throated Warbler *Dendroica dominica* Two reports sent in by Mark Janos, both were unanimously accepted, 19th and 20th accepted records. 52-92-22: One in Pueblo City Park 5/9/92 to 6/22/94, found by Van Truan. 52-92-17: One in Pueblo about 3 miles from City Park 6/11/92, Mark Janos found this bird and thought it probably was a different individual than 52-92-22.

Worm-eating Warbler *Helmitheros vermivorus* 52-92-79: One at Muir Springs Park near Ft. Morgan 5/13/92, report by Jack Reddall. Unanimous vote to accept, 32nd accepted record.

Swainson's Warbler *Limnothlypis swainsonii* 52-92-16: One at Fountain Creek Regional Park 7/16/92 to 7/23/92. Found by Toni Brevillier, reports by Toni Brevillier, Mark Janos, and Brandon Percival. Unanimous vote to accept, 5th accepted record.

Kentucky Warbler *Oporornis formosus* 52-92-65: One at Crow Valley Campground near Briggsdale 5/2/92, report and drawing by Joey Kellner. Unanimous vote to accept, 18th accepted record.

Mourning Warbler *Oporornis philadelphia* 52-92-31: One at Wheat Ridge 9/11/92, report by William Schreier. Unanimous vote to accept, 7th accepted record.

Hooded Warbler *Wilsonia citrina* 52-92-32: One banded at Fountain Creek Regional Park 7/9/92, report by Susan Blackshaw. Unanimous vote to accept, 5th summer record.

Hepatic Tanager *Piranga flava* Two records were received both received unanimous votes to accept. 55-92-69: One or two males and 1 female in Tobe Canyon, Las Animas County, 6/13/92, report by Dan Bridges. This was in the same general area as the only breeding records in Colorado. 55-92-44: One male near Cortez 9/13/92 to 10/4/92, report by Gerald Flyer, Maxine Flyer, Karen Harbaugh, and Doug Muscanell. Only the second record in western Colorado.

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* 55-92-66: One at Waterton 5/9/92, report by Hugh Kingery. Unanimous vote to accept.

Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea* 55-92-19: One at Lamar 5/25/92, report by Mark Janos. Unanimous vote to accept.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus* 56-92-47: One at Aspen 5/29/92 to 6/1/92, reports by Linda Vidal and Nancy Marsh. Unanimous vote to accept.

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* 56-92-92: One female at Hale Ponds, Yuma County, 5/9/92 and 5/10/92. Originally found on the joint CFO-KOS field trip and relocated by Peter Gent, Report by Peter Gent. Unanimous vote to accept, 11th accepted record.

Rufous-crowned Sparrow *Aimophila ruficeps* 56-92-57: One southwest of Antonito, Conejos County, 7/31/92, report by Tom Parker. Majority vote to accept, this is considerably west of the known range in Colorado.

Vesper Sparrow *Pooecetes gramineus* 56-92-94: Four at Fruita 1/18/92, report by Coen Dexter to clarify winter status in Grand Junction area. Unanimous vote to accept.

Sage Sparrow *Amphispiza belli* 56-92-96: One at Chatfield State Recreation Area 3/10/92 and 3/11/92, report by Phil Hayes. Unanimous vote to accept.

White-throated Sparrow *Zonotrichia albicollis* 56-92-113: One at Vega Lake, Mesa County, 10/20/92 to 10/26/92, report and photograph by Coen Dexter to clarify status in Mesa County. Unanimous vote to accept.

Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* 54-92-48: One at Loma, Mesa County 5/15/92, report by Barbara Shaffer. Unanimous vote to accept.

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* 54-92-112: One albino in Mesa County 11/4/91, photograph by Coen Dexter. Majority vote to accept.

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* 54-92-15: One on Kansas border east of Holly, found by Duane Nelson, report by Mark Janos. Majority vote to accept, 11th accepted record.

Rusty Blackbird *Euphagus carolinus* 54-92-74: Four near Gypsum 3/26/92, report by Jack Merchant. Unanimous vote to accept, 4th accepted record for western valleys.

Streak-backed Oriole *Icterus pustulatus* 54-92-72: One at Lathrop State Park 6/8/91, report by Russell DeFusco. This record was rejected, it could have been only conditionally accepted because it would be a first state record and was seen by only one observer, 2 members voted to accept, 1 to reject, and 5 felt there is not enough information.

Black Rosy-Finch *Leucosticte atrata* 56-92-59: One with a flock of Brown-capped Rosy-Finches on a summit ridge southwest of Telluride 6/22/91, report by Charles LaRue. This record was rejected, most members felt the details were too sketchy or that more information on variation in Rosy-Finches is needed.



RUFOUS-CROWNED SPARROW

CFO-ORC FILE # _____

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD

Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: _____
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)

Date(s): _____

Number of birds seen: _____ Sex: _____ Plumage: _____

Locality: _____ Elevation: _____

Nearest town: _____ County: _____

Time(s) observed: _____

Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): _____

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): _____

Distance, and how measured: _____

If photographed, type of equipment and film: _____

Who else photographed the bird? _____

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern. Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observe in the field:

Description (continued):

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation:

b) after observation:

This report was written from reports made during _____, after observation _____ from memory _____
Date and time report was written: _____

Reporting observer: _____ Signature: _____

Address: _____

All reports will be maintained permanently at the address below:
Return to:

Bill Prather
13810 WCR 1
Longmont, CO 80504
303-776-2191

PROBLEM

**A Small Shorebird, Viewed Through A Scope, Does Not Look Like
The Same Shorebird That Is In The Field Guide**

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There is an acute sense of frustration when the shorebird being viewed does not appear like any shorebird in the field guide. Equally annoying is when the shorebird is correctly identified but the field guide does not show the same depiction. Shorebirds: an identification guide (Hayman et al) is 412 pages. For the average field guide dealing with North American birds to correctly address all the variations found in its shorebirds, the guide would no longer be a field guide. This paper tries to condense many of the known reasons that influence how a shorebird can appear. It is hoped that if a budding shorebird enthusiast understands some of the reasons, he or she will then be able to pierce through the frustration wall and be able to start to really enjoy the fun of shorebirding.

Juvenile Vs. Adult Plumages In Fall

When a juvenile peep (a small sandpiper in the genus *Calidris*) is about to migrate south from the northern breeding grounds it is uniformly clothed in crisp brand new feathers (this is the only time in its life when this occurs). These feathers can last for as little as two weeks to as long as three months. This uniform appearance of the juvenile contrasts with the adult, which at this time appears in a mix of old raggedy feathers with some new basic feathers. The juvenile feathers are also smaller, leading to a further appearance of neatness (Veit and Jonsson 1984). As the fall season progresses, the adult will appear more in its new basic feathers and less in its old alternate feathers. From the first wingbeat south, the juvenile plumage is affected by wear. Later in its fall journey, not only wear but also molting to its first basic plumage will affect how the bird is now starting to appear. Usually by November most individuals are in their first basic plumage.

Hormones And Feather Coloring.

Since the color and growth of the feathers is also influenced by hormones (Veit and Jonsson 1984), it is understandable then that shorebirds do not all get the some dosages at the same time; consequently, not all shorebirds are colored the way the field guides have them painted. Stress can also affect how this hormonal charge is administered; a stray shorebird that has flown thousands of miles in the wrong direction can be confused as to why the shortgrass prairie it has found itself in is not like the ancestral wintering mangrove marshes it is supposed to be in; consequently, its hormones are upset and, thus, its molt could be out of sequence.

Where Shorebirds Winter And Plumage Color.

Where they winter can also affect how two birds of the same age and species can appear. For example, Least Sandpipers (*Calidris minutilla*) that winter in South America postpone their molt until after they arrive. Least Sandpipers that winter in San Francisco Bay could start their molt to basic in July. Therefore, on the same mud flat in August there could be two Least Sandpipers of the same age looking quite different (Veit and Jonsson 1984).

Individuality.

Some species seem more prone to individuality in appearance than others; for example, the Semipalmated Sandpiper can look like many of its congeners during different ages and molt sequences (Alstrom and Olsson 1989).

Posture.

A shorebird's appearance can be affected by its posture. For instance, on a relaxed shorebird the scapulars could be fluffed out, causing the wing coverts to be concealed. A tense shorebird could flatten the scapulars, thereby exposing most of its wing coverts -- in some cases diagnostic wing coverts (Chandler 1989).

Wear And Bleaching.

Wear and bleaching starts as soon as new feathers are grown. In breeding plumage new feathers are usually tipped gray and are bright-edged with dark centers. As wear and bleaching take effect, the grays can be worn away and the plumage could become brighter in some instances because the bright edging is not more apparent. As the bright edging is worn away through the breeding season, the dark center could now become more apparent, making the bird appear darker. The same holds true for juveniles; many juveniles gradually lose the brightly colored species-specific fringes of their weaker structured feathers during the course of their first fall. Thus, late migrants tend to more closely resemble one another. Shorebirds of the same species that winter farther south, where the sun is brighter and more intense for longer a period of time, can appear much lighter than birds that have wintered farther north (Hayman et al, 1986). During spring migration in North American, there could be two shorebirds of the same species, one looking paler than the other.

Spring Migration North.

The same set of factors that influence how a shorebird appears in the fall also determine how a shorebird can appear in spring on its way north. Added to this mix is age. Some shorebirds do not breed until their third calendar year or when they are two years of age (this is particularly true of larger shorebirds). These shorebirds would appear in a mix of old basic feathering with some new alternate feathers. Also, not all shorebirds molt to their alternate plumage at the same time. Some, like dowitchers, reach their height of breeding plumage around the middle of June.

Other Influences That Affect How A Shorebird Appears.

1) Size and shape: When viewing through a powerful telescope, shorebirds behind the shorebird being viewed tend to appear larger than they actually are (Chandler 1989).

2) Determining foot projection while a shorebird is in flight: Cold weather can cause shorebirds to tuck their legs into their body feathers, so a shorebird that is supposed to show a foot projection in flight sometimes will not.

3) Behavior: Some behavior may be indicative of a species, but caution should be used. For example, feeding behavior can be dependent on many variables such as food availability, spacing and presence or absence of other feeding shorebirds, just to name a few (Chander 1989).

4) Flight behavior: This can be influenced by wind, molt, mood, etc.

In Summation.

In all plumages shorebirds can appear different from one another of the same species at any given time. Also, shorebirds of the same species can appear different from one moment in their molt to another.

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BARN OWLS IN WESTERN COLORADO

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Barn Owls are much more common in west-central Colorado in all seasons than has been believed. Baily and Niedrach reported that "the only records for the Western Slope are from Mancos and Ft. Lewis" (1965). Davis

cited these records but mentioned no other records for western Colorado (1969). The Colorado Bird Distribution Latilong Study lists the Barn Owl as a resident in Latilong 8 (Grand Junction), as an accidental migrant in Latilongs 15 (Delta) and 16 (Montrose), and as absent in Latilong 9 (Glenwood Springs) (1988). Andrews and Righter describe the Barn Owl as a "rare and probably locally uncommon, spring and fall migrant and summer resident in western valleys." They add that in winter Barn Owls are "casual in western valleys (nine records)" (1992).

Prior to 1987, the known population of Western Colorado Barn Owls consisted of one pair which resided in a barn just east of Fruita. These birds were closely monitored by members of Grand Valley Audubon Society and appeared on five Christmas Count lists between 1984 and 1990. These records account for the resident status in Latilong 8. This pair produced young each year until 1990 when youngsters either drove them out of the barn or killed them.

In March of 1987 Mel Crider of Loma, Colorado, told me that he had flushed two "white owls" from Reed Wash, an arroyo north of Loma. On March 7th Tom Moran and I followed Crider's directions to the spot and found a pair of Barn Owls in a cavity in the arroyo's vertical bank. The cavity was about four feet below the top of a 15 foot high clay bank. This pair produced four young, which were banded by the USFWS in June. (No bands have been returned.) We assumed that the cavity had been formed by erosion and that the owls had opportunistically taken advantage of it. The soft clay ceiling of the hole collapsed later that year, and the owls were not found again near that location.

In the spring of 1990, Lee Stigen reported to me that a Grand Junction High School student had told him of finding Barn Owls in Persigo Wash, an arroyo north of Grand Junction. The young man agreed to show us the site. We found several holes similar to the one in Reed Wash, lots of whitewash, many pellets, and a few feathers, but no owls. The similarity in shape and position of the holes to the one in Reed Wash suggested that perhaps the owls were excavating them. Shortly after this, I read a report which described Barn Owls excavating holes in arroyo banks near Greeley (Milsap & Milsap, 1987), and shared that article with several local observers.

Since these discoveries, observers have found perhaps 25 or 30 occupied Barn Owl holes in Grand Valley arroyo and river banks. Another dozen or so occupied holes have been found in the Uncompahgre Valley near Delta and

Olathe. These owls do not appear to migrate and can be found during every month.

In the winter of 1994, Kim Potter investigated some likely looking holes at Rifle and found Barn Owl feathers and pellets, but no owls. She found no owls on subsequent checks during the spring and summer, and it appears that a small colony of owls either had been killed or had been driven out by extensive construction activity nearby.

Although no formal census techniques have been applied, it is apparent that Western Colorado hosts a significant resident population of Barn Owls. I found three pairs in the Breeding Bird Atlas priority block in the Fruita quadrangle. Coen Dexter found a recently occupied hole in the Badger Wash block, and I found another in the Corcoran Point block. At least two pairs live in the Point Creek block near Delta, another one or two in the Orchard City block, and one or two in the Delta block. All of the owls and all of the likely looking holes found thus far have been in arroyo and river banks in agricultural areas. If the populations are evenly distributed through the valleys, and they appear to be, there may be as many as 75 pairs of resident Barn Owls in the Grand Valley and another 30 or 40 in the Uncompahgre Valley. The apparently extirpated Rifle colony appears to have had perhaps five or six pairs.

The duration of Barn Owl residence in West Central Colorado is an interesting question. Some of the holes are in river banks which have probably been extant for hundreds if not thousands of years. Most of the holes, however, have been found in arroyo banks of very recent formation. Prior to white settlement in the 1880's and 90's, these watercourses apparently were meandering and shallow. Severe overgrazing at the onset of settlement denuded the riparian areas and precipitated the severe downcutting that characterizes nearly all the watercourses traversing the Colorado, Gunnison, and Uncompahgre River valleys today. No holes have been found more than one mile from irrigated fields although apparently appropriate vertical clay banks are common in desert habitat adjacent to the irrigated farmlands. It seems likely that the present Barn Owls populations are dependent upon agriculture and are a late addition to Western Colorado avifauna.

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A DAY FOR FORAGING

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It was one of those days, arriving amid high pressure, centerpiece of a Colorado autumn. No wind. "Blue" doesn't describe the sky. A benign sun.

I visit Grandview Cemetery in Ft. Collins roughly fifty times a year and have done so for over a decade. A certain predictability marks each visit. The trees don't move. The roads intersect at the same spots. The ditch flows north to south. But the birds, and most notably their behaviors, vary by visit. That is what draws me back week after week. To some extent I imagine that's what keeps us all pushing our wallets, schedules and even relationships to the limit, going back to the field for birds and their wondrous surprises.

On this day, as always, I kept my wrinkled 3X5 card tally of "what" and "how many". Only twice have I seen more species above, beside and below the headstones. But the story of the morning was foraging. Substituting birds for people, I felt like a spy peering through a window, seeing what a functional American family puts by choice on its Thanksgiving table. Food was abundant and through my Nikons, the birds grocery shopped. They strolled down the branch of a Safeway tree, across the surface of Albertson's alley, and into a City Market shrub. What, by choice, did they put in their carts? This was no desperation day of yellow-rumps frantically chipping pulp from Russian olive fruits amid a wet Crow Valley snow, of waxwings gorging on crabapples at 20 degrees below, or Barn Swallows risking their lives for midges at Colfax and Speer. This was center-of-the-watermelon time.

Freshly matured Douglas-fir cones drew a trio of mites to a lone tree near the entry gate. The Red-breasted Nuthatches deftly plucked seeds from the rat-tailed bracts and scales. In the flick of a wing, treasures were put on lay-away in the secret bark darkness of a nearby elm. Normally noisy imps went about their stashing in relative silence, as if to avoid detection by their white-breasted cousins and nearby chickadees. Common Grackles, dressed in sharkskin suits, defied characterization. Some rattled dry leaf clumps for a possible prize. Others walked the ditch bank, turning leaves in a game of brunch time solitaire. Still others sneaked inside a giant spruce and did whatever it is they do in there.

American elms are usually a source of customers, regardless of season. In fall, the "special" is honeydew. This sticky carbohydrate waste of aphids and scales is prized for energy. Foremost among the seekers of sweet are yellowjackets. Today, lopsided dogfights between David wasps and Goliath birds broke out constantly. Outside the inspired Word, Goliath usually wins. A Western Wood-Pewee, common member of the Waspcatcher Family, earned Ace status before my eyes. Wilson's Warblers do not have an itch somewhere - they just do what they must to nab flushed flying food.

Nuthatches, the white-chested kind, spiraled elms high and low. Probing, pecking, working with purpose. Among the gleaning guild, perhaps only creepers are more systematic. A male Downy Woodpecker tapped his beak-cane on an elm-skin sidewalk. His eyes only picked where to peck. Limb lottery is played by sound and touch and luck. Play often enough, buy tickets from the right store, and you could be rich for a while. As they say, certain games won't change your life, but they could make your day.

I usually figure gray, drizzly days are worthy of annual leave. Bright postcard mornings can be birdless. Perhaps exceptions like 9/25/94 define the rule, as everywhere feathers flew for the sheer joy of feeding.

Sparrows and other ground-loving birds are right before us, at or below eye-level, and yet determining what they consume is problematic. Sure, it's a seedhead of something - but what? Two grasses and a "weed" grow hopelessly entwined at the spot one sees bird heads stabbing and hears the cracking of beaks. Was it this little triangular speck of a seed they ate or that round speck of a seed? Or was it....?

Food fights broke out in an avian production of Animal House. White-crowned sparrows were distracted from hassling each other only by the temptation to hassle young chipping sparrows. Migrating juncos, mostly pink-sided Oregon forms, flashed white-on-gray-on-salmon throughout the squabbles of their cousins. All in all, it gave the impression of "birds everywhere". Probably only 40-50 individuals were involved, but their movements and chatter disproved "seeing's believing".

Lay a juniper berry and a writhing earthworm before a robin and it would probably gulp the latter. I'd take a morsel of lobster over a bite of hamburger, too. But over 365 days, "gin berries" are far more available and no doubt serve as a sort of peanut butter and jelly for resident "red-breasts". The tall Rocky Mountain Junipers in the cemetery's mid-north rustled with our most familiar thrush. Countless berries disappeared, depleting the future prospects for next month's arriving winter solitaires.

Consider all the feasts detailed so far. Throw in siskins plucking spruce seeds, Barn Swallows skillfully executing invisible tidbits 80 feet up, kingfishers belly-laughing over their latest limit, and gulls confident in the wastefulness of humans. It's all interesting, all worthy of observation. But to me the quiet events of a heavily-galled hackberry on the day or days it swarms with psyllids are best. Herein lies diversity and industriousness and opportunity.

Individual grains of sand make a beach. Five-thousand nipple-gall makers make a meal. That is, if you're a warbler or kinglet, chickadee or other dickybird. Some birds expend energy for that one trophy they can gorge on and leave to pecking orders 2 and 3. One rabbit beside the road lights up a magpie's spirit. And unless you like the stench of carrion, we should all applaud the chosen style of scavengers. But I can't help but marvel at and cheer the gleaners of the small. It would seem they have the advantage of being able to get by on the myriad arthropods hiding in niches everywhere they look. But it would also seem the world has a small bias. Small things

easily succumb to small changes. A degree up or down here, a toxin there. A plant disappears. A food web unravels. To an ant, a Reebok could ruin your whole day. So, every time I see a Wilson's Warbler or Ruby-crowned Kinglet nit-pick a meal of psyllids on their way to or from the tropics, I rejoice in the intricacy of it all and wonder how long it will continue.

Joining these two at Grandview this morning were two Townsend's and several Yellow-rumped Warblers, House Finch females, two Downy Woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadees and a Red-breasted Nuthatch. Even a young starling, big of bill and gullibility, imitated the wee birds for a while. Finally, with a disgruntled-looking bill wipe, it flew off to be a real starling and find its own center of the watermelon.

And so did I. I chose a Mountain Dew and a Sausage McMuffin With Egg. And they say we are the most intelligent life form.



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TURKEY VULTURE

This classic pose is typical of many vultures resting in the sun.

By Jim Karo

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