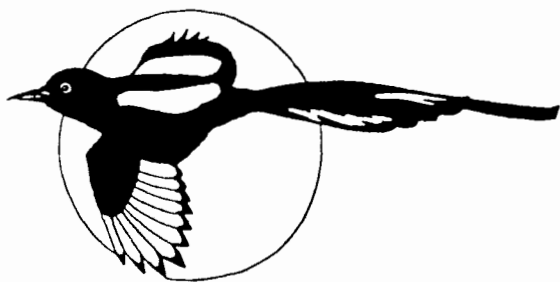

C.F.O. Journal

The Colorado Field Ornithologists' Quarterly





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TABLE OF CONTENTS

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS	
Coen Dexter-----	102
C.F.O. BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP MEETING, 5/27/95	
David Pantle-----	103
BENDIRE'S THRASHER FIELD TRIP REPORT	
John J. and Lisa Rowinski and Jerry Poe-----	105
CORRECTION-----	105
IN MEMORIUM-----	106
PROPOSAL FOR A CO STATE CHECKLIST PROJECT	
Greg Butcher and Toni Brevillier-----	109
MONTEZUMA COUNTY BIRDLIST	
Alan Versaw-----	113
C.F.O. MEMBERSHIP LIST (colored insert)	
Raymond Davis-----	122
HUMMIN'BIRD RAP	
Steve Bouricius-----	134
BREEDING CHIPPING SPARROWS AT 12,200 FEET?	
Alan Versaw-----	135
AN ATTEMPTED NESTING OF EASTERN BLUEBIRDS IN BOULDER	
Virginia Dionigi and Joe Harrison-----	138
SAPSUCKERS IN BACA COUNTY, CO	
Janeal Thompson-----	141
EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER BY KLAUS MALLING OLSEN	
David Leatherman-----	143
FURTHER INFO. ON THE <i>OBSCURUS</i> RACE OF COWBIRD IN CO	
Jameson Chace-----	146
NEWS FROM THE FIELD: THE WINTER REPORT	
Brandon Percival-----	149
INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTRIBUTORS-----	157

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Adult Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in the yard of Pat Buckhaults, Walsh, CO on 21 March 1995. First documented Baca County record. Janeal Thompson-----	cover
Trumpeter Swan on the Uncompahgre River at Ridgway, CO, Spring 1995 Andrea Robinson-----	108
Male Hooded Warbler southeast of Riverside Reservoir, Weld County, CO, May '95 Joe Roller-----	112
Male Varied Thrush in Colorado Springs, 22 November 1994 Alan Versaw-----	121
Marbled Godwit Jim Karo-----	137
Male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Walsh, CO., 21 March 1995 Janeal Thompson-----	142
Immature Long-tailed Jaeger at Union Reservoir, 20 October 1993 David Leatherman-----	145

UPCOMING C.F.O. FIELD TRIPS

LOWER ARKANSAS RESERVOIRS SHOREBIRD TRIP 9 SEPTEMBER

Meet on 9 September at 8 a.m. at the K-Mart parking lot (red caboose in the southwest corner) on US 50 (Exit 101) just west of I-25 in Pueblo. We will bird all the major reservoirs (Meredith, Henry, Blue and Cheraw) for shorebirds, waders, etc., plus local migrant landbird traps. A hat and sunscreen are recommended.

Trip Leader: Mark Janos (719) 544-5002

//

NORTHEASTERN COLORADO TRIP 24 SEPTEMBER

Meet on 24 September at 7 a.m. at the Tamarack Ranch State Wildlife Area Check Station about 1 mile north of Exit 156 (Crook/Fleming) off I-76. We will bird Tamarack Ranch, Red Lion State Wildlife Area, Jumbo Reservoir and possibly the Platte River at Julesburg. Both exciting passerine and water birds are possible.

Trip Leaders: Bill Prather (303) 776-2191
Bill Fink (303) 776-7395



**C. F. O. BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS
MAY 27, 1995**

David Pantle, Secretary
1826 Flora Court
Canon City, CO 81212

The C.F.O. Board met at 1:00 p.m. during the 33rd Annual Convention in Grand Junction. Present were Steve Bouricius, Coen Dexter, Ray Davis, David Pantle, John Barber, Bob Dickson, Bill Fink, David Leatherman, Susan Paynter, Brandon Percival, Kim Potter, Bill Prather and Alan Versaw.

1. *C.F.O. Journal*. Dave Leatherman was commended on the color cover of Dr. Ryder. It was left up to Dave to decide when to have another color cover. Color costs more, but the *Journal* is under budget for the year because Dave is doing the typing himself. It was suggested that we need more contact with graduate and undergraduate students to solicit articles from them. Dave Leatherman will discuss this with Ron Ryder. Kim Potter has written a number of letters soliciting articles to persons known to be doing bird research in the state. *C.F.O. Journal* also desires to publish information about first state records, but documentation is not always forthcoming.

2. Minutes and Bylaws. Board meeting minutes of Feb. 25, 1995 and new Bylaws of the Colorado Bird Records Committee were approved as published (April 1995 *C.F.O. Journal*). Bob Dickson noted that also amended were two provisions of the Bylaws of C.F.O. adopted May 20, 1978 and updated Nov. 11, 1993. The last sentence of VII Committees, 3. Rules, was amended to read, "Because of the special nature of responsibilities of the Colorado Bird Records Committee, the Bylaws of this Committee are separate." Deleted from VII-4 of the basic Bylaws are the former "Rules of the CFO Records Committee."

3. Checklist. A new "Field Checklist of Colorado Birds" prepared March 1995, with 452 species, has been printed by Bob Spencer. It is available at the convention and later from the Secretary or A.B.A. (see copy this issue).

4. Annual Convention 1996. We hope to meet in June 1996 at the YMCA of the Rockies as a combined meeting with Western Field Ornithologists. Steve has not yet received confirmation from W.F.O. Our first choice would be the third week in June, or any other week in June. The YMCA has asked for a \$500 deposit to reserve space. Steve was authorized, without checking further with the Board, to reserve a date and pay a deposit for up to 25 rooms if he has not heard further from W.F.O. or to make a deposit for more rooms (perhaps as many as 60-80 more) if he receives confirmation from W.F.O. He will ask YMCA where we could have secure space for an art show. Alan Versaw

suggested that we have a separate mailing to members about registration for the convention, rather than simply printing it in *C.F.O. Journal*. Bill Prather suggested Steve appoint a committee to help him plan the convention.

5. Next Board Meeting. The next meeting will be in Pueblo on September 9 after the Lower Arkansas field trip. Bob Dickson will check on a location.

6. Landbird Monitoring Workshop. Mike Carter, head of Colorado Bird Observatory and former C.F.O. president, has offered to conduct a fundraising workshop for C.F.O. Kim Potter attended a similar C.B.O. workshop, which was very well done. All agreed that we should accept Mike's offer and charge participants a fee of \$10 per person. Steve will contact Mike and attempt to schedule this for late August or early September. Steve will work with Mike on whether college credit is possible for teacher attendees.

7. Election of Officers and Directors. The present officers were nominated to serve another one-year term. Coen Dexter indicated that he may stop teaching and may move to Alaska, but this is presently uncertain. All preferred that Coen be reelected, and if there is a later vacancy it can be filled by appointment. Directors whose terms expire at this annual convention are Bob Dickson, Beth Dillon, and Linda Vidal, each of whom has made major contributions to the work of C.F.O. Names of possible new directors were discussed, particularly to have more representation from the Denver area. Suzi Plooster, an active member of Denver Field Ornithologists and president of Boulder Bird Club, was nominated as a director (and later consented to serve). Steve will propose additional names to the Board at its next meeting.

8. Convention. Mark Janos, who was unable to attend, has praised Coen's plans for field trips (and the writing and editing of *C.F.O. Journal* by Dave Leatherman). Our final registration was 73 persons, one more than for last year's meeting at Trinidad. The banquet speaker is Dr. Steven D. Emslie of Western State College, on bird fossils, especially of the California Condor. Papers are being presented by Dr. Ron Ryder on cormorants, Dick Guadagno on endangered southwestern canyon riparian habitat, and Rich Levad/Dan Bridges on owl populations. The first "Ronald A. Ryder Award" will be presented to Dr. Ryder at the banquet this evening.

9. Business Meeting. At the banquet, attended by over 60, members present elected officers and directors by unanimous vote. Elected as officers for next year, to hold office until the next convention, were Steve Bouricius, president, Coen Dexter, vice-president, David Pantle, secretary, and Raymond Davis, treasurer. Elected as director for term expiring in 1998 was Suzi Plooster.



**BENDIRE'S THRASHER FIELD TRIP RESULTS....
THE CONTROVERSY CONTINUES!**

John J. and Lisa Rawinski and Jerry Poe, Trip Leaders 1/

Our C.F.O. field trip on 3 June 1995 to see Bendire's Thrashers was attended by Dave Johnson, Tim Davis and the trip leaders. Guess it's kinda tough to have trips right after the Annual Convention, but we tackled our assignment with the enthusiasm of ten! It was a cool but sunny clear morning.

Unlike on our scouting trip just two days earlier, the mystery thrasher was not nearly as obvious on the actual field trip day. Prolonged searches kicked out a few Sage Thrashers, a MacGillivray's Warbler and a Dusky Flycatcher but no Bendire's Thrasher. Then, after about an hour and a half search, the mystery thrasher sang for a 20-second period from a distant hill, as if to mock our diligent search efforts. It stayed hidden in the pinyon and offered no looks.

We drove to one of Brandon Percival's recommended spots and instantly got a response to the tape. There was THE bird, and it appeared to be on territory and somewhat perturbed with the taping. We did not want to intrude unreasonably but also wanted to get good documentations. So, we worked the bird for about an hour. The mystery bird soon took on the name of "80 Percent Bird", because it exhibited about 80 percent of the diagnostic field characteristics of Bendire's Thrasher. Here is what fit and what did not.

The bird's size appeared just smaller than a robin and fit Bendire's. It sang from pinyon and currant bush tops and the song was melodious and warbling, definitely more like Bendire's than Sage on the National Geographic tape. The bird sang in flight, but that was not diagnostic. The Sage Thrasher songs heard on site were definitely more buzzy and broken, whereas the Bendire's was melodic and continuous. We often had three scopes on the Bendire's, which got as close as 30 yards. It moved periodically and afforded good looks in the morning sunshine.

The bird lacked wing bars. The back and wings were brownish-gray. The tail was the same color, with white to dusky corners. These fit Bendire's more than Sage. The eye was light yellow, but this was not diagnostic. The bird flew from perch to perch in an undulating flight pattern and would almost always perch on the highest point on a pinyon or shrub. The bird lacked an eyebrow, which Sage Thrashers usually have. The bill was fairly straight, with a slight curve in the upper mandible (especially visible when the bird sang), and had a relatively straight lower mandible. The *Audubon Master Guide to Birding* says, "...the lower mandible is straight with a pale base,

which is diagnostic but difficult to see." In some lighting positions, some of the group thought they could see this. In other light, it was not visible. So, just when we thought we had seen the diagnostic feature, we noticed the *Master Guide* depicts Sage Thrasher (p. 65) with a pale lower mandible base!

Advanced Birding by Kenn Kaufmann states, "...there can be some confusion between Sage and Bendire's Thrashers at some seasons, especially when Sage is in worn plumage." Our group decided that even in breeding plumage, the identification is difficult.

Our group noticed the apparent head roundness on the Bendire's Thrasher, compared to the flatter head of the Sage Thrashers. This characteristic is not mentioned in any field guides, but might be another useful feature to note in separating the two species.

The streaking on the breast and flanks was fairly distinct, although most of us could not clearly see "arrow-shaped" markings. When referring to field guides (Kaufmann, Peterson (Western) and Audubon Master Guide), they seemed almost too distinct for Bendire's and were more like Sage. Another disturbing thought is that Kaufmann states Sage Thrasher breast streaks "...extend to the belly and lengthen into streaks on the sides and flanks, a pattern that Bendire's never duplicates." While I personally never say never, the bird we viewed had streaks down the sides and flanks. Again, this is similar to Sage Thrasher.

So where does this leave us? The bird's overall size, bill size and shape, song, back and head color, lack of wingbars, lack of eye stripe and tail corners seem to best fit Bendire's Thrasher. Habitat for both Sage and Bendire's Thrashers can be pinyon-juniper (*Audubon Master Guide* and Andrews and Righter). The distinct breast streaks extending down the flanks are more diagnostic of Sage Thrasher.

It appears additional field trips and reviews on these species would be beneficial, since important contradictions need to be resolved.

For those wishing to observe these birds, travel north from Del Norte on Highway 112 about 0.5 miles. Just after crossing the Rio Grande River, go left on County Road 15, which heads north. After passing over an irrigation canal, CR 15 turns west. Follow this road about 3 miles until reaching Forest Service (FS) Road 660, which goes north up Old Woman Creek. Drive this road for 6 miles or so to where Road 660 turns east toward the Natural Arch. This may not be signed very well. From this juncture, drive 1.9 miles east and start listening from here to about 2.1 miles. This is where we have most recently seen these birds. Look in both the pinyon habitats, as well as brushy draws.

Birds were at the 1.9 mile mark 150 yards south of the road, and at the 2.1 mile mark about 50 yards north of the road.

After spending much of the morning with the Thrasher, we birded other San Luis Valley areas and compiled a list of 98 species. The most exciting bird was the second San Luis Valley record and first spring record of Hooded Warbler. Jerry Poe's keen eye found this male in trees near Monte Vista Refuge, to the delight of all. A Green Heron was also unusual at San Luis Lake!

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1/ John and Lisa Rawinski and Jerry Poe work for the San Juan and Rio Grande National Forests, Del Norte and Monte Vista, Colorado.



CORRECTION

The Editor regrets the incorrect title assigned to Janeal Thompson's very interesting article about barn swallows taking over a nest of house finches. The erroneous title appeared both in the index and with the article. Yikes! Obviously, the correct title should read: **INCIDENT OF BARN SWALLOWS USURPING AN ACTIVE HOUSE FINCH NEST**. This article will be correctly cited by the *Wildlife Review*, an abstracting journal which reviews the world wildlife literature, including the *C.F.O. Journal*.



IN MEMORIUM

All of us in the C.F.O. are saddened to learn of C.F.O. member Evan Hannay's passing this past spring. He died suddenly and unexpectedly while on a birding cruise to the Tuamotu and Marquesa Islands in the South Pacific. Evan valued his friends in C.F.O. Contributions in the memory of Evan Hannay can be made to the Nature Conservancy, 1815 North Lynn Street, Arlington, Virginia 22209. His wife Ives can be reached at 3841 South Juniper Circle, Evergreen, CO 80439.



Trumpeter Swan at Ridgway State Park, Ridgway, CO. This bird was first seen on 18 March 1995 and stayed until at least the middle of May.

Photo by Andrea Robinson of Montrose, CO.

PROPOSAL FOR A COLORADO STATE CHECKLIST PROJECT

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Birders in Quebec and Wisconsin have participated in a province-wide and a state-wide checklist program for a number of years. Both programs consist of birders filling out and submitting checklists to report birds encountered in a defined area in a defined time period. Both programs have computerized the data and produced a book to summarize the results, reporting population changes of birds and relative abundances of birds in different parts of the state or province. The Wisconsin program is organized by counties and by weeks; the Quebec program is organized around more specific locations (towns, parks, etc.), and birders fill out a checklist for each day of birding. The Wisconsin program focuses on checkmarks (presence or absence of birds), while the Quebec program includes reports of numbers of individuals.

A Migration Monitoring Council was formed in 1994 with a number of representatives from the United States and Canada. The council has two Technical Committees -- intensive and extensive. As co-chair of the Extensive Technical Committee and biologist for the Canadian Wildlife Service, Erica Dunn analyzed the results of the Quebec and Wisconsin programs to see if they would provide valid information on population changes of birds. Her analyses suggest that both programs are valuable! As a result of this analysis, the Migration Monitoring Council is expected to promote the creation of new checklist programs in states and provinces in North America.

We propose that Colorado begin a statewide checklist project. The project could be organized in a variety of ways, which should be determined by the C.F.O. board or a subcommittee of the board; however, we will make a number of recommendations. First and foremost, we urge that the Colorado checklist project follow recommendations of the Extensive Technical Committee of the Migration Monitoring Council so that the data collected in Colorado will be consistent with data collected in other states or provinces.

How to Organize Local Coverage

We suggest birders fill out one checklist per day for a local area.

The project should focus on checklists filled out for local areas, such as parks (state, county, or city), a lake or reservoir, a college campus or natural area, a portion of a national park or forest or BLM district, or any area (a favorite hiking, skiing, horseback or canoe route) that can be covered (preferably on foot or by nonmotorized transportation) in one-to-four hours. The preferred method of coverage is the "area-search method", which is similar to how a birder covers a portion of a Christmas Bird Count (CBC) circle on foot, or how a birder covers a portion of an atlas block on foot. An auto route might be included if it were around a lake or reservoir or other circular route that included a series of stops where the birder got out of the car. No individual local area should be larger than a CBC circle or longer than a Breeding Bird Survey route, most would be much smaller.

The project should include data from a number of areas that are visited repeatedly and covered in a similar fashion (weekly or monthly). Coverage should be consistent throughout the year, perhaps with more frequent coverage during migration. A team of people could cooperate to provide coverage of a particular area.

We hope that areas with local site managers would be included with the cooperation of the local staff and that the local results would be analyzed to improve management of the local site for birds. We should probably provide recognition of any site that is regularly covered as a Colorado Bird Population Monitoring Site, or some similar designation. Such sites might be willing to contribute to the project financially.

County versus Latilong

Local checklists should be collected into a regional scheme, so that trends can be reported for regions of Colorado, not just for local areas. We need to choose between a county scheme and a latilong scheme. Counties could be merged into nine regions, just like the map in Righter and Andrews' book on Colorado birds. However, we prefer the latilong scheme. We have a long history of birding by latilong in Colorado. If we used the latilong scheme, it would be easy to report the results of the checklist program by using one letter per latilong to create a Colorado map, as was done in the *Colorado Bird Distribution Latilong Study*, edited by Hugh Kingery in 1988. Using this scheme, monthly or seasonal reports of relative frequency of birds within latilongs could be published in the *C.F.O. Journal*.

Most checklists would cover one local area for a single day. However, not all birding would fit into such a scheme. If Colorado birders are interested in tracking the abundance of birds by county or latilong, in addition to local

areas, then they could fill out a supplemental checklist for each month for each latilong. These would report birds they saw outside the local areas for which they filled out a local area checklist. We would probably need to distinguish between local checklists and county or latilong checklists.

How to Organize the Data

We need to create a standardized checklist for birders to use. We may be able to use a single checklist for the entire project, or we may want to create different checklists for different regions of the state or for different seasons. The checklists should include only expected species; participants should be asked to fill out rare bird forms for unexpected species.

The checklists should be designed for easy data entry onto the computer. We need to devise a single database management system with an easy-to-use data entry program and a number of easy-to-use data analysis programs. We expect these programs will be developed outside of Colorado because of interest by the Migration Monitoring Council; we could use those programs or modify them for our purposes. Birders with their own computers could enter their own data. Each latilong would have a data coordinator who would supervise data entry onto the computer; some coordinators could cover more than one latilong because very little data would be generated for some latilongs. Once the data were on the computer, they could be used for a variety of reports, including reports to the *C.F.O. Journal*, to *American Birds* (=Audubon Field Notes), to local birds clubs, and to the localities that are consistently covered. Over the long term, population trends of Colorado birds could be determined and compared to trends suggested by the Breeding Bird Survey and the Christmas Bird Count.

Steps to Launch the Program

- (1) Decide to do it
- (2) Decide whether to organize it by county or latilong
- (3) Decide whether or not to concentrate on local areas
- (4) Decide on what kinds of data should be collected
- (5) Decide whether to use presence/absence or numbers of individuals
- (6) Design the checklist
- (7) Design the data entry program
- (8) Design the database management system
- (9) Design the data analysis system
- (10) Decide how to report the results and set up the reporting system
- (11) Find some income sources to support the project
- (12) Determine a budget for the project (hopefully, the project will be largely done by volunteers, requiring only a small budget).
- (13) Appoint county or latilong coordinators
- (14) Sign up local sites for consistent coverage
- (15) Announce a starting date

- (16) Start collecting data
- (17) Begin reporting results either monthly or seasonally
- (18) Evaluate progress annually
- (19) Coordinate with other state or provincial programs

Why Do It?

A Colorado Checklist Program has a number of benefits. The program could be C.F.O.'s major contribution to Colorado Partners in Flight. The results would be valuable to Colorado Partners in Flight by identifying local areas that are important for birds and for determining population trends for Colorado birds. A major benefit is having Colorado birders work with Colorado site managers to study birds on local sites. The checklist project establishes the relationship; in addition, site managers may call on bird experts for advice on how best to manage the sites for birds. The checklist project will enable Colorado birders to publish checklists for a number of local sites and will provide information on seasonal changes in relative abundance that can be included in the published checklists.



Adult Male Hooded Warbler first found by Joe Himmel in mid-May 1995
along Weld County Road 89 southeast of Riverside Reservoir.

Photo by Joe Roller of Golden, CO.

MONTEZUMA COUNTY, COLORADO, BIRDLIST

Alan Versaw
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During the five years (1987-1992) I lived in Montezuma County, I found it to be a place of wonderfully varied habitats with little known about its bird life. Montezuma County is located in the extreme southwest corner of the state and includes some 2000 square miles of habitat, ranging from the high Sonoran zone to the alpine tundra. The Dolores River is the largest waterway in the county and several reservoirs reliably store water. Unusual water bird records are drawn primarily from McPhee Reservoir next to Dolores and Totten Reservoir near Cortez. Virtually all records have been drawn from the last twenty years. Three notable exceptions to this rule are the Lucy's Warbler (more recent anecdotal records exist, but nothing written, photographic, or otherwise permanent), Painted Bunting and Varied Thrush.

I have not included a handful of birds for which only anecdotal records exist. However, the years of experience and careful eyes of Kip Stransky (Durango), Marilyn Colyer (Mancos and Mesa Verde National Park) and Gerald and Maxine Fyler (Dolores-sort of) proved to be invaluable resources in compiling this list. Without them, this list would be shorter by several species. A special note about Gerald and Maxine Fyler: well over half of the birds on this list have been recorded on their property, many only on their property. More than once they invited me out to their place to see a "special" bird.

Personally, I observed 225 species during the time I lived in the county. I believe it is safe to say that the exhaustive county list, were such a list ever to exist, would run well over 250 species. The upper extreme, in my opinion, could approach 300 species.

One special feature I have tried to include in this list is a separate "secondary" status on a line below the "primary" status, where appropriate. I hope readers find this useful. As unofficial "keeper of the list", I invite and welcome critiques and additions to this list. It should be said, however, that any additions at this point should come with documentation. And, would somebody please turn up a Swainson's Thrush in this county--even if only during migration. No other species looms as a bigger "miss" on this list.

6 March, 1995

Key to Codes

First Column: Abundance

A-Abundant
C-Common
F-Fairly common
U-Uncommon
I-Irregular
R-Rare

Second Column: Seasonal Status

Y-Permanent resident
S-Primarily a summer resident
M-Primarily a migrant
(a few may stay to breed in some cases)
W-primarily a winter resident

Third Column: Habitat Types (listed in order of frequency)

C-Cliffs, canyons, and rocky areas below timberline
D-Developed and agricultural areas
F-Sub-alpine spruce/fir
H-High altitude riparian areas, especially willows
M-Montane zone, ponderosa pine
P-Pinon, juniper, sage, and/or desert areas (5000-7000 feet)
R-Riparian zones, not including sub-alpine riparian habitats
S-Scrub oak, serviceberry, and similar communities
T-Alpine tundra and rocky areas
W-Reservoirs, rivers, marshy areas, other permanent water, mudflats
X-Widely varied habitats, usually excluding alpine zone

Loons & Grebes

Pacific Loon	R	M	W
Common Loon	U	M	W
Pied-billed Grebe	C	S	W
Horned Grebe	I	M	W
Eared Grebe	F	M	W
Western Grebe	F	M	W

Pelicans & Cormorants

American White Pelican	R	M	W
Double-crested Cormorant	U	M	W

Bitterns, Herons & Ibises

American Bittern	R	M	W
Great Blue Heron	C	S	W
	U	W	W
Snowy Egret	U	M	W
Cattle Egret	R	M	DW
Green Heron	R	M	W
Black-crowned Night Heron	U	S	W
White-faced Ibis	F	M	DW

Swans, Geese & Ducks

Tundra Swan	I	M	W
Snow Goose	I	M	WD
Ross's Goose	I	M	W
Canada Goose	C	Y	WD
Wood Duck	R	M	W
Green-winged Teal	C	M	W

Mallard	A	Y	W
Northern Pintail	F	M	W
Blue-winged Teal	U	M	W
Cinnamon Teal	C	M	W
Northern Shoveler	F	M	W
Gadwall	C	M	W
American Wigeon	F	M	W
Canvasback	U	M	W
Redhead	F	M	W
Ring-necked Duck	C	M	W
Lesser Scaup	U	M	W
Surf Scoter	R	M	W
White-winged Scoter	R	M	W
Common Goldeneye	F	W	W
Bufflehead	C	W	W
Hooded Merganser	U	M	W
Common Merganser	C	M	W
Red-breasted Merganser	R	M	W
Ruddy Duck	F	M	W
Vultures			
Turkey Vulture	C	S	X
Hawks, Eagles & Falcons			
Osprey	U	M	W
Bald Eagle	F	W	WD
Northern Harrier	F	Y	DW
Sharp-shinned Hawk	F	Y	MFD
Cooper's Hawk	U	Y	MS
Northern Goshawk	U	Y	M
Swainson's Hawk	U	M	DF
Red-tailed Hawk	C	Y	X
Ferruginous Hawk	F	W	DP
Rough-legged Hawk	U	W	DP
Golden Eagle	F	Y	X
American Kestrel	C	Y	X
Merlin	U	W	DP
Peregrine Falcon	U	S	C
Prairie Falcon	U	Y	C
Grouse, Turkeys & Quail			
Chukar	R	Y	P
Ring-necked Pheasant	U	Y	D
Blue Grouse	C	Y	MF
White-tailed Ptarmigan	U	Y	T
Sage Grouse	R*	Y	P
Wild Turkey	U	Y	MS
Scaled Quail	R	Y	P
Gambel's Quail	R	Y	P
Rails, Gallinules, & Coots			
Virginia Rail	F	S	W
Sora	U	S	W
Common Moorhen	R	?	W

American Coot	A	Y	W
Cranes			
Sandhill Crane	I	M	WR
Plovers			
Black-bellied Plover	R	M	W
Semipalmated Plover	U	M	W
Killdeer	C	S	WD
Stilts & Avocets			
Black-necked Stilt	R	M	W
American Avocet	U	M	W
Sandpipers & Phalaropes			
Greater Yellowlegs	U	M	W
Lesser Yellowlegs	C	M	W
Solitary Sandpiper	I	M	W
Willet	U	M	W
Spotted Sandpiper	C	S	W
Long-billed Curlew	R	M	WD
Marbled Godwit	U	M	W
Sanderling	R	M	W
Semipalmated Sandpiper	R	M	W
Western Sandpiper	C	M	W
Least Sandpiper	F	M	W
Baird's Sandpiper	U	M	W
Pectoral Sandpiper	U	M	W
Long-billed Dowitcher	F	M	W
Common Snipe	C	S	WD
	U	W	WD
Wilson's Phalarope	U	M	W
Gulls & Terns			
Franklin's Gull	U	M	WD
Bonaparte's Gull	R	M	W
Ring-billed Gull	F	M	WD
California Gull	U	M	WD
Herring Gull	R	M	WD
Forster's Tern	U	M	W
Black Tern	U	M	W
Doves & Pigeons			
Rock Dove	C	Y	D
Band-tailed Pigeon	U	S	M
Mourning Dove	C	S	DP
	R	W	D
Cuckoos & Roadrunners			
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	R	M	R
Greater Roadrunner	R	?	R
Owls			
Barn Owl	R	?	D

Flammulated Owl	U	S	M
Western Screech Owl	U	?	RD
Great Horned Owl	C	Y	X
Northern Pygmy Owl	U	Y	MP
Burrowing Owl	R	S	P
Spotted Owl	U	Y	C
Long-eared Owl	U	Y	PC
Short-eared Owl	R	M	P
Northern Saw-whet Owl	F	Y	M
Goatsuckers			
Common Nighthawk	C	S	PD
Common Poorwill	U	S	P
Swifts			
Black Swift	R	S	F
White-throated Swift	C	S	C
Hummingbirds			
Blue-throated Hummingbird	R	S	M
Black-chinned Hummingbird	C	S	PSD
Calliope Hummingbird	U	S	MD
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	C	S	X
Rufous Hummingbird	C	M	X
Kingfishers			
Belted Kingfisher	F	S	R
Woodpeckers			
Lewis's Woodpecker	F	Y	DM
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	R	W	D
Red-naped Sapsucker	F	S	FH
Williamson's Sapsucker	U	S	MF
Downy Woodpecker	F	Y	MPD
Hairy Woodpecker	F	Y	MP
Three-toed Woodpecker	R	?	M
Northern Flicker	C	Y	X
Flycatchers			
Olive-sided Flycatcher	U	S	F
Western Wood-Pewee	C	S	M
Willow Flycatcher	U	M	R
Hammond's Flycatcher	F	S	F
Dusky Flycatcher	F	S	SM
Gray Flycatcher	F	S	P
Cordilleran Flycatcher	C	S	FM
	F	M	R
Say's Phoebe	C	S	PD
Ash-throated Flycatcher	F	S	P
Cassin's Kingbird	R	S	P
Western Kingbird	C	S	DP
Eastern Kingbird	U	M	D
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	R	?	?

Larks

Horned Lark	F	Y	DP
	U	S	T

Swallows

Purple Martin	U	S	MR
Tree Swallow	F	S	MF
Violet-green Swallow	C	S	MCF
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	F	S	R
Bank Swallow	U	S	R
Cliff Swallow	F	S	CD
Barn Swallow	A	S	DR

Corvids

Gray Jay	F	Y	F
Steller's Jay	C	Y	MF
Scrub Jay	C	Y	SP
Pinyon Jay	C	Y	P
Clark's Nutcracker	C	Y	FM
Black-billed Magpie	C	Y	X
American Crow	F	Y	D
Common Raven	C	Y	X

Chickadees, Titmice & Bushtits

Black-capped Chickadee	F	Y	X
Mountain Chickadee	C	Y	FMD
Plain Titmouse	C	Y	PS
Bushtit	C	Y	PS

Nuthatches & Creepers

Red-breasted Nuthatch	F	Y	F
White-breasted Nuthatch	C	Y	MP
Pygmy Nuthatch	C	Y	M
Brown Creeper	F	Y	FM

Wrens

Rock Wren	C	S	PC
Canyon Wren	F	Y	C
Bewick's Wren	C	Y	PS
House Wren	C	S	MF
Marsh Wren	U	M	W

Dippers

American Dipper	U	Y	W
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Kinglets & Gnatcatchers

Golden-crowned Kinglet	U	Y	FP
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C	S	MPD
	U	W	D
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	C	S	PS

Thrushes

Western Bluebird	F	Y	MP
Mountain Bluebird	C	S	MD

	U	W	D
Townsend's Solitaire	F	S	FM
	U	W	PD
Hermit Thrush	F	S	MF
American Robin	A	Y	X
Varied Thrush	R	?	M
Mockingbirds & Thrashers			
Gray Catbird	U	S	R
Northern Mockingbird	F	S	PD
Sage Thrasher	F	M	P
	U	S	P
Pipits			
American Pipit	C	S	T
	U	M	W
Waxwings			
Bohemian Waxwing	I	M	D
Cedar Waxwing	U	W	D
	R	S	R
Shrikes & Starlings			
Northern Shrike	U	W	PD
Loggerhead Shrike	U	Y	P
European Starling	A	Y	X
Vireos			
Gray Vireo	F	S	P
Warbling Vireo	C	S	FMH
Solitary Vireo	C	S	MSP
Warblers			
Orange-crowned Warbler	F	S	MP
Tennessee Warbler	R	M	R
Nashville Warbler	U	M	RD
Virginia's Warbler	C	S	SP
Lucy's Warbler	R	S	R
Yellow Warbler	F	S	RS
Chestnut-sided Warbler	R	M	D
Yellow-rumped Warbler	C	S	FM
	C	M	RD
Black-throated Gray Warbler	C	S	P
Townsend's Warbler	U	M	MR
Blackburnian Warbler	R	M	D
Grace's Warbler	F	S	MS
American Redstart	R	M	M
Northern Waterthrush	R	M	W
MacGillivray's Warbler	F	S	SH
Common Yellowthroat	U	S	W
Wilson's Warbler	F	S	H
	F	M	R
Yellow-breasted Chat	U	S	R

Tanagers			
Hepatic Tanager	R	M	D
Western Tanager	C	S	MF
	F	M	PD
Grosbeaks			
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	R	M	D
Black-headed Grosbeak	F	S	DM
Blue Grosbeak	F	S	DR
Lazuli Bunting	U	S	SR
Indigo Bunting	R	S	SR
Painted Bunting	R	M	?
Towhees & Sparrows			
Green-tailed Towhee	F	S	SM
Rufous-sided Towhee	C	S	SPM
	U	W	S
Canyon Towhee	R	S	P
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	R	S	P
American Tree Sparrow	U	M	RD
Chipping Sparrow	C	S	PSM
Brewer's Sparrow	F	S	P
Vesper Sparrow	C	S	DPM
Lark Sparrow	C	S	PD
Black-throated Sparrow	F	S	P
Sage Sparrow	U	S	P
Lark Bunting	R	M	PD
Savannah Sparrow	U	M	DR
Grasshopper Sparrow	R	M	D
Fox Sparrow	U	S	H
Song Sparrow	C	Y	R
Lincoln's Sparrow	C	S	HF
White-throated Sparrow	R	W	D
White-crowned Sparrow	F	S	HF
	U	W	D
Harris's Sparrow	R	W	D
Dark-eyed Junco	A	W	DP
	C	S	F
Blackbirds & Orioles			
Red-winged Blackbird	C	Y	DR
Western Meadowlark	C	Y	DP
Yellow-headed Blackbird	U	S	W
	U	M	DW
Brewer's Blackbird	C	S	DM
Great-tailed Grackle	U	Y	WD
Common Grackle	U	S	D
Brown-headed Cowbird	C	S	X
	F	M	D
Northern Oriole (Bullock's)	C	S	DR
(Baltimore)	R	M	D
Scott's Oriole	R	S	P
Finches			

Brown-capped Rosy Finch	F	S	T
	U	W	P
Pine Grosbeak	U	S	M
Cassin's Finch	U	S	F
	U	W	D
House Finch	A	Y	DPS
Red Crossbill	F	Y	FMP
Pine Siskin	C	S	FM
	C	W	D
Lesser Goldfinch	C	S	DR
American Goldfinch	C	W	DR
	U	S	DR
Evening Grosbeak	U	S	FM
	F	W	D
Weaver Finches			
House Sparrow	A	Y	D

*--may be extirpated within county limits



Adult Male Varied Thrush at Colorado Springs on 22 November 1994
Photo by Alan Versaw of Colorado Springs, CO.

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The following rap poem by Steve Bouricius, current C.F.O. President, was designed for teaching children (and anybody else with an open mind) about the activities of Broad-tailed and Rufous Hummingbirds. Within the fun lyrics are many subtleties of hummingbird biology. -ED

HUMMIN'BIRD RAP



Chip Chip Chip Chip

I'm the toughest hummin'bird on the mountain here about

Chip Chip Chip Chip

I don't need to up'n shout, it's the **CHIP** that does the rout

Chip Chip Chip Chip

Got a gooseberry bush, the nectar's so fine

Chip Chip Chip Chip

There's only so much, so it's aaaall mine

Chip Chip Chip Chip

If someone comes to steal, I'll **SHOW** 'em how I feel

Flash Flash Flash Flash

Chip Flash Chip Flash

If that don't make 'em zing, I'll give 'em a little**WING**

Flutter Flutter Chip Flash, Flutter Chip Flash

Chip Chip Chip Chip

Chip Chip Chip Chip

When the Rufous comes back, you can be sure that he'll attack

Zee Chuppity Chup, Zee Chuppity Chup

Zee Zee Chuppity Chup, Zee Chuppity Chup

He's a tough little guy, we go high in the sky

Chippity Chip, Chuppity Chup, Zee Chuppity, Chippity, Chup

Chuppity Chuppity, Chippity Chippity

Chuppity, Chip, Chup



BREEDING CHIPPING SPARROWS AT 12,200 FEET?

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Five years of atlasng afforded me numerous opportunities to observe avian behavior. Each new block I worked became a learning laboratory for unusual and remarkable behaviors.

One incident in particular has stuck in my memory. On July 14, 1994, I was hiking at 12,200 feet in the New York Peak priority block (3910616). This block is situated north of Taylor Park, straddling the Pitkin County line. On my way back from visiting the American Pipits and Horned Larks of the tundra, my attention was drawn to a small group of sparrows moving about in the krummholz. These turned out to be Chipping Sparrows, not the White-crowned's I had anticipated. Savoring the find, I paused to look for evidence of breeding.

I tallied at least four adults and two juvenile birds. One adult bird carrying food disappeared from view as quickly as it appeared. Having lost this bird, I directed my attention toward a juvenile bird which perched in plain view about ten feet away, seemingly oblivious to my presence.

After a minute at most, an adult Chipping Sparrow entered the picture. It flew directly toward the younger bird, moved it off, and perched precisely where the younger bird had been. The younger bird moved a couple of branches down to a lower perch. The two birds repeated the process two more times in quick succession. On the third time, the younger bird flew a considerable distance away; I could not relocate it. The strength of its flight would suggest that the young bird was several days out of the nest. I recorded the species as "confirmed" with an "FF" (feeding fledglings) code, although I never did actually see food pass from the bill of an adult to a juvenile; all I had was circumstantial evidence.

After this incident, I watched the adult Chipping Sparrows for several minutes, remaining within a few feet of my original vantage point. Although the birds remained in the krummholz, I observed no other striking or unusual behavior. Although I had earlier seen two juvenile birds, I did not see either after the departure of the one that had been chased. Whether the second juvenile bird had likewise been chased away, had left of its own accord, or hid among the branches, I cannot say.

Earlier in the month I twice witnessed similar behavior by Gray-headed Juncos. The juvenile juncos, however, had not shown the same stubbornness as the juvenile Chipping Sparrow. Both times they took the hint from the first "attack" and flew several feet away. The adult juncos did not repeat the procedure as had the Chipping Sparrow.

This past winter I wrote to Donald and Lillian Stokes about the Chipping Sparrow incident (see *Bird Watcher's Digest*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 106-7). They hypothesized the activity I observed was an example of "supplanting"--a sort of avian "shooing" of one brood antecedent to the raising of another. My guess had been that the adult bird was trying to hide the juvenile bird in the presence of a perceived predator. Probably the greatest difficulty with the supplanting thesis is that it seems extremely unlikely for Chipping Sparrows to be starting a second (or third?) brood in mid-July, especially at timberline. Of course, if supplanting takes place with the last brood of the season as well as earlier broods, this objection becomes empty.

The situation raises a handful of additional questions. Andrews and Righter suggest Chipping Sparrows may occasionally breed up to timberline, but, apparently, no confirmations of breeding at this altitude exist. If the adult behavior was either supplanting or an attempt to chase the young away from a predator, one must entertain the possibility of near-timberline breeding. It remains less apparent, however, why four(!) adult birds were present. The presence of four adult birds, with no apparent territorial behavior among them, suggests that either the birds had left territory or simply were not very territorial at this point in the breeding cycle. Either alternative weakens the supplanting hypothesis.

Ehrlich, Dobkin, and Wheye (1988) suggest Chipping Sparrows tend to wander in family groups shortly after the young have fledged. This may help explain the presence of young and adult birds at an unusually high elevation, even if four adult birds stretches the concept of "family group" a tad.

Atlas field workers reported Chipping Sparrows in krummholz habitat in six other blocks. In the one other case where the species was "confirmed", the atlaser used the "fledgling" code. Although Chipping Sparrows were reported on alpine tundra in six atlas blocks, no "confirmations" were received from the tundra. In most cases they were reported, no doubt correctly, as an "observed" (non-breeding) species. The overwhelming majority of these records from the krummholz and tundra come from late summer (after the middle of July), suggesting a post-breeding upward vertical migration. Interestingly, however, the one other "confirmation" from the krummholz carries a 30 June date, which would lend some plausibility to a claim of breeding.

After stewing over the observation for the better part of a year, my hopes for answering the questions satisfactorily have diminished. Perhaps someone reading this will offer a more compelling explanation of the events.

I am increasingly uncertain, however, of the validity of the claim to confirmed breeding in the krummholz. The confirmation itself is somewhat less dubious, since the birds were nearly in the center of the priority block. Still, the questions linger and beg for a cogent explanation.

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Marbled Godwit
Photo by Jim Karo of Albuquerque, N.M.

**AN ATTEMPTED NESTING OF EASTERN BLUEBIRDS
IN BOULDER COUNTY, COLORADO - SPRING 1993**

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Brief History of Eastern Bluebirds in Boulder County

On June 18, 1887, Denis Gale, an early Colorado naturalist discovered four fresh eggs in a nest of Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) at the Walstad Ranch in Boulder County, Colorado. [The authors have been unable to determine the exact location of this ranch.] In his field notes he wrote, "Only 3 eggs a week previous - no birds seen near nest - having one additional egg added in a week and then find all of them fresh suggest a very irregular laying. I soon had a good opportunity of viewing the birds and plainly determined the species by the male."

Gale was a well-respected naturalist that began his work in Colorado in 1883. He was born in London in 1828 and acquired mining interests at Gold Hill in Boulder County. In 1892 he moved his family to Denver from Philadelphia and lived there until his death on February 26, 1905.

His work was confined chiefly to the foothills and mountains of Boulder and southern Larimer Counties. According to his notes, he was able to sight all three species of bluebirds and many other birds whose life histories were not well known.

Correspondance with Captain Charles E. Bendire and Doctor C. H. Merriam led to some of Gale's observation records of nesting and food habits of several birds being published in *The Auk*. And at least 22 of them appeared in the Life History of North American Birds by Bendire.

Since Gale's nest sighting in 1887, there seems to be no other confirmed nest of Eastern Bluebirds in Boulder County. Hugh Kingery reports that *American Birds* records the nearest nest sites at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal in Adams County in 1991 and again in 1993.

Eastern Bluebirds at Allegra Collister Nature Area (a.k.a. "Lykins Gulch")

How exciting! Although it was April 10th before members of the banding team sighted the pair of bluebirds, Bill Kaempfer of Boulder had observed the rare visitors at the gulch on 28 February 1993. He noted the male was already displaying mating behavior.

Allegra Collister Nature Area, as the area is now called in honor of the late bander, is a small spring-fed riparian ravine. It is located near the foothills approximately five miles south of Lyons. It is an ideal habitat for migrants to feed and rest. Bird banding was conducted at the site by Collister from the early 1950's until the 1970's. Following Collister's departure, Craig Williams became the Master Bander. However, in the mid-1980's the banding station was closed due to habitat destruction by grazing cattle. In 1991 the area was secured and declared a preserve through the efforts of the Boulder County Nature Association (BCNA). Banding was resumed in May of that year.

In that same spring, BCNA members fenced off the preserve and installed two bluebird nest boxes on the northern fence line. Beyond that fence is an open grassy field. The location is ideal for a nest box for any of the bluebird species.

The nest boxes showed no activity until the spring of 1993, when the Eastern Bluebirds showed up. By the time the mist nets were ready to open on April 20, the pair had already set up housekeeping in the nest box located along the trail to the easternmost net sites.

Since the banding team knew this was a rare occasion for Eastern Bluebirds to nest in Boulder County, a decision was made to not operate the net closest to the nest box and to reroute the trail to the furthest net. To further reduce disturbance, a sign was placed in the trail advising visitors not to approach the nest box. If they wished to observe the birds, a safe but full view of the nest box could be obtained from St. Vrain Road which parallels the south fence.

The banding team then took on the joy of monitoring bluebird activities. They were sighted every banding day and seemed oblivious to anyone or anything other than their courtship and nest building. The pair used the entire gulch and surrounding fields as their territory. Often the male, in his glorious spring plumage, perched on an electric high-wire directly above our banding table.

On April 25, 27 and 29 the pair was observed carrying nesting material to the nest box. During the first week of May, the female was seen less and less and the male took up a vigil close to the nest. He became very attentive and protective of the box. Sighting after sighting, this exquisitely-colored songster would be seen on perches not ten feet from the nest, daring anything to come near his lady in her time of confinement.

On May 4 the male flew with a large insect in its beak to the nest hole. The female appeared, took the offering, dropped to the ground and gulped the

morsel down. Then she immediately returned to the nest. Once, on May 15, two Yellow Warblers ventured too close to the male's territory and, in a flash of rust and iridescent blue, they were quickly chased away.

The cold dawn of May 17 brought a heavy rain that continued until dark. The birds were not seen on May 18 or 21. The banding team was heartsick. When the pair was still not seen on May 22, the nest box was checked. It revealed five small bluish eggs that had been abandoned. The delicate-looking eggs were nestled in a bed of grasses with some strands of cow hair lining the cup structure. What a disappointment! Everyone felt that these beautiful creatures had come so near in raising a brood, only to have to give it up because of rain or some other unknown cause. On further examination, it was discovered the roof of the nest box was slightly off-center. The penetrating rain of May 17 must have leaked through onto the nest and perhaps caused the birds to leave.

For the rest of the banding season, the little friends were not seen again. Nor did they return in 1994. But the banding team has high hopes of enticing another pair. They have installed three new nest boxes (a donation from the CO Division of Wildlife) and have repaired the faulty roof of the used nest box.

We will surely keep a very watchful eye for the return of our Eastern Bluebirds.

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**SAPSUCKERS IN BACA COUNTY, COLORADO,
INCLUDING FIRST DOCUMENTATION OF
YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER**

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Throughout the years several residents of Walsh, Colorado have contacted me about "strange holes" in their tree trunks, some of which first occur during the winter months. In January 1991, town resident Pat Buckhaults called about such holes on her Scot's Pines. I assured her they were not caused by insects but rather by a woodpecker, specifically one of the sapsuckers. She agreed to check her tree grove faithfully in hopes of spotting the migratory or wintering hole-maker.

Pat's efforts were finally rewarded on 21 March 1995 at 8:30 a.m., when she heard a faint tapping high in a Scot's Pine and saw a male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*). At 1:03 p.m. I confirmed, documented and photographed her sighting.

For some reason, the usually elusive woodpecker was undaunted by our activities and remained in clear view. It allowed good close observation and nice opportunities for photographs. During its four-day stay, the industrious sapsucker preferred the upper pine trunks for making sap wells; foraged for insects; fought and attacked an invading Red-naped Sapsucker (*S. nuchalis*); and tenaciously clung to the pines in wind gusts of up to 54 miles an hour.

In February 1991 Pat and I had glimpses of a Red-naped Sapsucker in the tree grove but did not have adequate observations for documentation. As reported above, Pat saw a male Red-naped fighting the Yellow-bellied on 22-23 March 1995 and I saw a male Red-naped across town on 10 April 1995. I also have two records of female Williamson's Sapsuckers (*S. thyroideus*) in my Walsh yard, one on 12-13 December 1978 and another on 2-3 November 1991.

Our increasing set of records may prove Baca County is a consistent stop for migrating and/or wintering sapsuckers of all three species.





Adult Male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
21 March 1995 in Scots Pine at Walsh, CO.
First documented record of this species for Baca County.
Photo by Janeal Thompson of Walsh, CO.

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER BY KLAUS MALLING OLSEN
CONCERNING JAEGER IDENTIFICATION

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Fall is just around the corner, and so, hopefully, are some Colorado jaegers. In 1993 many of us were fortunate enough to see the juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger found by the Prathers at Union Reservoir. I personally had some very enjoyable hours photographing that lost bird on 20 October. Jaeger identification can be among birding's greatest challenges and during this one's appearance, I found myself consulting whatever references were available to verify the skillful identification assigned this individual by the Prathers. An April 1989 article in *British Birds* [Volume 42(4) p.143-176], by Denmark's Klaus Malling Olsen was most helpful. Because I was able to get close-up photographs, I decided to send a representative set to Mr. Olsen for comments. The following segments are part of his charming 7 November 1994 letter. They are shared with the hope that because of them, we are able to wrestle more successfully with future jaeger identifications.

In general I think it safe to say Europeans are more advanced than North Americans in their knowledge of subtle field marks and jizz. Combining these identification styles can be powerful and Mr. Olsen's mastery of this approach is instructive. (Please, nobody write me about the Dolly Parton remark!).

Of note, Mr. Olsen's great new book Terns of Europe and North America (ISBN 0-691-04387-6) was released this year. It includes thorough coverage of immature and winter plumages.. It is full of illustrations by the Swedish artist Hans Larsson, and has over 200 photographs. Also, Mr. Olsen quite possibly may be asked to start work on a new identification guide to the gulls of the western Palearctic and North America. We can profit by whatever he produces.

Remarks, somewhat edited for clarity, from Mr. Olsen:

"Dear David

Very many thanks for writing concerning a juvenile skua (= jaeger) from Weld County, Colorado.....Your bird is easy to identify...: a typical juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger. I shall in points explain what excludes all other skuas.

1. Overall colouration greyish without any warm brown tinge. In a fresh bird

(as this juvenile) in autumn (juveniles, as other age classes could show some heavily worn feather parts that time of year) the cold greyish tinge is typical.

2. Head shape and bill: only Long-tailed would show this gentle impression coursed by a Mew Gull-rounded head and short (but rather thick) bill. Diagnostic is that outer 50% of the bill are dark against pale inner 50%, and that the length of the gonys angle is approximately 40-50% (much less on a generally more marked gonys angle in other skuas).

3. Heavy black-and-white barring on tail coverts does not exclude Parasitic, which normally shows more mottled bars. More important is, however, the total lack of warm brownish tinge found in almost every juvenile Parasitic. The same is the case in underwing, which makes Long-tailed look strikingly barred (and pale versus often darker body), whereas most Parasitics show darker brown background colouration to pale bars, making the underwing look darker than body. This is a good field mark, which has proved its effect in recent years following the publication of the paper in *British Birds*.

4. Just 2 pale primary shafts. This is not a 100% character, but is the typical pattern in Long-tailed, versus normally 3-7 in Parasiticus.

5. Whitish feather tips to upperpart feathers. In Parasiticus, feather tips are buff-tinged, rarely with just a few white-tipped feathers.

6. Underparts typical for juvenile Long-tailed: grey breast bar rather uniform, standing out against white area on mid-breast. This is a character making juvenile Long-tailed often look older than they really are!

7. Pale half-moon on shafts of surface of primaries generally narrower than in other species. No pale patch on under primary coverts, as these feathers are evenly barred with dark and pale.

8. Although jizz is harder to get impression on in photos, the short, rounded head versus the "Schwartenegger" breast - which again stands out against the rather flat belly - as seen (in your photos). You may even call the breast of Long-tailed "Dolly Parton style". Compared to Parasitic, Long-tailed looks short/round-headed (as if they have crashed with a wall!) and elongated with long triangular hindbody and tail.

9. This is strengthened by the 2-4 cm long, slightly rounded central pairs of tail feathers, ... visible in several photos. These feathers would have been more pointed and shorter in Parasiticus.

Conclusion: a nice juvenile Long-tailed, which I would like to have seen.

....I am again with North American specimens of Long-tailed surprised how much paler (they are) on average as compared to our birds. I would regard your bird as a rather typical North American juvenile - here in Europe such a pale bird would have been called uncommon (5% of the total are so pale)."

Mr. Olsen's address as of this letter's date is:

Klaus Malling Olsen
Gartnerivej 3,1
DK 2100 Copenhagen O
Denmark

My experience would indicate that, within reason, he would welcome comments, questions and the like from North Americans regarding skuas (jaegers), terns and gulls. He is particularly interested in getting to know our Franklin's Gull better.



Immature Long-tailed Jaeger
Union Reservoir east of Longmont, CO on 20 October 1993
Photo by David Leatherman of Fort Collins, CO.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE *OBSCURUS* RACE OF THE BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD IN COLORADO

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Three races of the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Monothrus ater*) occur in North America (Friedmann 1929, AOU 1983). The eastern subspecies, *ater*, occurs largely east of the Rocky Mountains. The largest of the subspecies, the sagebrush cowbird *artemesiae*, occurs throughout the western United States. The smallest subspecies, *obscurus*, appropriately named the dwarf cowbird, occurs mostly in the southwestern U.S. Based on the Denver Museum of Natural History and the University of Colorado Museum zoology collections of cowbirds, the *ater* subspecies occurs in the eastern counties of Colorado, *artemesiae* throughout the remainder of the western counties including the Front Range counties, and *obscurus* until recently has only occurred in southwestern Colorado. Colorado is an interesting place to study the range expansion and gene flow of cowbirds because the 3 subspecies occur sympatrically.

Three *obscurus* specimens were collected in Boulder County during 1984 and 1986, which shows a recent range expansion of the subspecies into northern Colorado. This is important because according to Rothstein (1978) *obscurus* never occurred in Colorado. These specimens are housed at the University of Colorado Museum.

Geographical variation in nestling coloration exists among the cowbird races. *Ater* and *artemesiae* nestlings have white rictal flanges (i.e. the fleshy external mouth lining), while those of *obscurus* have yellow rictal flanges (Rothstein 1978). Ortega and Cruz (1992) used rictal flange coloration, in part, to demonstrate gene flow of the *obscurus* race into the north-central Colorado population of *artemesiae*. They suggested that gene flow also accounts for the recent shift towards smaller cowbirds in that region (Ortega and Cruz 1992). This paper serves to further document the movement of *obscurus* genes into the north-central Colorado cowbird population.

In 1994, during an investigation of the reproductive success of Solitary Vireos (*Vireo solitarius*) and Warbling Vireos (*V. gilvus*) in Boulder County, I documented the rictal flange color of all cowbird nestlings found in vireo nests. Twenty cowbirds hatched in 23 parasitized Solitary Vireo nests, two

(10%) of which were yellow-flanged cowbird nestlings. Four cowbirds hatched in 8 parasitized Warbling Vireo nests, and one of these (25%) had a yellow flange. All three nests with *obscurus* nestlings were found at low elevations west of Boulder (Fig. 1). These yellow-flanged cowbirds provide further evidence of the presence of *obscurus* genes in Boulder County.

The presence of the *obscurus* race in the *artemesiae* population may be far greater than we are able to detect by only examining the rictal flange coloration of nestlings. If yellow flange coloration is recessive to white coloration, as Ortega and Cruz (1992) suggest, then heterozygous nestlings with white flange coloration would not reveal the true ratio of *obscurus* genes in a population. Investigations to identify the inheritance pattern of flange coloration in cowbirds are warranted, and identification of marker genes to accurately study gene flow in these populations is needed. In the meantime, further documentation of flange coloration of cowbird nestlings throughout Colorado will help us better understand range expansions and, possibly, gene flow of cowbird races in Colorado.

I gratefully acknowledge the Denver Museum of Natural History and the University of Colorado Museum for allowing access to their zoological collections. I thank Scott Severs for assistance in the field and Alexander Cruz, Cate Ortega, and Tara P. Chace for helpful suggestions with this note. Funding for the study was provided by the Boulder County Nature Association, the University of Colorado and Alexander Cruz.

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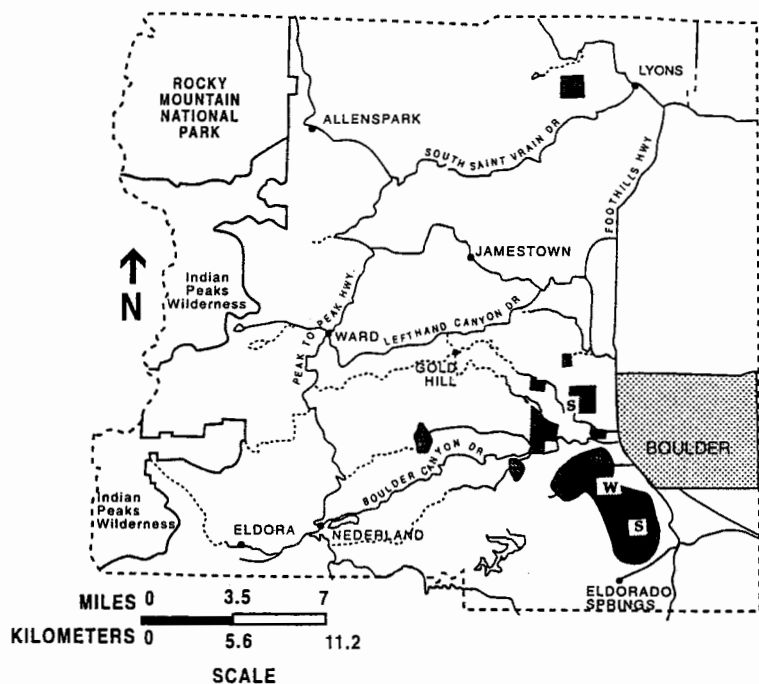


Figure 1. Map of study areas in western Boulder County (darkly stippled). Location of parasitized nests with yellow-flanged cowbirds are marked by "S" for Solitary Vireo nests, and "W" for the Warbling Vireo nest.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD: THE WINTER REPORT
(December 1994, January & February 1995)

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Many rare and unusual species were reported this winter. The best two are Common Ground-dove and Harris' Hawk. Both have never been adequately documented from Colorado before. The Colorado Bird Records Committee will review sightings of these two species in the near future.

The information used in this report was provided to Hugh Kingery for his *Audubon Field Notes* regional summary. Birds not reported to Hugh Kingery or the regional compilers are not included in this report. This means birds reported only to the *Colorado Bird Report* (taped phone alert) are not included.

The regional compilers for *Audubon Field Notes* are: Winston William Brockner for the Evergreen area; Brandon Percival for Southeastern CO; Ann Means for the Loveland, Lyons, Longmont and Berthoud areas (LLBL); and Bill Lisowsky for the Northern Front Range area, including Fort Collins. The other parts of the state do not officially have a compiler. If you would like to be a compiler for *Audubon Field Notes* in your particular area, contact Hugh E. Kingery. Any sighting with a * means a rare bird form was submitted to Hugh Kingery and to the Colorado Bird Records Committee.

[mob = many observers]

Red-throated Loon - one seen 12/18 at Pueblo Res. (Van Truan).

Pacific Loon - one seen 12/3-12 at Pueblo Res. (Brandon Percival and Mark Janos), and in mid-December at Marston Lake in sw Denver (Tina Jones).

Common Loon - up to five between 12/3 and 12/29 at Pueblo Res. (Brandon Percival and Mark Janos). Another seen 12/21-22 at Marston Lake (Tina Jones), and yet another 1/12 to 2/18 at Pueblo Reservoir (Brandon Percival and mob).

Yellow-billed Loon - one immature found 12/17 to 1/7 at Pueblo Res. (*Mark Janos and mob) and then two immatures were seen on 1/8 to 2/28 at Pueblo Res. (*Mark Janos, *Brandon Percival and mob).

Red-necked Grebe - one in first-winter plumage seen 12/16-19 at Hamilton Res. north of Fort Collins (Dan Bridges and mob).

American White Pelican - two at Barr Lake on 12/17 and one there on 1/23 (Tony Leukering and Jeff Schultz), one below Pueblo Res. dam on 12/20-21 (Brandon Percival and Bob Dickson), another 12/30 at Lake Henry near Ordway (Richard Bunn, Mark Janos and Brandon Percival), another on 1/7 into February at Fountain Crk. Regional Park (mob).

Tundra Swan - three immatures seen 1/14 on the Uncompahgre River in Montrose County (Bob and Nancy Gustafson).

Trumpeter Swan - three adults at Valmont Reservoir on 1/6 to 1/20 and then later at Arvada Res (Bill Lisowsky and mob). This species should be documented.

Greater White-fronted Goose - up to 22 seen at Valco Ponds in Canon City 12/18 to 1/28 (Rosie and Jim Watts, David and Sherill Pantle and mob), one at Jackson Res. on 12/25 (Mark Janos), one on 12/28 at Fort Collins City Park (David Bolton and Ann Delzell), six at Lower Latham Res. in Weld County on 2/21 (Joe Himmel), one at Windsor Lake in the Ft. Collins area on 2/23 (David Ely), one at Union Res. on 2/25 (Bill Prather) and two near Berthoud on 2/26 (Bobbie Christensen).

Ross' Goose - up to three at Jumbo Res. on 12/1 (Dan Bridges), one at Highline Res. in Mesa County on 12/23 (Alan Versaw), 30 on 12/31 on the Holly CBC (Mark Janos), one at Angel Lake near Severance on 2/10-12 (David Ely, John Barber and Bill Lisowsky), one at Holbrook Res. near Rocky Ford on 2/19 (Mark Janos) and one at Lower Latham Res. on 2/21 (Joe Himmel).

Brant - one western race seen 2/7-8 at Angel Lake and later at Windsor Lake, both southeast of Fort Collins (*David Ely and a few others).

Cinnamon Teal - this species made it back to the Pueblo area by 2/11.

Eurasian Wigeon - one adult male, first found during the fall period (David Leatherman), stayed through the winter reporting period at Edora Park in Ft. Collins.

Greater Scaup - one female at Prospect Ponds east of Ft. Collins on 12/1 (Bill Lisowsky), one male at Valmont Res. on 1/8 (Tony Leukering and others), one male at Prospect Park in Wheat Ridge on 1/13 (Karleen Schofield), three at Clifton Sewage Ponds on 1/24 (Bob and Nancy Gustafson) and one female in Fort Collins on 2/18 (David Ely).

Oldsquaw - up to three birds at Horsetooth Res. on 12/10 through the period (David Leatherman and David Ely), up to four on Pueblo Res. on 12/17 to 2/12 (Mark Janos, Brandon Percival and mob), one immature male and one immature female along the South Platte River at 88th Ave. in north Denver throughout the period (mob), two at Union Res. on 12/11 (Jim Kuhn) and one there on 1/2 (John Prather), one female at Two Buttes Res. on 2/19-22 (Scott Seltman, Tom Shane and Janeal Thompson).

White-winged Scoter - one immature on Union Res on 12/7 (John Prather), two subadult males at Union Res. on 12/11 (David's Leatherman and Ely).

Barrow's Goldeneye - at least 38 wintered in the Rifle area (Kim Potter), at least one adult male at the South Platte River at 88th Avenue in Denver (mob), one female at Horsetooth Res. (David Leatherman and David Ely), a male and a female at Duck Lake south of Fort Collins on 12/10 (David Ely), a pair on Lake Estes on 12/15 (Warner Reeser), one male at Lake Estes on 1/19 (David Bolton), two along the South Platte River west of Lake George in Park County 12/26 (Alan Versaw), up to five on Pueblo Res. on 12/17 to 2/17 (Mark Janos, Brandon Percival and mob).

Hooded Merganser - a very high count of 83 from Runyon Lake in Pueblo on 1/1 (Brandon Percival and Van Truan).

Osprey - one reported 12/17 on the Pueblo Res. CBC. There are no accepted winter records for this species.

Northern Goshawk - one wintered in the Rifle Falls area (Kim Potter), one in January in Littleton (Tina Jones), one on 12/9 at Evergreen (Rev. Duane Perry), one at Red Rocks Park on 12/10 (Lea Ann and Bob Brown), another two in the Eagle area on 12/19 & 12/29 (Jack Merchant), in the Fort Collins area two were found on 12/21 and 1/12 (Dave Leatherman and John Barber), another in Pueblo on 12/17 (Alan Versaw, Dave Silverman and Rosie & Jim Watts), another (or perhaps the same individual) in Pueblo City Park on 1/2 (Mark Janos), one at Castlewood Canyon on 2/3 (Dan Bridges) and one at Muir Springs 2/16 (Dan Bridges).

Harris Hawk - one adult 12/17 to 12/28 at Waterton Canyon west of Chatfield Res. (Joey Kellner and others, *Mark Janos, *J.B. Hayes and mob). Another adult 12/17 to at least 2/4 on the Fort Collins CBC and seen later by Bill Lisowsky, John Barber, Tom Barber, Vicki LaRoche and others. This species will become a first state record if accepted.

Peregrine Falcon - one seen on 12/31 at Evergreen (Evan Hannay), another at the South Platte River at 78th Ave. and 88th Ave. (mob), another at Debeque in Mesa County on 1/21 and 1/29 (Kim Potter), another on the DFO Field Trip

to Chatfield Res. on 2/11, and one at Lower Latham Res. on 2/21 (Joe Himmel).

Gyr Falcon - one adult gray-phase at Union Res. and west in fields on 1/4 to 2/10 (Bill Fink and Mark Nikas) and seen by *Mark Janos and mob.

Chukar - this species is normal in Grand Junction area. However, the many reported from Evergreen to Conifer were out of place and are no doubt escapes from somewhere.

Dunlin - one at Valmont Res. to start off the year right on 1/1 (David Ely and David Leatherman).

Little Gull - one in first-winter plumage on Pueblo Res. 11/25 to 12/3 (Brandon Percival).

Bonaparte's Gull - up to 40 at Pueblo Res. 12/1 to 12/17 (Brandon Percival, Mark Janos and mob).

Mew Gull - one adult from 11/19 to 1/16 at Pueblo Res. (once seen at CF&I Lakes south of Pueblo (*Mark Janos and others).

Thayer's Gull - two immatures at Horsetooth Res. from 12/10 to 1/17 (David Ely and David Leatherman), one at the Fort Collins dump (perhaps one of the same individuals as above) on 1/21 (Bill Lisowsky), an immature at Pueblo Res. on 12/17, 1/8, and 2/17 (Mark Janos), an adult in winter plumage at Pueblo Res. on 12/30 (Mark Janos and Brandon Percival), an adult in winter plumage at Pueblo Res. on 1/29 (Mark Janos), one on 1/7 at Lake Estes (Warner Reeser and others), and one at Horseshoe Lake near Loveland on 1/31 (David Ely).

Lesser Black-backed Gull - one adult at Pueblo Res. on 12/20 (Brandon Percival), one adult at Horsetooth Res. on 12/29 (Bill & Paula Lisowsky).

Glaucous Gull - one second-winter at Prewitt Res. on 12/17 (Dan Bridges), one at Cherry Crk. Res. on 2/22 & 2/24 (Bob Brown and Karleen Schofield).

Great Black-backed Gull - one third-winter bird on Pueblo Res. 12/1 to 2/28 (Mark Janos and Brandon Percival).

Black-legged Kittiwake - one adult in winter plumage, first found in November (Joe Roller), stayed to 12/3 at Cherry Crk. Res. (DFO Field Trip and mob).

Band-tailed Pigeon - unusual wintering bird seen 2/25 in Las Animas County (Mark Janos).

Common Ground-dove - one seen 12/22 on the west side of Cozzens Lake wwsoutheast of Eaton in Weld County (Joe Himmel). This species has not been accepted in Colorado and because this was a single observer situation will still await official confirmation. [see Bylaws of the Colorado Bird Records Committee in *C.F.O. Journal* vol. 29(2)].

Barn Owl - one on 12/17 at Pueblo Res. (Brandon Percival & Van Truan).

Northern Pygmy-owl - two found on the Rocky Mountain National Park CBC (reported by Ron Ryder), one on 12/26 in Westcliffe (Mike Ketchen & Leon Bright), one 12/29 at Waterton Canyon (Joe Roller), two on 1/9 near Livermore (Joe Himmel), another on 1/18 at Evergreen (Mary & Robert Pugh), one on 2/5 east of Crawford (*Ronda Woodward) and, lastly, one heard in Estes Park on 2/8 (Stephen Martin).

Long-eared Owl - a total of 25 reported in northern Colorado between 12/3 and 1/4.

Short-eared Owl - one at the Loveland Airport on 12/4 (Bobbie & Jean Christensen), up to five at the Wellington SWA from 12/21 to 2/10 (David Ely & David Leatherman and mob).

Red-bellied Woodpecker - two at Ovid throughout period (David Ely, David Leatherman, John Barber and Bill Lisowsky), one male on 12/17 at Rocky Ford SWA (Brandon Percival).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - one on 12/20 in Penrose (Jim Watts), one immature 1/5 in Loveland (Jean Christensen, and one immature on 1/24 in Golden (Karleen Schofield).

Williamson's Sapsucker - one female reported from Rye on 1/2 (Clif Smith).

Three-toed Woodpecker - three on the Indian Peaks Winter Bird Count (IPWBC) on 1/14 and one at Livermore 2/8 (John Barber).

***Empidonax* Flycatcher Species** - one well seen on 12/10 near the Pueblo Nature Center along the Arkansas River (*Mark Janos and Brandon Percival). The bird was thought to be a "western-type" flycatcher.

Say's Phoebe - one on 12/18 in Florence (Rosie Watts, Mark & Barbara Yaeger), one in Colorado City 1/2 (David Silverman), one near Rifle on 2/7 at Fravert Reservoir (Kim Potter) and yet another on 2/8 in Pueblo (Dave Silverman).

Tree Swallow - a very unusual winter record on 12/6 at Chatfield Arboretum in the southwest Denver area (Else Van Erp). This first winter sighting for this species in Colorado should be documented.

Chihuahuan Raven - two on 12/18 in Florence (Tony Leukering), another three in Las Animas County on 2/25 (Mark Janos).

Winter Wren - one at Pueblo on 12/17 to 1/29 (Alan Versaw, David Siverman, Jim Watts and seen by the DFO Field Trip on the later date), one at Muir Springs on 12/24 & 25 (Mark Janos), one at Jackson Res. on 12/28 (David Ely & David Leatherman), one at Golden Ponds in Longmont on 1/8 (David Leatherman) and here on 1/22 (John Prather), one along the Poudre River on 1/9 (David Ely), one in Joe Roller's Denver yard on 1/29, and two along the St. Vrain River in Lyons on 2/27-28 (D.W. King).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher - one at Pueblo Res. on 12/1-2 (Bob Dickson & Mark Janos).

Eastern Bluebird - one female on 12/18 near Canon City (Richard Bunn), two males on 1/16-18 near Grand Junction (*Arthur Smith, Ron Lambeth, Coen Dexter, Bob & Nancy Gustafson), and six at Rocky Ford SWA on 2/19 (Mark Janos and Brandon Percival).

Hermit Thrush - one on the Colorado River west of Rifle on 1/24 (Kim Potter).

Varied Thrush - one male near Pagosa Springs on 1/9 (*Jim Shepherdson, Ron Decker and Stu Sernow).

Gray Catbird - one at Muir Springs on 1/2 (Joe Roller), one seen many times by many in December and on 1/3 in Fort Collins (Deb Jensen), one at Longmont on 12/16-18 (Jeanne Halsey) and one on the Poudre River Bike Trail in Fort Collins on 2/6 (David Ely and David Leatherman).

Northern Mockingbird - five reported in southeastern Colorado between 12/17 and 2/25, one in January in Littleton (Tina Jones).

Sage Thrasher - one at Pueblo Res. 12/10 through 1/22 (Brandon Percival and Dave Johnson).

Brown Thrasher - one at Hamilton Res. on 12/3 (David Leatherman and David Ely) and one at Longmont on 12/17 (Jeanne Halsey).

Bohemian Waxwing - this species reported from almost everywhere in the state this winter. Numbers/Location/Date: 9 at Muir Springs 12/3, 20 at Rifle 12/9, 70 at Rocky Mountain National Park 12/23, 689 in Larimer County 1/3 to 1/27, 300 north of Fort Collins 1/5, 108 at LLBL 1/9 to 2/20, 87 at Indian Peaks 1/14, 48 at Bergen Park near Evergreen 1/18, 29 at Bailey 1/23, 25 and 5 at the Air Force Academy 2/1 and 2/6, and 50 at Craig 2/17.

Orange-crowned Warbler - one at Pueblo on 12/17 (Jim & Rosie Watts, Alan Versaw and David Silverman).

Common Yellowthroat - one 12/17 in Longmont (Mike Figs).

Northern Cardinal - up to five at Ovid on 1/16 (Bill Lisowsky, John Barber, David Ely and David Leatherman).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak - one first-fall male on 12/22 to 12/28 at Lyons (Raymond Davis).

Green-tailed Towhee - one on 12/27 south of Gypsum (Jack Merchant), one on 1/23 at Crown Hill in Jefferson County (Warren Finch).

Rufous-crowned Sparrow - one adult found 1/2 on the face of Spring Creek Dam east of Horsetooth Res. near Fort Collins (Bill Lisowsky) and seen 1/6 (Joe Mammoser, David Ely and David Leatherman). This is probably the most northerly record for Colorado and is even more remarkable considering the season. Winter birds seen in their normal breeding area on 2/22 at Picture Canyon (Dan Bridges) and Cottonwood Canyon in Baca/Las Animas County (Mark Janos).

Chipping Sparrow - two reported on the Pueblo Res. CBC. This species is very rare in winter and needs documentation (to separate it from the more expected American Tree Sparrow).

Field Sparrow - one at Barr Lake on 12/31 (Mark Carter). This species should be documented in winter.

Lincoln's Sparrow - five reported from southeastern Colorado between 12/3 and 12/18.

Golden-crowned Sparrow - one adult at Red Rocks Park from 12/10 through 2/5 (Bob Brown and Karleen Schofield), one immature found 12/12 near the Pueblo Nature Center (Brandon Percival), and yet another was seen at Muir Springs on 12/24 and 12/26 (*Mark Janos) and on 1/2 (Joe Roller).

Snow Bunting - three at Jackson Res. on 12/26 (Joe Himmel) and four at Barr Lake on 12/31 (Tony Leukering).

Yellow-headed Blackbird - four found in the Fort Collins area between 1/3 and 2/23 (Steve Martin, Bill Lisowsky and David Ely), up to two near Barr Lake on 2/2-5 (Tony Leukering) and one on 2/4 near Berthoud (Bobbie Christensen).

Rusty Blackbird - two at the Arkansas River in Pueblo between 12/1 and 12/31 (Brandon Percival), one female at Bonny Res. on 12/10 (Dan Bridges), another 19 in Holly on 12/31 (Mark Janos, Brandon Percival and Drew Smith), up to four below Pueblo Res. dam between 1/4 and 2/1 (Brandon Percival and others), and two at Breckenridge on 2/12 (*Linda McMenamy).

Great-tailed Grackle - 12 in Holly on 12/31 (Brandon Percival, Mark Janos and Drew Smith).

Common Grackle - 8 in the LLBL area in December (mob), one at Ovid 12/1 (David Leatherman), one in Vail on 12/31 (Bob Richter), four at Muir Springs on 1/1 (Dan Bridges and Mark Nikas), one at Ron Ryder's Fort Collins feeder between 2/4 and 2/28, three south of Lower Latham on 2/9 (Bill Lisowsky) and one near Timnath on 2/10 (Bill Lisowsky).

Black Rosy Finch - one seen on the IPWBC on 1/14, one at Walden on 2/8 (Dave Bolton and Ann Delzell), 34 found by two parties near Livermore on 12/31, one in Ward on 1/20 (Myron and Suzi Plooster), one at Rifle on 2/11 (Kim Potter) and 35 in Debeque on 2/17 (Bob and Nancy Gustafson).

White-winged Crossbill - 26 reported on the IPWBC on 1/14. This species should always be called in to the Colorado Bird Report to give others a chance to see this species.



**INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTRIBUTORS
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The *C.F.O. Journal* is devoted to the field study of birds in Colorado. Articles and notes of scientific or general interest and reports of unusual observations are solicited. Articles are informal and are not restricted to any particular style, but authors are asked to consult recent issues for the general format. Photos and drawings reproduce best if black and white, showing good contrast. Other material will be used if it can be printed in black and white. Please send negatives or slides, as well as prints, to save on costs of printing: both will be returned.

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Deadlines are December 1, March 1, June 1 and September 1, for issues dated January, April, June and October, respectively.

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Standard reporting forms are available in the "Colorado Bird Distribution Latilong Study", from the *C.F.O. Journal* Editor, or an *Audubon Field Notes Mountain West* form is available from Hugh Kingery. Forms are preferred, as completion of all sections ensures most pertinent information is included.

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