

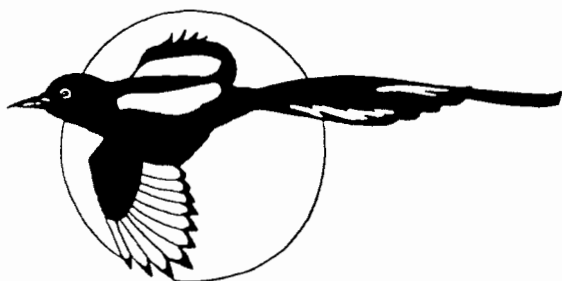
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# *C.F.O. Journal*

The Colorado Field Ornithologists' Quarterly

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### EDITOR'S REMARKS

I don't know about you, but I was never so ready for winter to end as this year. Hopefully when this issue reaches you (belatedly), you will be thinking about your most recent warbler sighting.

Please consider attending this year's Joint Convention of The Colorado Field Ornithologists and The Western Field Ornithologists in Estes Park, June 14, 15 and 16. You should have received a separate mailing about this event. It should be an exciting time of birding and interaction with bird enthusiasts from throughout the West.

Well, it had to happen sometime. Hugh Kingery has finally decided it is somebody else's turn to compile the Mountain West report for *Audubon Field Notes*. Van Truan and Brandon Percival have a tough act to follow. We should all take the time to express personally our appreciation for the countless, largely-thankless hours Hugh devoted to this task. And we should do all we can to help Van and Brandon in their new responsibility. (See formal announcement to follow).

Brandon, in his new role as assistant to Van, has begged out of compiling our "News From The Field" column. We thank Brandon for his efforts. Taking over will be my good friend David Ely of Fort Collins. Thus, the string of excellent birders handling this job continues.

I have had the fortune to travel to both California and Texas this year, and think it has made me a better Colorado birder. I have some thoughts about this which I hope to work into a future article. What article are you working on? Yes, I always have a need for interesting material, both written and pictorial.

If you haven't figured it out, the "splitters" dominate the taxonomic world these days. It is more important than ever that we document and discriminate between "races", "subspecies", "color morphs" and the like during our field birding. Look at those towhees and orioles out east carefully. Any Brewer's Sparrow above timberline is worth taking field notes on and turning in with your quarterly report. Solitary Vireos, Fox Sparrows, Song Sparrows and many others are subject to possible splits in the future. The way things are going, who knows? - orange house finches may be a new species before the 4th of July. Our motivation should be more than possible list additions. Careful birding brings many dividends. If you force yourself to distinguish every Yellow-rumped Warbler into "Myrtle" or "Audubon's", my bet is you'll not miss that occasional Grace's or other rarity mixed in, see some new behavior, and in general just have a more enjoyable time in the field.

Be sure to look over the article in this issue by Mark Janos about the recent splits. Mark is our new Colorado Bird Records Committee chair. He replaces Bill Prather. While you're jotting a note of appreciation to Hugh, think about doing the same for Bill. He has done a lot, along with the committee, to get the records back on track and up to date. There is still some backlog, but under Mark's leadership the light at the tunnel's end is visible.

How about another letter of thanks? Coen Dexter is leaving the fold and Colorado. His leadership on the other side of the mountain has been instrumental in helping define bird populations there. He has served as C.F.O. Field Trip Coordinator for the last few years, done numerous Atlas blocks, been our C.F.O. Vice-President., and much more. And the local school system has the audacity to drive him off. Drat.

Have you paid your dues for 1996?

Attention Idabelle Arndt. Please check the article with photos in this issue by Steve and Kathy Martin on their hybrid chickadee. This answers the question about what the young looked like.

Anybody interested in taking over as Editor? I will be finishing my stint (long-toed and occasionally rufous-necked) with the October 1996 issue and would be glad to work with the new Editor during the transition. Contact me if you have questions or otherwise want to talk about it. Remember, you will have a great safety net to keep you honest. His name is David Pantle.



## CORRECTIONS

In the 1993 Records Committee Report (*C.F.O. Journal* 30(1)), on page 28 the Connecticut Warbler citation for Barr Lake should read "25 May 1993, report by Mike Carter". The change of date from the 24th to the 25th is of some note because the 25th of May is the exact date for all (2) other spring records in Colorado for this species. Mike Carter is Colorado Bird Observatory Director. Mark Carter is a former faculty member of the CSU Entomology Department.

The caption on the Acorn Woodpecker photograph in the last issue (*C.F.O. Journal* 30(1), page 5) should credit "Christian Hagen" for finding this bird at the "Sylvan Dale Ranch". Christian works at the ranch at the mouth to Big Thompson Canyon and can be reached at 2921 North County Road 31D, Loveland, CO 80538, phone: 970/593-1585.



## NORTHEASTERN CO FIELD TRIP May 19

Meet at the Division of Wildlife's Tamarack Ranch Check Station at 7 AM on May 19. This all-day trip will be led by Bill Prather. The Check Station can be reached by taking I-76 for about 25 miles northeast of Sterling to Exit 149 (Crook). Go north on Logan County 81 Road for about a mile and watch for the Check Station on the right (east). Bring enough food and drink to sustain you between the relatively sparse restaurants. Be prepared for ticks, poison ivy and good birds. At this time of year at least a few eastern migrants are to be expected, and the trip also hopes to produce local specialties such as Bell's Vireo, Bobolink, Indigo Bunting, Red-headed and Red-bellied Woodpecker, Baltimore Oriole, Bobwhite, and perhaps Field Sparrow or Eastern Towhee.

For information, contact Bill Prather at 303/776-2191.



### A REQUEST OF RESPECT FOR THE OWNERS AND WILD INHABITANTS OF THE ALLEGRA COLLISTER NATURE AREA

The Allegra Collister Nature Area (also referred to as Lykins Gulch) lies a few miles south and east of Lyons, CO. This area clearly holds an attraction for many birds and other creatures. Because of its value as a study site for a variety of disciplines, the Boulder County Nature Association has obtained and administers a conservation easement for this critical habitat. It is private property. It is important that the landowner's wishes be respected and the intent of the agreement honored. Written permission must be obtained prior to entering the property. Access will be limited. Only those conducting pre-approved studies or who are performing planned maintenance activities will be allowed routine entry. People with questions about the area should contact the Boulder County Nature Association, Joe Harrison (303/772-3481) or Virginia Dionigi (303/776-2609). Thank you for your consideration of this matter. (See also *C.F.O. Journal* 29(3):138-140 and 30(1):18-19).





GOLDEN EAGLE  
Adult at the nest near Walsh, CO  
July 15, 1995  
Janeal Thompson

### A NOTE TO C.F.O. MEMBERS

Van A. Truan and Brandon K. Percival will be the new Mountain West Regional Editors for *Audubon Field Notes* magazine. We would like you to send us reports about birds you have seen during a season. The seasons are: Spring (March-May), Summer (June-July), Fall (August-November), and Winter (December-February). We need your reports by the following deadlines: Spring (June 15), Summer (August 15), Fall (December 15) and Winter (March 15). Please also include rare bird forms on rare or unusual species that you have seen. The following information is particularly important: species, dates, number, plumage, location and observers. The following are also certainly worthy of reporting: late dates, early dates, out of place species, out of season species, high counts of species, low counts of species, trends among common species. Send reports to Van A. Truan, 1901 Court Street, Pueblo, CO 81003 (phone: 719/543-4744).

Thank you and good birding.

Van A. Truan and Brandon K. Percival



### C.F.O. BOREAL FOREST SKI TRIP SUMMARY

Coen Dexter  
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970/4647971

On 27 January 1996 nearly a dozen hardy skiers tackled the boreal forest on the Grand Mesa east of Grand Junction in quest of Three-toed Woodpeckers, White-winged Crossbills, and other wintering forest species. The group did not go disappointed. Not only did all participants get a good look at a Three-toed Woodpecker, a pair of White-winged Crossbills put on a good show for the group. Since Rich Levad discovered White-winged Crossbills on the Grand Mesa three years ago, birders on skis somewhat regularly find the crossbills on County Line and Lake of the Woods Trails.

While returning to Grand Junction, a short side trip to Colbran proved worthwhile. Several residents of the small town have winter bird feeders. At one feeder a Harris' Sparrow was present and in a nearby tree a Red-naped Sapsucker was busy looking for whatever sapsuckers look for. This winter record of a sapsucker is one of only a few for western Colorado.



**A SIX-OWL DAY:  
REPORT ON GRAND VALLEY/BOOKCLIFFS FIELD TRIP**

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A few Grand Valley owls must have been amazed on the afternoon of March 30, 1996, when they were beset not by a mob of songbirds, but by a mob of Binocular-eyed Gawkers. Forty-six C.F.O. and Grand Valley Audubon members toured the valley that day, and all got extended looks at the area's five nesting owl species: Barn Owl, Great Horned Owl, Western Screech-Owl, Long-eared Owl, and Burrowing Owl. Over half the group returned after dinner and traveled to the Bookcliffs for a good look at #6: Saw-whet Owl.

The trip was blessed with great weather--sunny, calm and a high in the 60's. The group first stopped at a Western Screech-Owl's hole near Fruita, which predictably catches the afternoon sun at its entrance. It has, therefore, become a standard for field trip visits. The sight of 19 vehicles pulling in beside his tree apparently was too much, though, and he ducked for cover before half the crowd saw him. The trip leaders (Rich Levad and Kim Potter) took the group a mile down the road to try another, which they had seen only an hour earlier. No luck. The first owl must have called ahead. A mile further on, however, the luck changed as the leaders' third choice chose to rely on camouflage rather than retreat. The spotting scopes prevailed, though, and everyone got a good look at a Western Screech-Owl pretending to be cottonwood bark.

The Barn Owl at the next stop also cooperated, curiously peering back at the crowd from his burrow in an arroyo bank. The group then headed across the Highline Canal on Highway 139 and into the desert, where a pair of Burrowing Owls entertained with their bobbing antics. This stop provided some nice digressions to the owl mission: Turkey Vultures, Red-tailed Hawks, and a Golden Eagle circled overhead; Sage Thrashers and a Loggerhead Shrike sang incessantly; and a Sage Sparrow hopped along the trail ahead.

The next stop provided lengthy views of a Long-eared Owl on her nest, an old magpie nest in a salt-cedar thicket. Although the owl was beautifully concealed, everyone apparently was able to see it (defying a prediction by one leader who felt half the group would not find the bird even though she filled half the scope field). After being boosted by Kim to see through the scope, the youngest member of the crowd whispered to her, "She's got yellow eyes!"

At the last afternoon stop, from about 30 feet, the group scoped a Great Horned Owl. Its nest on the shore of Mack Mesa Lake overlooks a crowd of

fishermen every day. She seems to think that if she has to sit still on that nest for over a month, at least she can have some entertainment. She was utterly unconcerned by the birders, who more than doubled her usual audience.

The original plan for this trip called for an evening trek onto the Grand Mesa to look for Boreal, Northern Pygmy, and Saw-whet Owls. Scouting trips in the weeks before the trip, however, proved fruitless. The leaders decided it would be more comfortable this time of year getting shut out at 7000 feet than at 10,000. So, after a break for supper, about 25 members of the original group drove north on Highway 131 into the Bookcliffs. But they did not get shut out. At the foot of Douglas Pass they glassed a Saw-whet Owl the leaders called in and spotlighted, the day's sixth owl species. This brief observation was capped by a more leisurely sight, perhaps even more spectacular--the comet Hyakutake, high in the crystal skies of the western Colorado mountains.



## HAS EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE ARRIVED IN COLORADO?

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On 30 December 1995, the Greeley Christmas Bird Count day, my daughter Susan and I spooked a flock of a dozen Mourning Doves from a young cottonwood thicket on private land near the South Platte River east of Evans. We immediately noticed one of the doves was not a Mourning Dove. It was significantly larger, plumper and very pale. The underwing secondaries seemed virtually an ivory color. The tail was square and long, showing much white and some black as the bird landed. The upper wings did not show the prominent white patches of the White-winged Dove, but did reveal very dark primaries. The undertail coverts were gray, not white, as on the domestic Ringed Turtle-Dove. The flock was very wary, and we only saw the mystery dove facing us while perching, or flying extremely fast at such an angle as to prevent getting a good view of the nape area. The doves could not be refunded.

In correspondence with David Sibley, he remarked the Eurasian Collared-Dove population expansion out of the southeastern U.S. has been so explosive that an arrival of this species in Colorado is now a possibility.

Look at the doves - you may be the one to answer the question!



**COLORADO'S FIRST WINTER RECORD OF  
BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*)**

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An adult Black Phoebe was found October 14, 1995 at the Canon City Riverwalk by Se Etta Moss. This bird was seen through October 17, 1995 by Mark Janos and David Pantle. Se Etta was able to videotape the bird during its four-day stay. On a very late date of November 15, 1995, David Pantle was able to refind the bird. This species has never before been reported in November in Colorado.

During the Penrose Christmas Bird Count on December 17, 1995 I was surprised to again find the Black Phoebe. I was standing just west of the Reynolds Avenue Bridge in Canon City on the trail along the Arkansas River. The bird flew toward me and landed in a nearby tree. I quickly identified the bird and took notes. It then flew east under the bridge and to the north side of the river, where it disappeared onto private property. This sighting gives Colorado its first winter record of Black Phoebe.

After my mid-December sighting, Canon City residents Se Etta Moss and David Pantle have been able to document the bird's extended stay through at least February 3, 1996. Se Etta has brought many of the phoebe's favorite foods to the area in an attempt to help its survival. The temperature in early February in Canon City got down to about -17 degrees F and the Black Phoebe continued to be seen just after that.

Say's Phoebes have occurred in winter in Colorado many times, with most being on the western slope and in the southeastern counties. There is only one previous record of Eastern Phoebe in winter in Colorado (Boulder, December 21, 1975). [A second wintering Eastern Phoebe was seen and documented by Beth Dillon on the December 31, 1995 Rawhide Christmas Bird Count north of Fort Collins - ED]. Other flycatchers that have been in Colorado in winter are: Vermilion Flycatcher and the "Western" type flycatcher in Pueblo (December 1994).

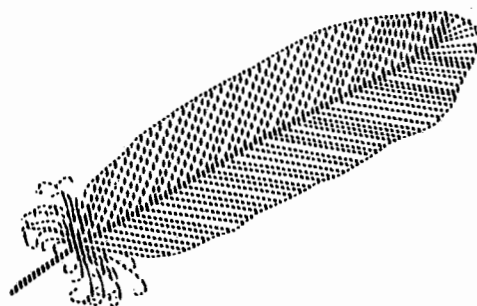
The Pueblo area has had many rare birds this winter: Cape May, Prairie and MacGillivray's Warblers; Common Yellowthroat; a few Say's Phoebes; Savannah Sparrow; and Green-tailed Towhee. None of these stayed as long or as late as the Black Phoebe.

It is surprising a bird so rare (only ten accepted records in Colorado prior to 1994) and so dependant on insects would winter here. However, there has been an increasing number of reports of this species since 1994. This includes many more nesting sites on the western slope and in southeastern Colorado. Whether these represent a real increase in numbers of this species or rather increased searching of new areas because of the Breeding Bird Atlas Project, or both, is hard to say. In spring of 1995 came reports from northern Colorado, including Estes Park and Fort Collins. There are not many records north of that.

I wish to thank both Se Etta Moss and David Pantle for continually updating me on the status of this bird. And Se Etta is to be commended for bringing food to help its winter survival in Canon City, Colorado.

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**A REVIEW OF SOME CHANGES CONTAINED IN THE FORTIETH  
SUPPLEMENT TO THE AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION  
CHECKLIST OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS**

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The purpose of this article is to acquaint Colorado birders with some of the changes contained in the 40th Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union [A.O.U.] *Check-list of North American Birds* (hereafter the "40th Supplement"). I will present only those changes that directly affect species, or species complexes, of which one or more members occur in Colorado. For complete changes, refer to the 40th Supplement itself. I include a brief summary of the reasons for any taxonomic changes given by the A.O.U., but for a more complete account refer to the 40th Supplement. The literature citations in the 40th Supplement will direct the reader to the original studies.

The 40th Supplement adds 19 species to the 6th edition of the A.O.U. *Check-list of North American Birds* (hereafter the "Check-list") main list because of splitting of species. Of these, 8 are of interest here. Four of these are species that occur in Colorado and 4 are split from species occurring in Colorado: Gilded Flicker (*Colaptes chrysoides*), Western Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), Island Scrub-Jay (*A. insularis*), Bicknell's Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*), Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*), Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*), Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*), and Black-backed Oriole (*I. abeillei*). Five scientific names are changed due to generic reallocation. Only one of these occurs in Colorado: Great Egret (*Ardea alba*). A corrected spelling is made for the scientific name for one species: American Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominicus*). Thirteen English names are changed. Only two of these affect species that occur in Colorado: Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) and Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*).

All changes are official with the publication of the 40th Supplement. Those changes pertaining to Colorado birds are described here in taxonomic order:

1. The scientific name of Great Egret is changed from *Casmerodius albus* to *Ardea alba*.

The English name of *Elanoides forficatus* is changed from American Swallow-tailed Kite to Swallow-tailed Kite. An African kite that was also referred to by this name is now usually called Scissor-tailed Kite and the modifier "American" is no longer needed for the North American species.

3. The spelling of the species name of American Golden-Plover, *Pluvialis dominica*, is changed to *dominicus*. As "Dominicus" is a noun, it does not have to agree in gender with the generic name.
4. The English name of *Larus ridibundus* is changed from Common Black-headed Gull to Black-headed Gull. This is done in order to conform to names used in the sixth edition of the *Checklist of Birds of Britain and Ireland* (British Ornithologists' Union [B.O.U.] 1992) for mainly Old World species that occur rarely or casually in North America.
5. Gilded Flicker (*Colaptes chrysoides*) is split from Northern Flicker (*C. auratus*) and is recognized as a full species. Interbreeding is very limited and the two forms are separated by habitat. Gilded Flicker is inserted after Northern Flicker on the Check-list. Both the "red-shafted" and "yellow-shafted" forms of the Northern Flicker freely interbreed, with far eastern Colorado falling solidly within a wide hybrid zone. (The "hybrid zone" of Short's 1965 flicker study included an area of far eastern Colorado from Crook and Wray in the northeast to the Holly area in the southeast. None of the flickers that he collected in Crook, Fort Morgan or Greeley were pure "red-shafted", and "yellow-shafted" features are frequently seen on the plains of eastern Colorado. Birders should be alert for the hybrids and take care so as not to confuse them with Gilded Flickers. The Gilded Flicker, which is restricted to desert lowlands and foothills in southeastern California and south-central Arizona, has not been recorded in Colorado, and is very unlikely to ever occur in the state.
6. The Scrub Jay complex has been split into three separate species based on genetic, morphological and behavioral differences: Florida Scrub-Jay (*Apheloma coerulescens*), Island Scrub-Jay (*A. insularis*) and Western Scrub-Jay (*A. californica*). The Florida Scrub-Jay is restricted to Florida and the Island Scrub-Jay occurs only on Santa Cruz Island in the Channel Islands of California. Thus, the name for the jay occurring in Colorado is the Western Scrub-Jay. Note that the correct spelling of the group name "Scrub-Jay" includes a hyphen. Be aware that the Western Scrub-Jay consists of two groups: the *californica* group, which occurs from southwestern Washington through western Oregon, California and northwestern and west-central Nevada; and the *woodhousei* group, which occurs in the interior western United States. The *woodhousei* group of the Western Scrub-Jay is what occurs in Colorado. This is important to know if further studies show that these two groups warrant specific status.
7. Bicknell's Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*) is split from Gray-cheeked Thrush (*C. minimus*) and is recognized as a full species. This form is afforded species status based on differences in vocalizations, migration, morphology and habitat preferences. Bicknell's Thrush occurs in North America mainly in

southeastern Canada and New England. It migrates mainly east of the Appalachian Mountains. For a very informative article on the (possibly hopeless) field identification of this new species, see McLaren, 1995. The Gray-cheeked Thrush is a rare migrant in Colorado. Bicknell's Thrush is not known to occur in Colorado but birders should be aware of differences between these two species. Bicknell's Thrush is placed on the Check-list immediately after Gray-cheeked Thrush.

8. As many have anticipated, the Rufous-sided Towhee is split into two separate species: Eastern Towhee (*Papilo erythrophthalmus*) and Spotted Towhee (*P. maculatus*). This is done on the basis of differences in vocalizations, plumage and sexual dimorphism. There is a narrow zone of extensive hybridization to the east of Colorado in the Great Plains. However, DNA hybridization studies between these two forms show differences between them that are as great or greater than in many recognized species pairs. Eastern Towhee precedes Spotted Towhee on the Check-list. Eastern Towhee is a wide-ranging species that breeds in eastern North America (not Colorado) and winters in the southeastern United States (from Nebraska to southern Texas on the western edge of its range). The Spotted Towhee breeds and sometimes winters in (generally) western North America (including Colorado). Although Spotted Towhee is the common "Rufous-sided" towhee in Colorado, the Eastern Towhee also occurs casually in Colorado. There are specimen and sight records mainly in the eastern half of the state.

9. The Sharp-tailed Sparrow is split into two species: Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus caudacutus*) and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*A. nelsoni*). The Saltmarsh precedes Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow on the Check-list. This split is made based on differences in vocalizations, habitat and morphology. There is a narrow zone of overlap with limited interbreeding in southern Maine (Scarborough Marsh, Popham Beach). The Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow breeds exclusively in salt marshes from southern Maine to Pea Island, North Carolina. It winters along the southern Atlantic coast of the United States to Florida and rarely on the Gulf Coast. The Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow breeds in brackish and salt marshes. It breeds widely across the interior northern part of North America and winters in coastal marshes along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts (rarely coastal California). It migrates through the interior of the United States and is the species that has been rarely recorded in Colorado (including one *A. nelsoni* specimen from Gunnison, Colorado on October 23, 1952). For identification tips on this pair of sibling species see DeBenedictis, 1995.

10. The Northern Oriole is split into three species. These appear in the following order in the Check-list: Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*), Bullock's Oriole (*I. bullockii*), and Black-vented Oriole (*I. abeillei*). The Black-vented Oriole occurs only in Mexico and will not be discussed here. The two northern

species were previously merged because of hybridization on the Great Plains. This hybrid zone is stable and some sites show pure parental types rather than free interbreeding. Because of numerous differences in vocalizations, plumages, molts, details of nesting and body size that are at least as different as in any other pairs of related species, these two species are split and revert to their former English names. The Baltimore Oriole precedes the Bullock's Oriole on the Check-list. Bullock's Oriole is a common breeding bird in Colorado. Baltimore Oriole is a much less common breeding species and migrant in Colorado, mainly in the state's eastern half, particularly the eastern fringes. Some eastern Colorado plains areas are in the known hybrid zone.

Other changes in the Check-list are detailed in the 40th Supplement which may be of interest to Colorado birders but which are outside the scope of this article. Interested birders should read the original supplement, which appears in the July 1995 *Auk*, mailed in March 1996. Birders interested in this and related topics should be sure to read the recurring "Gleanings From the Technical Literature" articles by Paul A. DeBenedictis and the annual "ABA Checklist Committee Reports", both of which appear in *Birding*.

In summary, besides several name changes, Colorado birders will recognize two additional species added to the Colorado state list: Baltimore Oriole and Eastern Towhee.

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## HYBRIDIZATION BETWEEN A MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE AND BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE IN COLORADO

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This paper reports on the pairing, nesting, and successful reproduction of a female Mountain Chickadee (*Parus gambeli*) and a male Black-capped Chickadee (*P. atricapillus*).

### Locality and Habitat

The mixed pairing occurred in northeastern Larimer County, approximately 2 miles southwest of Wellington at an elevation of 5,225 feet. Over the past two decades at this location, two adjacent farms, together comprising approximately 60 acres, have been planted and actively managed to enhance their attractiveness to wildlife, and to provide for the principal ecological requirements of a variety of birds and mammals. Because most land surrounding this acreage is clean-farmed and offers little suitable wildlife cover, these two farms form an "island" of quality habitat. The management practices used within this tract have been successful: since recordkeeping was initiated in 1977, 182 species of birds have been noted on the two farms, including breeding, wintering, and migrating species considered unusual or rare for the region.

The habitat has attracted Black-capped Chickadees during all seasons, and in several years has supported wintering Mountain Chickadees. Both chickadee species primarily utilize the dense cover afforded by two large windbreaks (planted to coniferous and deciduous trees) and the more open, spacious plantings of larger cottonwoods interspersed with pines, spruces, aspens and various shrubs surrounding one of the homes. During windy weather, both species appear especially dependent on the thick coniferous cover of the two shelterbelts. Without these plantings, it is doubtful that chickadees would nest in this windswept area. Other features of the local environment that are used by chickadees are open water (kept ice-free through the winter), suet and seed feeders, and boxes placed on cottonwoods to provide nesting "cavities".

### Chronology of Pairing and Nest Selection Events

The female Mountain Chickadee was first noted in one of the shelterbelts on August 7, 1993, and was observed regularly thereafter. In Colorado this species is a partial altitudinal migrant, normally found during summer in

coniferous and aspen forests, where it typically nests at elevations above 8,000 feet (Andrews and Righter, 1992). Wintering may occur at these higher elevations, as well as at lower sites; in some years certain birds spend the winter months on the eastern plains. Individuals descending to lower elevations are generally first-year birds (Dixon and Gilbert, 1964). In those years when Mountain Chickadees have wintered on our land, they have not arrived until late October or early November. Hence, this particular bird appeared in the area almost 3 months earlier than other Mountain Chickadees that have used the two farms for the winter season. Andrews and Righter (1992) show only a few lowland records for Mountain Chickadee during summer months, with principal movement into lower elevations beginning in early October.

Soon after its arrival, this Mountain Chickadee began associating with Black-capped Chickadees inhabiting the area. By early September, it was normally accompanying one specific Black-capped Chickadee. Incidental to mistnetting and banding activities being performed for other purposes, we captured and banded this Black-capped and the Mountain Chickadee; these fortuitous bandings permitted us to be certain about the clear, early association between these two individuals, and to follow their activities and relationship through the 1993-94 winter season. Whereas pair formation in most songbirds occurs in the spring, Black-capped Chickadees usually form pairs during the autumn (Smith, 1991); the paired male and female then associate closely, while participating loosely in a larger wintering flock of chickadees that is sometimes joined by other species. Based on our observations of their consistent proximity and interactions through the winter, pair-bonding of these two Mountain and Black-capped Chickadee individuals occurred in early autumn, 1993. Throughout the winter, the small flock they were members of spent a majority of its time within the two properties, and the flock birds fed regularly at sunflower and suet feeding stations around both homes.

Beginning in early March 1994, the pair began focusing more and more attention and activity on the yard and shelterbelt plantings where the nest boxes were located, and the male began delivering frequent *fee-bee* song. On March 6, nest box investigation was first observed, when we saw both chickadees entering and leaving the boxes. These inspections of potential nest cavities were common through March and into mid-April. Over most of March, the pair continued occasionally to visit the other shelterbelt (about 1/4 mile to the south, and separated by an open field having patches of shrubs, sapling trees, and a 5-foot junipers). By late March, however, the pair rarely left the 4-acre shelterbelt and lawn where the nest boxes were positioned -- this area became the pair's breeding territory.

On April 19, "excavation" of wood chips and sawdust commenced at one of the nest boxes. Both birds threw wood chips out through the access hole or carried the material and dropped it at modest distances from the box. Excavation activities at this nest box continued for 3 days, but ceased abruptly when the pair began removing wood shavings from a second box. This latter box was chosen for the nest cavity.

### Nesting Activities

Nest building by Mountain Chickadees is performed by both members of the pair (Dahlsten and Copper, 1979), whereas Black-capped Chickadee nests are constructed solely by the female (Smith, 1991). In this mixed pair, the Mountain Chickadee performed all the gathering and transporting of nesting material, and she built the nest with no assistance. The male Black-capped was typically nearby, but did not participate in any way. After the youngsters fledged, we examined the nest. It was comprised almost entirely of fine fur from voles (*Microtus* sp.), with occasional short lengths of colored yarn mixed in. Depth was about 3 inches. We suspect the vole hair was picked apart from pellets regurgitated by Long-eared Owls (*Asio otus*) that roost each winter in this shelterbelt. Many owl pellets were available and were predominantly formed of vole fur and bones.

Egg deposition occurred in early May; observations of the adult birds' activities and behaviors suggested that incubation began about May 7. When we eventually checked the nest box contents on May 16, seven eggs were present. The Mountain Chickadee performed all the incubation; she was frequently fed during this period by her Black-capped mate. Our next inspection of the nest occurred on May 20, soon after we saw the female leave the nest box. We discovered the male in the box, apparently feeding two chicks that had just hatched. Their down was still wet. Five unhatched eggs were present. Eventually, six of the seven eggs (85.7%) hatched. This hatching success compares favorably to the 77.3 to 84.5% range reported by Smith (1967) for Black-capped Chickadees. The unhatched egg showed no evidence of development.

Both adults brought food to the nestlings. After arriving with food, the Mountain Chickadee normally remained in the nest box much longer than did the male, and appeared to perform all the brooding. During the early days after hatching, the Black-capped made many more feeding trips than did the female, generally transferring food items directly to her at the entrance hole.

On May 29 each hybrid nestling was banded with a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aluminum band and a color band. On that date each was developing normally, and showed no growth dysfunctions. On June 7, when the nestlings were about 18 days old, each hybrid chick was removed from the nest,

photographed, and returned to the nest box. At the time when photographs were taken, each hybrid chickadee appeared developmentally normal in all respects -- fully feathered, bright-eyed, very active and perceptive, and capable of short flights. Two of the youngsters fledged within minutes after being placed back in the nest; others remained in the nest box, some until the morning of June 10. Both parents attended to the fledged young and also continued feeding nestlings.

Undisturbed Black-capped Chickadees normally leave the nest about 16 days after hatching (Smith, 1993), whereas Mountain Chickadees typically fledge at age 20-21 days (Harrap and Quinn, 1995). The hybrid juveniles left the nest between 18 and 21 days after hatching. The earlier departures were undoubtedly a consequence of the disruption caused by handling. Usually, all chicks in a brood fledge within 1-2 hours of each other (Smith, 1993). In view of this, and because the last-fledging bird left the nest box at day 21, it is likely the entire brood would have fledged at this age, had the nestlings not been disturbed. In this respect, the hybrids matured in accordance with Mountain Chickadee developmental schedules.

Soon after all the juveniles had fledged, they flocked together and moved as a family unit, with parent birds in attendance. All were very mobile and showed good flight capabilities. The flock remained in the yard and shelterbelt through June 28, when the birds began visiting the other farm shelterbelt about 1/4 mile to the south. The following day they ranged farther, beyond both farms. Soon after, the young birds dispersed, and have not been observed since. Dispersal of juvenile chickadees is normally a sudden event. In Black-capped Chickadees the rapid breakup of the family flock normally occurs about 3 weeks after the birds leave the nest (Weise and Meyer, 1979). Fidelity is then established to a different location; only rarely have the birds been known to ever return to their natal site. The hybrid juveniles followed this normal timing and pattern of dispersement.

### **Appearance of Hybrid Juvenile Chickadees**

At day 18, the hybrid nestlings were almost indistinguishable from typical Black-capped Chickadees in head and throat pattern, and in having a whitish fringe on the greater coverts, the longest tertial, and the secondaries. Close examination in the hand, however, revealed a whisper-thin white superciliary in three of the birds (Cover); a white "comma" or crescent above the ear coverts in two of the birds (Figure 1); and no evidence of white in the superciliary area in one juvenile. Some birds showed whitish in the loreal area. On June 19, when the fledglings were 30 days of age and strongly flighted, we observed them through 8x binoculars at very close range in excellent lighting, as they perched together in an open chokecherry. At 30 days of age the markings photographed at age 18 days were still present, to approximately

the same extent. Because the birds were color-banded, we were able to make direct comparisons between appearance at 18 and 30 days of age for each individual. Measurements were not taken of the nestling birds. We had intended to recapture birds prior to their dispersal and take mensural data when they were more mature. Unfortunately, dispersal occurred before we attempted mistnetting.

### Fate of the Adults

After their hybrid offspring dispersed, the Mountain and Black-capped Chickadee pair remained on the farms through the summer, fall, and winter of 1994-95, always in close association. On February 1, 1995 the female vanished. The male responded by frequent, almost continuous *fee-bee* song from many locations throughout the winter territory, for more than 2 weeks. About 1 month later he disappeared and was not observed again until he briefly reappeared for part of June 20, 1995. This male has not been seen since. The farm area where the nest boxes are located is now the domain of a pure pair of Black-capped Chickadees.

### Is Mountain X Black-capped Chickadee Hybridization Common?

The only other known instances of successful production of hybrid offspring by a mixed pair of Mountain and Black-capped Chickadees were reported by Howe (1984a, 1984b). These cases of interbreeding occurred in habitat that was marginal for both species, in the Rio Grande Valley of central New Mexico. W. Howe (pers. comm.) indicated that the marginality of the habitat, and the very low population densities of Black-capped and Mountain Chickadees in the area perhaps resulted in insufficient intraspecific mates; this may have stimulated the mixed pairings. Hybrid offspring from the middle Rio Grande River Valley also had hints of Mountain Chickadee genetics, with long, thin superciliaries or occasional crescents above or behind the eyes.

### Acknowledgments

We are grateful to Jim and Louise Meiman, our neighbors who also have enhanced their farm for wildlife, for sharing with us their observations on this mixed pair of chickadees.

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FIGURE 1. Hybrid chickadee at 18 days of age,  
showing a small white "comma" above the eye.

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Stephen and KathyAnne Martin

## KNOWLEDGE OF THE COLORADO HOST RELATIONS OF THE PARASITIC BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*)

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The Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*), a generalist brood parasite, has been recorded parasitizing the nests of over 200 species, mostly passerines (Friedmann 1929, 1963, Friedmann et al. 1977). Cowbird host preference varies regionally, and it is our purpose to compile information on host records for Colorado. We have consolidated the Colorado records from the existing literature and have added new information on cowbird hosts in Colorado. New information has been obtained from the Nest Record Card Program, observer reports from the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas, egg collections in the University of Colorado Museum and Denver Museum of Natural History, and field observations.

The Brown-headed Cowbird has been common on the plains of eastern Colorado since at least the turn of the century. Early cowbird host records have been noted by Henshaw (1875), Gale (1893), Bendire (1893), Rockwell (1908), and Sclater (1912). The high abundance of cowbirds on the high plains of the East Slope were rarely cause for mention by most early naturalists.

Throughout the U.S. cowbirds have recently expanded their range, enabling them to utilize novel species as hosts. New hosts often lack the evolutionary defense mechanisms that have developed among many species long-exposed to brood parasitism and that are needed to counter parasitic cowbirds' efforts. Many regions of Colorado and their associated bird communities are experiencing either recent or heightened cowbird activity (Hanka 1985, Chace and Cruz *unpubl.*). This expansion has raised concerns about the effects of cowbirds on host species only recently exposed to this brood parasite (Rothstein 1975a), Brittingham and Temple 1983). This compilation of Colorado parasitism records documents changes in host utilization by the Brown-headed Cowbird and provides baseline knowledge of their host relationships in Colorado.

### Species Accounts

Each species account begins with reference to Friedmann (1929, 1931, 1938, 1949, 1963, 1966, 1971, and Friedmann et al. 1977), followed by summary of the Colorado Nest Record Card program (1987 to 1993). An entry such as F:5,

NC: 2 (1987 1991), would indicate 5 records by Friedmann and 2 Nest Record Card records of parasitism in Colorado in 1987 and 1991. Details of Colorado parasitism records comprise the remainder of the account. A great deal of information has been obtained through the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas Project, years 1987 to 1995 reported here. The species accounts specify the observers and dates, e.g. "Kingery (bba 1991)". Further information comes from the literature, egg collections in the University of Colorado Museum (UCM) and Denver Museum of Natural History (DMNH), and field observations.

Willow Flycatcher, *Empidonax trailii* (Audubon). -- F:2, NC:0. Most of Friedmann's records and early Colorado records of Traill's Flycatcher refer to this species. Gale (1893) recorded three instances of parasitism for this species, two nests with one cowbird egg added to clutches of four and two flycatcher eggs, and one doubly parasitized nest (Boulder County). Betts (1913) reported parasitism on this species in Boulder County. Sedgwick and Knopf (1988) recorded a 41% parasitism rate for 27 nests in Jackson County. Two egg collections exist (UCM), both collected by Gale (in 1888 and 1890) near Boulder, both consist of one cowbird egg with four flycatcher eggs. Sedgwick (bba 1987) reported a nest with a cowbird egg in Jackson County.

Dusky Flycatcher, *Empidonax oberholseri* (Phillips). -- F: 1, NC: 0. Kingery (1974) reported one incidence of parasitism in Jefferson County. Hallock (bba 1991) in Larimer County and Dillon (bba 1994) in Jackson County reported fledgling cowbirds. Bridges (bba 1993) reported a Dusky flycatcher nest with one cowbird egg in Montezuma County and Merchant (bba 1995) reported a nest with a young cowbird in Eagle County.

Gray Flycatcher, *Empidonax wrightii* (Baird). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Toolen (bba 1992) recorded a nest with a cowbird young in Moffat County. Ireland (bba 1994) reported a nest with a cowbird in Mesa County.

Cordilleran Flycatcher, *Empidonax difficilis* (Baird). -- F: 0, NC: 0. The only Colorado parasitism record for the Cordilleran Flycatcher comes from Sorenson and Sorenson's (bba 1991) report of adults attending a cowbird fledgling in Teller County.

Eastern Phoebe, *Sayornis phoebe* (Latham). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Jones (bba 1991) reported a young cowbird in a phoebe's nest in Baca County.

Western Kingbird, *Tyrannus verticalis* (Say). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Dirckx (bba 1994) reported two separate parasitism events in Weld County on this rarely parasitized species.

Horned Lark, *Eremophila alpestris* (Linnaeus). -- F: 1, NC: 0. Rollins observed (15 April 1960) a Horned Lark feeding a young cowbird in Weldona (Bailey and Niedrach 1965). Gillihan (bba 1993) reported a fledgling cowbird in Saguache County, as did Wieland (bba 1994) in Phillips County.

Mountain Chickadee, *Parus gambeli* (Ridgeway). -- F: 0, NC: 0. One record comes from Brockner (1984) in Evergreen (Jefferson County, 2280 m) of a cowbird nestling found in a nesting box with four Mountain Chickadee young.

Rock Wren, *Salpinctes obsoletus* (Say). -- F: 2, NC: 0. Smith reports one incidence from Loveland (Larimer County) of a cowbird egg in a Rock Wren nest (Bendire 1893). Rollins (4 April 1960) observed a Rock Wren feeding two cowbirds (Bailey and Niedrach 1965).

Bewick's Wren, *Thryomanes bewickii* (Audubon). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Two records come from Youkey (bba 1988) where two cowbird eggs were found in a Bewick's Wren nest, and a young cowbird in a wren's nest in Las Animas County.

House Wren, *Troglodytes aedon* (Vieillot). -- F: 0, NC: 0. A single record comes from Yaeger (bba 1994) in Las Animas County.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet, *Regulus calendula* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Three records exist for Colorado. The first is a feeding incident at Lake Dillon (2720 m) (Spencer 1985). Another is from Meyer (bba 1989) of a young cowbird in a Ruby-crowned Kinglet nest in Gunnison County. Liewer (bba 1994) also found a young cowbird with kinglets in Grand County.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, *Poliophtila caerulea* (Linnaeus). -- F: 1, NC: 0. Lowe (1917) reported Brown-headed Cowbirds commonly parasitizing Blue-gray Gnatcatchers in Pueblo County. Cowbirds were found in gnatcatcher nests in Mesa (Brevillier, bba 1989), Delta (Rowe, bba 1990), Moffat (Toolen, bba 1994), and La Plata (Kingery, bba 1995) Counties. Dexter (bba 1993) observed a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher feeding a young cowbird in Rio Blanco County.

Mountain Bluebird, *Sialia currucoides* (Bechstein). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Two records come from Youkey (bba 1988) of two cowbird eggs in one Mountain Bluebird nest, and a young cowbird in the other in Las Animas County.

Hermit Thrush, *Catharus guttatus* (Pallas). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Lentz (bba 1990) found a cowbird egg in a Hermit Thrush nest in Park County. Kingery (bba 1994) observed a young cowbird under the care of a Hermit Thrush in Mineral County.

American Robin, *Turdus migratorius* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Meyer (bba 1994) recorded the parasitism of this known cowbird ejector in Gunnison County.

Brown Thrasher, *Tomostoma rufum* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Dillon (bba 1994) reported a young cowbird in a Brown Thrasher nest in Kit Carson County.

Gray Vireo, *Vireo vicinior* (Coues). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Leatherman (June 1987) observed a young cowbird in a Gray Vireo nest in Colorado National Monument, Mesa County. Hutchings (bba 1995) reported a nest with a cowbird egg in Colorado National Monument.

Solitary Vireo, *Vireo solitarius* (Wilson). -- F: 0, NC: 22 (1992, 1993). In addition to the 22 nest card records there are four atlas block records in Boulder (King 1992), Douglas (Schock 1988), Larimer (Dillon 1994) and Montezuma (Versaw 1991) Counties. Bailey and Niedrach (1965) reported seven parasitized nests in 1961. Marvil and Cruz (1989) reported that 48.7% of 78 nests were parasitized from 1984 to 1986. In 1990, Cruz, Jr. observed a parasitized nest in Boulder County. Chace reported a parasitism rate similar to Marvil and Cruz (1989) of 54.3% for 81 nests found in 1993 and 1994 (21 nest card records). Overall, the work of Chace, Cruz, and Marvil (in press) found that 47% (n=132) of Solitary Vireo nests in Boulder County (1984-1986, 1992-1993) were parasitized.

Warbling Vireo, *Vireo gilvus* (Vieillot). -- F: 0, NC: 7 (1992, 1993). In addition to nest cards, eight atlas block records exist from Gunnison (Meyer 1988), San Miguel (Dexter 1989), Huerfano (Yaeger 1990), Montrose (Dexter 1993), Archuleta (Kingery 1993), Fremont (Dillon 1993 and Lentz 1994) and Eagle (Merchant 1995) Counties. Bailey and Niedrach (1965) report three parasitized nests in 1961. Chace reported that 48.3% of 29 nests monitored in 1993 and 1994 were parasitized in Boulder County (6 nest card records).

Red-eyed Vireo, *Vireo olivaceus* (Linnaeus). -- F: 1, NC: 0. Friedmann (1977) determined that where this species is abundant in the U.S., there is high parasitism. Bailey and Niedrach (1965) recorded two Colorado records, and Truan (bba 1989) reported a third in Pueblo County.

Virginia's Warbler, *Vermivora virginiae* (Baird). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Several Breeding Bird Atlas volunteers reported fledgling cowbirds sighted with adult Virginia's Warblers in Gilpin (Phillips 1988), El Paso (Higgins 1989), Rio Blanco (Wright 1994), Teller (Versaw 1994), and Mesa (Hutchings 1995) Counties. In addition, Cruz observed (June 1988) two parasitized Virginia's Warbler nests. One nest contained two cowbird young and two warbler

young. The other nest contained three eggs, of which one was a cowbird egg. Also in Boulder County, Cruz, Jr. observed a parasitized nest in 1990.

Yellow Warbler, *Dendroica petechia* (Linnaeus). -- F: many, NC: 0. Twelve atlas volunteers reported cowbird parasitism on this highly parasitized species in Alamosa (Gillihan 1993), Costilla (Bridges 1989), Douglas (Springston 1987), El Paso (Brevillier 1992), Elbert (Herold and Herold 1988), Garfield (Zerbi 1990 and Levad 1993), Grand (Collins 1994), Gunnison (Meyer 1994), Jackson (Sedgwick 1987 and Dillon 1993), and Otero (Dickson and Dickson 1989) Counties. Friedmann (1929) does not quantify the number of records but states that Colorado is one of many states with Yellow Warbler host records. Gale (1893) reported two Colorado records of a cowbird egg in a Yellow Warbler nest (Boulder County). Rockwell (1908) reported parasitism of this species in Mesa County. Sclater (1912) reported Aiken's observation of a three-layered nest, possibly indicating two parasitism events. Betts (1913) reported parasitism on this warbler in Boulder County. Keeler-Wolf et al. (1972) reported a parasitized nest in Gunnison County. Kingery (1974) reported parasitism of the Yellow Warbler in Jefferson County. In 1988, Prather observed two parasitism events in Boulder County, the first was of a nest with four warbler eggs and one cowbird egg that did not hatch. The second incident was of a Yellow Warbler feeding a cowbird fledgling. Cruz observed three parasitized nests along Apple Valley Road in Boulder County. Two nests (28 May 1988 and 6 June 1988) contained four warbler eggs and a cowbird egg, the third nest (17 June 1989) contained two warbler eggs and a cowbird egg. Elisabeth Ammon observed (13 June 1990) a parasitized nest on Arapaho Ranch (Boulder County), the nest contained three Yellow Warbler eggs and a cowbird egg. Cruz Jr. observed two parasitized nests in 1990 (Boulder County). Howe and Knopf (1993) reported 27.3% (n=37) nests parasitized in a willow carr community in Jackson County prior to a fire. Following a fire, they found lower parasitism in the burn (1989, 15.8% n=20; 1990, 20.6% n=22) than in the control area (1989 20.8% n=43; 1990 38.6% n=44).

Yellow-rumped Warbler, *Dendroica coronata* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Four fledgling cowbirds were reported with Yellow-rumped Warblers by Parker and Parker (bba 1990) in La Plata County, Kingery and Kingery (bba 1991) in Routt County, Versaw (bba 1993) in Archuleta County, Bridges (bba 1993) in Moffat County, Hallock (bba 1994) in Routt County, and Potter (bba 1994) in La Plata and Mesa Counties.

Black-throated Gray Warbler, *Dendroica nigrescens* (Townsend). -- F: 0, NC: 0. One Colorado record of parasitism for this species comes from Ward (bba 1987) in Moffat County of a pair of Black-throated Gray Warblers successfully raising a young cowbird. Merchant (bba 1990) reported the other of adults feeding a young cowbird in Garfield County.

Grace's Warbler, *Dendroica graciae* (Baird). -- F: 0, NC: 0. The one record comes from Dexter (bba 1989) of cowbird eggs found in a Grace's Warbler nest in San Miguel County.

MacGillivray's Warbler, *Oporornis tolmiei* (Townsend). -- F: 1, NC: 0. Gilman (1907) reported an early Colorado record of parasitism for this species (which Friedmann noted), in which a cowbird egg was observed in a nest with two MacGillivray's Warbler eggs in southwestern Colorado. Recently, Ford (bba 1994) found adults feeding a young cowbird in Gunnison County.

Common Yellowthroat, *Geothlypis trichas* (Linnaeus). -- F: many, NC: 0. Friedmann (1929) states, "several writers claim that this bird is one of the most imposed upon species in their respective regions." Gale (1893) recorded a cowbird egg in a nest of two eggs. Lincoln (1920) reports high frequency of parasitism along the Clear Creek drainage. Barr Lake has a recorded incidence in the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology collection.

Wilson's Warbler, *Wilsonia pusilla* (Wilson). -- F: several, NC: 0. Friedmann et al. (1977) state that records exist for Colorado from the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, but they give no details. Spencer (1985) reports a feeding incident at 3180 m. Ammon observed 2 nests (40% n=5) parasitized in 1990 and four nests (10.5% n=38) parasitized in 1992 (Front Range subalpine willow communities, Boulder, Clear Creek and Summit Counties). In addition, Ammon observed (1990) a male Wilson's Warbler feeding a fledgling cowbird at Red Rock Lake (Boulder County). The Colorado Bird Observatory (bba 1994) recorded many parasitized nests in Summit County.

Yellow-breasted Chat, *Icteria virens* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. The only record of parasitism on this species is from Kingery (bba 1989) in Yuma County.

Western Tanager, *Piranga ludoviciana* (Wilson). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Higgins (bba 1989) reported two young cowbirds in a Western Tanager nest (El Paso County). In 1990, Cruz Jr. observed a parasitized nest with one cowbird egg with three tanager eggs in Boulder County.

Black-headed Grosbeak, *Pheucticus melanocephalus* (Swainson). -- F: several, NC: 0. Gale (1893) states that the Black-headed Grosbeak is a frequent host, but only specifies one record. Sclater (1912) also notes the common frequency of parasitism by cowbirds. There is one egg collection record (DMNH 1914) of a cowbird egg with three grosbeak eggs; no locality information exists but Colorado is assumed.

Blue Grosbeak, *Guiraca caerulea* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Levad (bba 1993) reported a fledgling cowbird with an adult Blue Grosbeak in La Plata County.

Lazuli Bunting, *Passerina amoneae* (Say). -- F: 2, NC: 0. Sclater (1912) reported a Lazuli Bunting nest containing one cowbird egg and three of its own. Bailey and Niedrach (1965) observed a Lazuli Bunting feeding a cowbird (27 June 1951). In addition, Wilson (bba 1988) reported a double parasitism in Douglas County and Herold (bba 1988) reported a fledgling cowbird in Elbert County. Cruz observed (29 June 1988) a parasitized Lazuli Bunting nest which contained three bunting eggs and one cowbird nestling. Upon inspection seven days later the nest only contained a cowbird (Boulder County).

Green-tailed Towhee, *Pipilo chlorurus* (Audubon). -- F: 2, NC: 0. Henshaw (1875) recorded a cowbird egg in a Green-tailed Towhee nest at Fort Garland. According to Rockwell (1908), this species is a favorite cowbird host in Mesa County. Garcia (bba 1991) reported cowbird eggs in a Routt County nest. Martin (bba 1991) observed a Green-tailed Towhee with a fledgling cowbird in Larimer County, as did Dexter (bba 1993) in Montrose County, and Kingery and Kingery (bba 1995) in Chaffee County.

Rufous-sided Towhee, *Pipilo erythrophthalmus* (Linnaeus). -- F: several, NC: 0. Rockwell (1908) states that in Mesa County Rufous-sided Towhees are a favorite host of the cowbird. Kingery and Kingery (bba 1991) report a fledged cowbird with host parents in Jefferson County.

Cassin's Sparrow, *Aimophila cassinii* (Woodhouse). -- F: 1, NC: 0. The only Colorado record of parasitism on this host species is of a nest found parasitized in the Comanche National Grassland, Baca County (Kingery and Julian 1971).

Chipping Sparrow, *Spizella passerina* (Bechstein). -- F: 0, NC: 0. One record is a Chipping Sparrow feeding incident in Rocky Mountain National Park (Spencer 1985). In Larimer County Opler (bba 1993) reported a parasitized nest and Spahn (bba 1988) reported a nest with a cowbird nestling. Fledgling cowbirds were reported by Kingery and Kingery (bba 1992) in Saguache County, Williams (bba 1991) in Mesa County, and Pearson (bba 1994) in Garfield County.

Vesper Sparrow, *Poocetes gramineus* (Gmelin). -- F: 1, NC: 0. Friedmann (1963) reports Colorado as one of many states where Vesper Sparrows are parasitized, however, no details are given. Meyer (bba 1987) reported a nest with young in Gunnison County. Fledglings being fed by adult Vesper Sparrows were reported by Kuenning and Kuenning (bba 1992) in Park County and by Reichert (bba 1993) in Rio Blanco County.

Lark Sparrow, *Chondestes grammacus* (Say). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Rollins reported two incidents of Lark Sparrows feeding a young cowbird (30 April 1960, 28

June 1961) (Bailey and Niedrach 1965). Cowbird eggs were found in Lark Sparrow nests by Kingery (bba 1989) in Yuma County, Truan (bba 1990), and Bannon (bba 1992) in Las Animas County.

Sage Sparrow, *Amphispiza belli* (Cassin). -- F: 0, NC: 0. One Colorado record comes from Kingery and Kingery (bba 1992) of a fledgling cowbird with adult Sage Sparrows in Moffat County.

Lark Bunting, *Calamospiza melanocorys* (Stejneger). -- F: 0, NC: 0. The single record for Colorado comes from a parasitized nest on the Pawnee Grasslands, Weld County, 20 June 1972 (Porter 1973). This is the southernmost record of parasitism on the Lark Bunting (for previous record, see Bennett 1974).

Savannah Sparrow, *Passerculus sandwichensis* (Gmelin). -- F: 2, NC: 0. Warren (1910) reported a nest with one cowbird egg and four Savannah Sparrow eggs at Medano Ranch in Alamosa County. Additionally, Kingery reported both a 1973 parasitized nest in Jefferson County (Kingery 1974), and adults feeding a juvenile cowbird in the San Luis Valley (bba 1993). Dillon (bba 1994) reported a fledgling cowbird with adult sparrows in Jackson County.

Fox Sparrow, *Passerella iliaca* (Merrem). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Colorado's only record of parasitism on this species comes from Lentz (bba 1994) in Summit County.

Song Sparrow, *Melospiza melodia* (Wilson). -- F: 1, NC: 0. Bendire (1873) recorded a nest of three Song Sparrow eggs accompanied by two cowbird eggs in El Paso County on 2 July 1874. Aiken also noted parasitism on this species in El Paso County (Sclater 1912). Brown-headed Cowbird fledglings have been spotted with adult Song Sparrows by Kingery and Kingery (bba 1992) in Moffat County, Levad (bba 1993) in Garfield County, Hetrick (bba 1994) in Adams County, Nelson (bba 1987) in Jackson County and Hawksworth and Graham (bba 1991) in Rio Blanco County reported parasitized nests. Segwick and Knopf (1988) state that this species is a common host in north-central Colorado.

Lincoln's Sparrow, *Melospiza lincolnii* (Audubon). -- F: 1, NC: 0. Kingery (1974) reports a parasitized nest in Jefferson County. Ammon observed a parasitized nest in 1990 that contained two sparrow eggs and a cowbird egg (Caribou Road, Boulder County), and also recorded two nests (2.9% n=70) parasitized in 1992. Parasitism was also recorded by Lentz (bba 1994) in Park County.

Dark-eyed Junco, *Junco hyemalis* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Six records of parasitism exist for this species. Fledgling cowbirds sighted with adults were

reported by Miller (bba 1990) in Custer County, Kingery and Kingery (bba 1992) in Moffat County and Hinsdale County, Meyer (bba 1993) in Gunnison County, Dillon (bba 1994) in Jackson County, and Bouricius (bba 1994) in Boulder County. In Larimer County a parasitized nest was reported by Cringan (bba 1992) and adults feeding a young cowbird in Grand County was reported by Barrett (bba 1991).

Red-winged Blackbird, *Agelaius phoeniceus* (Linnaeus). -- F: several, NC: 0. Gale (1893) and Lincoln (1920) considered this species to be a favorite host of the cowbird. Rockwell (1908) also noted the high frequency of parasitism in Mesa County. Hanka (1979) reported a 17.5% (n= 154) parasitism rate in north-central Colorado and south-central Wyoming. Betts (1913) reported parasitism on this species in Boulder County. Ortega and Cruz (1988, 1991) reported 11% and 41% (n= 650) parasitism in Boulder County. An egg collection (DMNH) record comes from Arapahoe County (1904). In addition, cowbird parasitism on this frequent host was reported in 13 atlas blocks, 11 records of eggs in the nest and two records of a fledgling cowbird with adult blackbirds in Arapahoe (Kingery 1987), Douglas (Springston 1987), Hinsdale (Kingery and Kingery 1992), Jefferson (Jones 1993), Larimer (Cringan 1987 and Means 1990), Logan (Prather 1992), Kiowa (Nelson 1994), Kit Carson (Hartman 1993), Prowers (Nelson 1994), Washington (Andrews 1989), and Yuma (Kingery 1989) Counties.

Western Meadowlark, *Sturnella neglecta* (Audubon). -- F: 1, NC: 0. Aiken found two cowbird eggs in a Western Meadowlark nest in El Paso County (Sclater 1912).

Yellow-headed Blackbird, *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* (Bonaparte). -- F: 1, NC: 0. Lincoln (1920) noted the relatively high frequency of parasitism on this species along the Clear Creek drainage. Gale (1893) also recorded parasitism on this species in Boulder County. Adams (bba 1993) reported a parasitized nest in Delta County. This is interesting, given the parasitism rates of 0.5% (n= 381) found by Hanka (1979) and 0% (n= 351) found by Ortega and Cruz (1988).

Brewer's Blackbird, *Euphagus cyanocephalus* (Wagler). -- F: several, NC: 0. Betts (1913) reported this species being parasitized in Boulder County. Gale (1893) reported one incident in Boulder County. Hanka (1985) reported high elevation (2895 m) parasitism of 40% (n= 45) of Brewer's Blackbird nests. In addition, he also noted three nests with four cowbird eggs, and one nest with six. In north-central Colorado and south-central Wyoming, Hanka (1979) found 19.4% of 217 Brewer's Blackbird nests parasitized. Meyer (bba 1991) reported parasitism of a Brewer's Blackbird nest in Gunnison County. Cruz found a parasitized nest (29 May 1988) that contained four host eggs and a cowbird egg.

Common Grackle, *Quiscalus quiscula* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. The only Colorado record comes from Prather (bba 1992) of a cowbird egg in a Common Grackle nest in Logan County.

Orchard Oriole, *Icterus spurius* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Chace and Severs (bba 1993 and 1994) reported the parasitism of this species in Yuma County, where adult Orchard Orioles were feeding a juvenile cowbird. This adds evidence to Friedmann et al.'s (1977) claim that this species is an acceptor, unlike the Northern Oriole.

Northern (Bullock's) Oriole, *Icterus galbula* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. The Northern Oriole is generally considered a rejector species (Rothstein 1977) and rarely accepts cowbird eggs (Friedmann et al 1977). However, three Colorado records exist. Hanka (1984) reported two nests parasitized in north-central Colorado, and Chace and Severs (bba 1993) reported a Bullock's Oriole feeding a fledged cowbird in Yuma County.

American Goldfinch, *Carduelis tristis* (Linnaeus). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Jones (bba 1991) in Sedgwick County and Bridges (bba 1993) in Denver County both reported an adult goldfinch feeding a young cowbird. Typically American Goldfinches are considered poor cowbird hosts and are rarely parasitized (Middleton 1991).

Lesser Goldfinch, *Carduelis psaltria* (Say). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Cruz Jr. observed two parasitized nests in Boulder County in 1990. The first nest contained two goldfinch and two cowbird eggs, of which only one cowbird hatched. The second nest contained four goldfinch eggs and one cowbird egg.

Cassin's Finch, *Carpodacus mexicanus* (Muller). -- F: 0, NC: 0. Three records exist of parasitized nests of this prolific species in Mesa (Levad, bba 1989), Baca (Thompson, bba 1990), and Delta (Woodward, bba 1994) Counties.

House Sparrow, *Passer domesticus* (Linnaeus). -- F: 2, NC: 0. Rockwell (1909) reported a cowbird egg being incubated in a House Sparrow nest which had been built in an abandoned Black-billed Magpie nest at Barr Lake, Adams County.

### Potential Host Species

Potential host species are confirmed breeders in Colorado (Andrews and Righter 1992) and are parasitized in adjacent states (Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico and Oklahoma). Potential host species include the Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Say's Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Barn Swallow, Eastern Bluebird, Swainson's Thrush, Gray Catbird,

Northern Mockingbird, Sage Thrasher, Bell's Vireo, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Brewer's Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, and the Pine Siskin (Friedmann 1929, 1931, 1938, 1949, 1963, 1966, 1977; Johnson 1960; Sutton 1967; Hill 1976; Elliott 1978; Tyler 1979; Lowther 1977 and 1984; Thompson and Ely 1989; Brown 1994; and Friedmann et al. 1977). These species deserve special attention in Colorado.

## Discussion

We have provided documentation of brood parasitism on 59 species breeding in Colorado. An additional 22 species, known to be hosts in adjacent states are likely to be parasitized in Colorado. Of these 22 species, only the Swainson's Thrush, Indigo Bunting, Brewer's Sparrow, and Grasshopper Sparrow have extensive ranges in Colorado (Andrews and Righter 1992). These species deserve special monitoring to determine parasitism frequencies in Colorado. The Say's Phoebe, Bell's Vireo, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Dickcissel, and Field Sparrow are rare breeders or have localized distributions in Colorado (Andrews and Righter 1992). Gaining quantitative information on parasitism frequencies for host species with limited distributions is difficult, but also important. A better understanding of cowbird host selection can be obtained when comparing host density and parasitism frequency between the host species in the center and fringe of its range. Several potential species listed are not suitable hosts based on their nest location (e.g. cavity nesters) or poor ability to raise cowbird young (e.g. Mourning Dove and Pine Siskin). All nests should be observed and the contents and outcome recorded in the Cornell Nest Record Data Program to ascertain the regional frequency of parasitism and the effect it has on the host species.

Species may vary regionally in their response to cowbird parasitism (Rothstein 1975b). This report provides further evidence of parasitic variation from observations in Colorado where usual egg rejectors sometimes become acceptors (e.g. Northern Oriole), and an usually poor host sometimes is a good one (e.g. American Goldfinch). Additionally, the American Robin has been shown to reject 97.8% of cowbird eggs in several populations throughout the U.S. (Rothstein 1975a), but has been known to accept eggs in Colorado and Kansas (Elliott 1978). In Colorado, Ammon (unpubl.) and Cruz experimentally parasitized 20 American Robin nests with plastic, water-filled, acrylic-painted eggs that closely resembled the dimensions and mass of cowbird eggs. These artificially parasitic experiments elicited a rejection response of 95%, which is similar to what Rothstein (1975a) found in many other U.S. locations, but distinctly different from the response found in Kansas. Even well-known and studied species deserve continued monitoring

of parasitism frequencies to determine changes in responses to the brood parasitic cowbird in Colorado.

We consider our studies of cowbird parasitism in Colorado as on-going, and we hope that astute observers of breeding birds will continue to report their findings to the Cornell Nest Record Program (request cards from Hugh Kingery, Breeding Bird Atlas Coordinator, Denver Museum of Natural History) or directly to us (correspondance to Dr. Alexander Cruz).

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IMMATURE (1ST-WINTER?) DICKCISSEL

At winter feeder in Fort Collins

January 1, 1995

Beth Dillon



CANYON TOWHEE

At feeder in New Mexico

Jim Karo

NEWS FROM THE FIELD  
FALL 1995 (August - November)

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Fall 1995 seemed to be very exciting around the state. Many good birds were found. Some highlights include: the many mountain species seen far onto the plains, the lack of warblers in most areas (excluding Pueblo), and the good number of stray gulls and jaegers. I believe the most exciting bird activity this fall and early winter were the report of *three* Ancient Murrelets in Colorado. What is this little ocean bird doing here? The two in this report were found injured or dead. The one in December was alive and well at Chatfield Reservoir for only one day. Many birders were able to see it on that date. Colorado has only three previous Ancient Murrelet records prior to 1994. One was found on a road near Denver during fall 1994 and now three more in 1995. These four will make the total *seven* Ancient Murrelet records for Colorado. Let's all try to find a healthy one in 1996 that decides to stay for more than one day. This will let other Colorado birders have a chance to add it to their lists.

One quick story. Mark Janos and I were birding in the lower Arkansas River valley on October 14. We went to many areas without seeing much of interest. On the way home on Highway 50 just west of Manzanola, I spotted a weird-looking hawk on top of a telephone pole. As we drove by, I thought maybe we should turn around (even though it probably was just a dark-phase Red-tailed Hawk). When we got back to the hawk, we were overwhelmed to see it was an adult **Harris' Hawk** (I somewhat thought it was this species when we drove by at 55 mph). Mark did not see the bird when we first went by, so he had no idea what I thought I had seen this time. Now whenever Mark and I go by this spot we look very carefully for the bird. I guess the point is, if you just drove by something you think was unusual, go back and look at it. Who knows, you might find that overdue first state record of White-tailed Kite.

The following species, reported this fall and included in this report, have fewer than 10 accepted state records: Brown Pelican, Harris' Hawk, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Long-tailed Jaeger (one or two reports), Little Gull (two reports), Great Black-backed Gull (two reports), Ancient Murrelet (*two* reports), Lesser Nighthawk, Blue-throated Hummingbird, Acorn Woodpecker (two reports), Sprague's Pipit, Phainopepla, and Prairie Warbler. Also, there were many other unusual birds seen this fall.

The data in this report are from reports sent to Hugh Kingery for *Audubon Field Notes* and from the Denver Field Ornithologists' newsletter, *The Lark Bunting*. This report does not include the Colorado Rare Bird Alert listings, unless they were in a report to the above sources. I would like to thank all of the regional compilers and contributors. Without their reports, I could not do this for your *C.F.O. Journal*. We still need compilers for three major birding areas in Colorado: Denver, Boulder, and Colorado Springs. All underlined species in this report require documentation to the Colorado Bird Records Committee (CBRC). An \* means a Rare Bird Form was submitted by the observer to CBRC or to Hugh Kingery (who makes a copy and sends it to CBRC).

Notable species reported follow (including number of individuals seen, plumage or sex, location, date, and observer(s) in most cases):

**Pacific Loon:** 12 reported between 10/15 & 11/29.

**Common Loon:** 60+ reported between 8/8 & 11/25

**Red-necked Grebe:** one at Union Reservoir, near Longmont, from 11/7-11/24 (JPr, mo)

**Brown Pelican:** one immature at Confluence Park in Delta from 8/5-10/12.

**American Bittern:** one se of Berthoud in August (BC); one at Bonny Reservoir on 11/4 (DB).

**Tundra Swan:** two at Hamilton Reservoir on 11/5 (RAR); two at Big Johnson Reservoir in Colorado Springs from 11/7-11/22 (BG, mo); one immature at Sombrero Ponds in Boulder on 11/4 (WPL, JM). This bird was sadly found dead on the ice several days later. One at Adobe Creek Golf Course on the western slope on 11/25 (CD).

**Trumpeter Swan:** two at Union Reservoir on 11/1 (BPr); one at Huerfano Reservoir near Vineland on 11/11 (MJ\*).

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** one at Huerfano Reservoir on 11/4 (PSS, CS); one immature in Fort Collins on 11/1 (DCE, DAL, WPL, BPu); 11 at Valco Ponds in Canon City on 11/12 (TL, RB, BM); one immature at Cherry Creek Reservoir on 11/21 (BB); one near Fruita on 11/25 (CD); one on the NE Colorado DFO Trip on 11/26 (JRo, mo).

**Greater White-fronted Goose X Snow Goose:** one near Greeley on 11/24 (JHi).

**Snow Goose:** many at several locations statewide this fall.

**Ross Goose:** seen at scattered locations statewide this fall, usually with Snow Geese. A very high number of 800 at Huerfano Reservoir on 11/11 (MJ); one near Mack on 11/11 (CD) is a rare west slope record.

**Greater Scaup:** one at Highline Reservoir on 9/18 (CD); one at Clifton on 11/1 (RL); one male at a pond n. of 78th Avenue at the S. Platte River in Adams County on 11/4 (TM, VM); four to six at Rist Benson Reservoir near Loveland from 11/4-11/30 (CH, mo).

**Oldsquaw:** two near Greeley from 11/13-11/30 (JHi); one at Union Reservoir on 11/20 (JPr) and 11/23-24 (BPr); one at Chatfield Reservoir on 11/24 (JM, WPL); four at Upper Queens Reservoir on 11/25 (BKP, MJ); one on the NE Colorado DFO trip on 11/26 (JRo, mo); three at Douglas Reservoir near Wellington on 11/24 (NE).

**Black Scoter:** one female at McLellan Reservoir from 11/17-11/30 (TJ, mo); one female at Marston Reservoir on 11/19 (TJ).

**Surf Scoter:** one at Cherry Creek Reservoir on 10/27 (WPL, DAL); one female at Pueblo Reservoir's Fish Hatchery Pond from 10/28-11/4 (BKP, DS, mo); one female at Big Johnson Reservoir on 10/28 (BG, DSm, MH); three at Rist Benson Reservoir from 11/3-11/17 (CH, TM, VM, mo).

**White-winged Scoter:** one on the S. Platte River in Adams County from 10/29-11/3 (DLA, FS, DFO, mo); one near Greeley from 11/13-11/30 (JHi); one male at McLellan Reservoir from 11/17-11/30 (TJ, mo).

**Barrow's Goldeneye:** two near Molina on 10/26 (CD); one female at Valco Ponds in Pueblo on 11/5 (PSS, CS); two at Warren Lake in Fort Collins on 11/5 (WPL, DAL, TL); one adult male at North Poudre Reservoir #3 nw of Wellington on 11/5 (TL).

**Northern Goshawk:** two immatures on the Rifle Area DFO trip on 8/12-8/13 (KP, mo); one in Estes Park on 9/14 (SR); five on the Indian Peaks Fall Bird Count (IPFBC) in upper Boulder County on 9/16; one adult in Bow Mar on 9/24-9/25 (TJ) and one immature there on 10/5 (TJ); one at Mount Falcon Open Space on 10/3 (AB, mo); one immature in Pueblo on 10/21 (BD); one adult n. of Eagle on 11/5 (JMe) and one immature there on 11/7 (JMe).

**Harris' Hawk** one adult just w. of Manzanola on 10/14-10/15 (BKP, MJ\*, mo).

**Broad-winged Hawk:** one on the Roxborough State Park DFO trip on 9/17 (JBH, mo); one at Tamarack SWA on 9/24 (BPr, CFO); one immature at Lykins Gulch on 9/25-9/26 (VD, TE, JHa); one immature at Barr Lake on 9/26 (TL); one at Mount Falcon Open Space on 10/3 (AB, mo).

**Peregrine Falcon:** four in the Grand Valley during the period; one immature at Apex Trail in Jefferson County on 8/17 (KS); one at Lake Cheraw on 9/2 (MJ, VT, BD, LL); one at Hart's Basin on 9/3 (KP); one at Jumbo Reservoir on 9/4 (DAL, DCE), one e. of Rocky Ford on 9/9 (SS, MR); one on the IPFBC on 9/16; one at Lower Latham Reservoir on 9/19 (WPL, JFB); one adult at Barr Lake State Park on 9/10 (DSc, DFO); one immature at Union Reservoir on 9/22 (WPL); one w. of Longmont on 10/3 (DWK); one on the Monte Vista DFO trip on 10/21-10/22 (MP, SP, mo); one adult at Union Reservoir on 10/26 (WPL); one at Big Johnson Reservoir on 11/6-11/7 (BG); one male and one female at 74th Avenue and the S. Platte River on 11/10 (TL); one w. of Loveland on 11/26 (CH). [It seemed to be a good fall for this species. However, as usual, I did not see one.]

**American Golden-Plover:** one at Union Reservoir on 9/22 (DWK); one at Milton Reservoir on 9/24, 9/30, and 10/1 (RO); eight at Jumbo SWA on 9/25 (JRe); three at Jumbo on 9/29 (JFB, WPL) and one there on 10/8 (NE, JK, DFO) and eleven there 10/14 (DB), six at Little Jumbo Reservoir on 10/9 (JFB, WPL, DAL); one at Big Johnson Reservoir from 10/24-10/28 (BG, mo).

**Piping Plover:** two at Milton Reservoir on 8/11 (RO).

**Mountain Plover:** two at the La Junta Sewage Ponds on 8/18 (BKP, MJ); one at Adobe Creek Reservoir on 10/15 (DJ).

**Upland Sandpiper:** 22 seen on the southeastern plains between 8/12 and 9/17. This is an unusually high number.

**Ruddy Turnstone:** one at Hannah Ranch SWA south of Colorado Springs on 9/9-9/10 (AV\*, MJ\*, BKP, mo); one at Union Reservoir on 9/28 (JV).

**Red Knot:** one at Jumbo Reservoir on 8/31 (JRe); one in winter plumage at the La Junta Sewage Ponds from 9/1-9/3 (BKP, mo).

**Sharp-tailed Sandpiper:** one juvenile at a pond near the junction of Weld County Roads 42 and 45 east of LaSalle on 8/5 (JPr\*, WPL\*, PDL, JHi\*). If accepted, it will be a 2nd state record.

**Dunlin:** one near Grand Junction on 11/1 (RL); one at Union Reservoir on 11/10 (BPR, IP, CH, WPL, JFB); one immature at Windsor Lake on 11/23-11/24 (WPL, JM, DCE, JHi).

**Buff-breasted Sanpiper** one at Jumbo Reservoir on 9/1 (JM); two individuals (different from the bird on 9/1) at Jumbo on 9/4 (DAL, JM, DCE).

**Short-billed Dowitcher**: one juvenile at Hart's Basin near Delta on 8/18-8/20 (CD\*, RL\*, photos by CD); one at Jumbo Reservoir on 9/14 (BBr).

**Red Phalarope** one at Ridgway on 9/10 (KP); two at Jumbo SWA on 9/25 (JRe).

**Jaeger sp.**: one at Barr Lake on 10/21 (L&MR, DFO, mo).

**Pomarine Jaeger**: one at Cherry Creek Reservoir on 9/11 (PE, JRe, DFO).

**Parasitic Jaeger** one light-phased juvenile at Lake Henry e. of Ordway from 9/9-9/17 (SS, MR\*, BKP, CFO).

**Long-tailed Jaeger** one adult at Milton Reservoir on 9/4-9/6 (RO) and perhaps the same bird at Barr Lake from 9/10-9/15 (TL, DSc, HK\*, DFO).

**Laughing Gull**: one immature at Cherry Creek Reservoir on 8/31 (JRe).

**Little Gull**: one immature at Clifton from 9/12-9/14 (RL\*, CD, BW, photos by CD); one immature at Union Reservoir on 9/24 (DAL\*, JM).

**Thayer's Gull** one first-winter at Valco Ponds in Pueblo on 10/11 (BKP); as many as five at Jackson Reservoir from 10/18-11/18 (JHi); two immatures at Horsetooth Reservoir near Fort Collins from 11/18-11/19 (DCE, WPL); one first winter bird at Pueblo Reservoir on 11/26 (MJ); one at Union Reservoir during the last two weeks in November (WPL).

**Great Black-backed Gull** one third-winter bird molting into adult winter plumage at Cherry Creek Reservoir from 9/16-11/18 (G&JH, MJ\*, SEF\*, PEL\*, mo). This bird was first thought to be a Western Gull. Opinion now seems strongly in favor of GBBG, although a final ruling by the Colorado Bird Records Committee is yet to be made. Among those viewing this bird were East Coast veterans listed above. Also, one adult winter at Pueblo Reservoir from 11/16-11/30 (BKP, MJ\*, mo).

**Black-legged Kittiwake** two immatures seen together at Nee Noshe Reservoir on 11/25 (BKP, MJ\*).

**Sabine's Gull** 18 found this fall in eastern Colorado between 8/31 and 9/29; one immature at Clifton on 9/12 (RL\*, CD, BW); and one immature at Hart's Basin on 10/14 (JRG\*, mo) were rare west slope records.

**Caspian Tern:** one at Cherry Creek Reservoir on 8/15 (BB); one at Lake Cheraw on 9/17 (DJ).

**Common Tern:** 17 seen between 9/2 and 10/7 in eastern Colorado.

**Least Tern:** two at Jet Reservoir in Kiowa County on 8/12 (CW, JK, BKP, VT, BD); four at Adobe Creek Reservoir on 9/26 (DB) and four there on 10/1 (DB).

**Ancient Murrelet:** one found on a road near Louisville in late October or early November, taken by plane to San Diego, CA and released; one immature found dead at Utah Pond Park in Aurora on 11/9 (DB), the latter taken to the Denver Museum of Natural History.

**White-winged Dove:** one in a Pueblo backyard from 10/21-11/7 (NC, BKP, MJ\*, DS\*, mo). With all the recent records, Pueblo may be the "White-winged Dove Capitol of Colorado".

**Barn Owl:** two in the Grand Valley during the period (RL); one at Loveland Fairgrounds on 8/26 (MM); two in Cottonwood Canyon in Baca County on 9/3 (BKP, DFO); one at Two Buttes Reservoir on 9/3 (BKP, PH, DFO); one at Lamar Community College on 9/9 (SS, MR); one at Lake Henry on 10/8 (MJ).

**Flammulated Owl:** one s. of Eagle on 8/30 (KP); one at Rocky Mountain National Park on 9/25 (SR). This species is rarely found in the fall.

**Short-eared Owl:** one se. of Berthoud on 11/1-11/4 (BC); one at Cherry Creek Reservoir on 11/22 (BR).

**Lesser Nighthawk:** one at the Prospect Road bridge over the Poudre River in Fort Collins on 9/10 (DAL\*, DCE).

**Black Swift:** three flying over the observer's cabin in the Wet Mountains near Lake Isabel on 8/3 (BKP); 8-12 at Willow Lake in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains on 8/7 (AV); 15 in Pueblo on 9/6 (BD); many others were found in normal areas on the western slope.

**Blue-throated Hummingbird:** one along the Storm King Mountain Trail near Glenwood Springs on 8/25 (KP).

**Black-chinned Hummingbird:** one northerly report from Waterton Canyon on 9/9 (HK, DFO); others found on the western slope and southeastern Colorado during the early part of the period.

**Calliope Hummingbird:** a female near Lake Isabel on 8/4 (BKP); two at Wetmore on 8/19 (VT). Very few reports compared to August 1994.

**Acorn Woodpecker:** two in southwestern Durango on 8/13 (DB); one female at Sylvan Dale Ranch west of Loveland from 9/27-10/2 (CH, mo).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** up to four at Bonny Reservoir from 9/17-11/5 (mo); three at Tamarack SWA on 9/23 (BPr, CFO); one on the NE Colorado DFO trip on 11/26 (JR, mo).

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** up to two reported from a location ne of Fowler from 10/1-10/7 (PSS, CS, DJ); one immature in Lyons on 11/28 (DWK).

**Red-naped Sapsucker:** two (a male and female) at Valco Ponds in Pueblo from 9/9-10/8 (BKP, mo); one at Rigli Ranch on 9/23 (JRi, DFO); one at Lyons on 9/31 (DWK); one female on the NE Colorado DFO trip on 10/8 (NE, JK, mo); one on the DFO trip to Monte Vista on 10/21-10/22 (MP, SP, mo).

**Three-toed Woodpecker:** one ne of Steamboat Springs on 8/4 (KS); one female near Lake Isabel on 8/19 (BKP, MJ, DFO); one on the IPFBC on 9/16; an amazing 12 were reported from the western slope between 9/28 and 10/31 (KP).

**Willow Flycatcher:** two or three found in the Eagle area on 8/10 (JMe); one was s. of Lyons on 8/14 (DWK); one e. of Fort Lyon on 9/1 (BKP); one at Cottonwood Canyon on 9/3 (BKP, DFO); two at the Escalante SWA near Delta on 9/7 (RL, CD).

**Gray Flycatcher:** one banded at Barr Lake on 8/31 (TL, SH); another northerly bird reported at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal on 9/10 (HK, UK, DFO).

**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** one at Lykins Gulch on 9/1 (JHa, VD).

**Great Crested Flycatcher:** one at Lake Henry on 9/3 (MJ, VZ); one at Two Buttes Reservoir on 9/3 (BKP); one at Lamar Community College on 9/4 (BKP, DFO).

**Black Phoebe:** one adult at the Canon City Riverwalk from 10/14-10/17 (SM, DP, MJ) and 11/15 (BKP\*).

**Eastern Phoebe:** one at Lake Henry on 9/9 (SS, MR); one in Rock Canyon below Pueblo Reservoir dam on 10/20-10/21 (BKP, MJ); many others in Baca County during Labor Day weekend.

**Cassin's Kingbird:** two at Valco Ponds in Pueblo from 9/19-9/24 (BKP, mo); two w. of Grover on 9/22 (BDi); one near Avondale on 9/23 (MJ); one on the west side of Fort Collins on 9/28 (DAL); others in Baca County during Labor Day weekend.

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** one near Campo on 9/16 (PJ, WAS); one in sw Kansas with kingbirds about two miles from Colorado on the Cimarron River, flying from the west, probably from Colorado (BKP, Chris Hobbs, Sebastian Patti and Steve Addinall).

**Purple Martin:** three at Coulter Mesa in Garfield County on 9/2 (KP).

**Mountain and foothills species wandering onto the Plains:** *Scrub Jay*, *Mountain Chickadee*, *Plain Titmouse*, *Golden-crowned Kinglet*, *Red-breasted Nuthatch*, and *Pygmy Nuthatch* all were seen in strange areas on the plains this fall. [In Morton County, Kansas: *Pinyon Jays*, *Scrub Jays* and *Mountain Chickadees* all made news. All are unusual or rare in Kansas.]

**Winter Wren:** one at Barr Lake on 10/14 (MC, SH); one near Fort Collins on 10/18 (FK); one at Pony Express SWA in Sedgwick County on 10/22 (DB); one at Valco Ponds in Pueblo on 11/11 (MJ); one at Ovid on 11/26 (JRo, DFO).

**Eastern Bluebird:** 14 in Boulder on 10/6 (BJ); one male in Logan County on 10/15 (DCE, DAL, JM); nine at Bonny Reservoir on 11/4 (DB); one w. of Loveland on 11/6-11/8 (CH); two in Penrose on 11/12 (TL, RB, BM, RW); one at Lamar on 11/25 (BKP, MJ).

**Brown Thrasher:** one near Gypsum in Eagle County on 9/18 (JMe).

**Sprague's Pipit:** two north of Road 30 and west of Road 59 in Sedgwick County on 10/7 (DB) and 10/8 (JK, NE, DFO).

**Bohemian Waxwing:** 25 in Clifton on 11/22 (CD).

**Phainopepla:** one female at the Redlands near Grand Junction from 10/29-10/30 (GH, CD, RL, VZ, photos by CD).

**White-eyed Vireo:** one adult at Colorado City on 10/30 (DS\*).

**Bell's Vireo:** one at the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt on 9/23 (TM, VM).

**Solitary (Eastern) Vireo:** one at Ovid on 9/24 (BPr, CFO).

**Solitary (Cassin's) Vireo:** one at Prewitt Reservoir on 8/27 (JK, DFO); three banded at Barr Lake on 9/5, 9/14 and 9/22 (TL, SH).

**Solitary (non-plumbeous) Vireo:** one at Grand Junction on 10/2 (RL\*). This bird was one of the two subspecies considered uncommon to rare in Colorado.

**Philadelphia Vireo:** one at Valco Ponds in Pueblo on 9/7 (MJ\*, BKP).

**Red-eyed Vireo:** one at Valco Ponds in Pueblo on 8/25 (BKP); four at Chatfield State Park on 8/26 (EH, mo); one on the NE Colorado DFO trip on 8/27 (JK, DFO); one to two in Fort Collins on 9/2 (DAL, DCE); one at Two Buttes Reservoir on 9/3 (BKP); one in Waterton Canyon on 9/9 (HK, DFO); one at Lamar Community College on 9/16 (BKP); one at Fountain Creek Regional Park near Fountain on 9/16 (AV); one at Jackson Lake on 10/9 (JHi); one at Rocky Mountain Arsenal on 10/18 (EH, DR, DFO).

**Tennessee Warbler:** one at Valco Ponds in Pueblo from 9/19-9/23 (BKP, mo); one at Tamarack SWA on 9/23 (BPr); three at Rigli Ranch on 9/23 (JRi, DFO); one at Crow Valley Campground on 9/23 (JHi); one at Lake Henry on 10/8 (DJ).

**Nashville Warbler:** one at Barr Lake on 9/9 (LB); one at Valco Ponds in Pueblo on 9/23 (KS); one in Fort Collins on 10/1 (DAL).

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** one immature at Valco Ponds in Pueblo from 9/20-9/22 (BKP).

**Magnolia Warbler:** two at Crow Valley Campground on 9/9 (BDi); one immature banded at Barr Lake on 9/14 (TL, SH); one at Chatfield State Park on 9/17 (BB); one immature banded at Barr Lake on 9/17 (SH); one adult male in fall plumage at Valco Ponds in Pueblo from 9/19-9/22 (BKP, mo); one at Tamarack SWA on 9/23 (BPr).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** one immature banded at Barr Lake on 8/31 (TL, JHi, SH); one immature male banded and recaptured at Barr Lake on 9/13 and 9/15 (TL, SH); one immature female banded at Lykins Gulch on 9/18 (JHa, VD, photo JHa); one immature male at Valco Ponds in Pueblo from 9/23-9/25 (MJ, KS, mo); one female at the Canon City Riverwalk on 10/15 (MJ, BKP, VT, PEL, SEF, VMA); one female at Chatfield State Park on 11/4 (BB); one at Gregory Canyon in Boulder on 11/13 (BK).

**Black-throated Gray Warbler:** one female at Valco Ponds in Pueblo on 9/28 (BD, JD); one immature male at Two Buttes Reservoir on 10/1 (DB); others found on the western slope and in Fremont County where they nest.

**Townsend's Warbler:** one seen on the early date of 8/13, followed by one on 8/14. A few others were seen from late August to mid-October.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** one adult male at Milton Reservoir on 9/16 (RO).

**Pine Warbler:** one at Golden Ponds Park in Longmont on 8/31 (DWK); one male in Logan County on 10/15 (DAL, JM, DCE).

**Palm Warbler:** one at Bonny Reservoir on 9/21 (J&NK); one at the Pony Express SWA on 10/7 (DB); one at Valco Ponds in Pueblo on 10/29-10-30 (BKP, mo).

**Blackpoll Warbler:** one at Prewitt Reservoir on 8/27 (JK, DFO); one banded at Lykins Gulch on 9/8 (TE, VD).

**Black-and-white Warbler:** one adult female at Lake Henry on 8/26 (MJ, BKP); one at Chatfield State Park on 9/3 (BB); one at Valco Ponds in Pueblo on 9/10 (BD); one at Two Buttes Reservoir on 9/11 (DSm, GC); one female in Pueblo City Park on 9/24 (MJ); one immature male at Chatfield State Park on 10/28 (TL, SH); also one banded at Lykins Gulch during the period.

**American Redstart:** 21 were reported between 8/27 and 9/26; one late first-year male at Valco Ponds in Pueblo from 10/29-10/31 (BKP).

**Worm-eating Warbler:** one reported at Lyons on 10/13 (DWK\*, RD).

**Ovenbird:** one e. of Lake Meredith on 9/1 (BKP); one at Lake Henry on 9/3 (MJ, VZ); one at Two Buttes Reservoir on 9/11 (DSm, GC); one at Crow Valley Campground on 9/22 (BDi); one in Kremmling on 10/29 (NB\*).

**Northern Waterthrush:** 15 reported between 8/17 and 9/16 in eastern Colorado; one at Escalante SWA on 9/4 (RL, KP).

**Summer Tanager:** one female at Wheat Ridge Greenbelt on 9/22 (BS).

**Northern Cardinal:** one male at Carrizo Canyon in Baca County on 9/3 (BKP, DFO); one female at Ovid on 10/8 (NE, JK, DFO) and two on 11/26 (JRo, DFO).

**Rufous-sided (Eastern) Towhee:** four at Tamarack SWA on 9/23 (BPr) and five there on 9/24 (BPr, CFO). This former subspecies is now elevated to full specific rank and should be reported to define its status in Colorado.

**Canyon Towhee:** one wandered north to Bow Mar on 10/2 (TJ).

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** one immature male at Wheat Ridge Greenbelt on 9/25 (BS); one immature male at Valco Ponds in Pueblo on 10/6 (BKP, BD); one immature male at Wellington on 10/17-10/18 (SMA, KM).

**Field Sparrow:** five at Two Buttes Reservoir on 9/4 (GA, DFO); one w. of Lyons on 9/4 (DWK); five at Bonny Reservoir on 11/4-11/5 (JKi, DFO).

**Swamp, White-throated and Harris' Sparrows:** all reported in good numbers around the state this fall.

**Golden-crowned Sparrow:** one at Cherry Creek Reservoir on 10/23 (BB).

**Rusty Blackbird:** one in Fort Collins on 11/4 (DCE); one female in fall plumage in Winter Park on 11/17 (GPH\*).

**Great-tailed Grackle:** one male at Valco Ponds in Canon City on 11/12 (TL, RB, BM), this maybe only the 2nd Fremont County Record; many others found around the state this fall.

**Purple Finch:** one in Pueblo on 10/21 (BD); one in Fort Collins on 11/2 (RAR); one e. of Fort Lyon on Roads JJ & 16 in Bent County from 11/12-11/23 (BKP, VT, MJ\*, mo).

**White-winged Crossbill:** one adult and 3 or 4 juveniles on the Grand Mesa on 9/5 (RL\*).

**Cited Observers:** DFO Field Trip, CFO Field Trip, Wichita Audubon Society, Kansas (WAS), Indian Peaks Fall Bird Count (IPFBC), George Armbrust (GA), John Barber (JFB), Norm Barrett (NB), Ann Bonnell (AB), Bob Bradley (BBR), Dan Bridges (DB), Bob Brown (BB), Lea Ann Brown (LB), Richard Bunn (RB), Mike Carter (MC), Bobbie Christensen (BC), Gary Conover (GC), Nancy Crafton (NC), Raymond Davis (RD), Coen Dexter (CD), Bob Dickson (BD), Johnnie Dickson (JD), Beth Dillon (BDi), Virginia Dionigi (VD), Patty Echelmeyer (PE), David Ely (DCE), Norm Erthal (NE), Tony Esposito (TE), Shawneen Finnegan (SEF), Bob Goycoolea (BG), J. Richard Guadagno (JRG), Bob & Nancy Gustafson (B&NG), Glenn & Jeane Hageman (G&JH), Christian Hagen (CH), Joe Harrison (JHa), J.B. Hayes (JBH), Phil Hayes (PH), Joe Himmel (JHi), Ed Holub (EH), Gregory Horstman (GPH), Gloria Howard (GH), Mark Hullinger (MH), Scott Hutchings (SH), Mark Janos (MJ), Pete Janzen (PJ), Bob Jickling (BJ), Dave Johnson (DJ), Tina Jones (TJ), Bill Kaempfer (BK), Joe & Norma Kamby (J&NK), Joey Kellner (JK), D.W. King (DWK), Jackie King (JKi), Hugh Kingery (HK), Urling Kingery (UK), Fritz Knopf (FK), David Laliberte (DLA), David Leatherman (DAL), Paul Lehman (PEL), Tony Leukering (TL), Rich Levad (RL), Lindsay Lilly Jr. (LL), Paula Lisowsky (PDL), William Lisowsky (WPL), Marilyn Mador (MM),

Joe Mammoser (JM), Kathy Martin (KM), Steve Martin (SMa), Bill Maynard (BM), Virginia Maynard (VMa), Jack Merchant (JMe), Tim Mitzen (TM), Vince Mitzen (VM), Se Etta Moss (SM), Ric Olsen (RO), David Pantle (DP), Brandon Percival (BKP), Myron Plooster (MP), Suzi Plooster (SP), Kim Potter (KP), Bill Prather (BPr), Inez Prather (IP), John Prather (JPr), Bill Pulliam (BPu), Mike Rader (MR), Scott Rashid (SR), Jack Reddall (JRe), David Rhodes (DR), Bob Righter (BR), Joe Rigli (JRi), Joe Roller (JRo), Lee & Marilyn Rowe (L&MR), Ron Ryder (RAR), Pearle Sandstrom-Smith (PSS), Karleen Schofield (KS), Dick Schottler (DSc), Scott Seltman (SS), David Silverman (DS), Clif Smith (CS), David Smith (DSm), Bob Spencer (BS), Frances Sperl (FS), Van Truan (VT), John Vanderpoel (JV), Alan Versaw (AV), Rosie Watts (RW), Chris Wood (CW), Brenda Wright (BW), Vic Zerbi (VZ), many other observers (mo).



**LAUGHING GULL (2ND WINTER)**

Corpus Christi, Texas

April 10, 1996

David Leatherman

## INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTRIBUTORS OF THE *C.F.O. JOURNAL*

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, July and October, respectively.

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If photographs are submitted, please send two copies, as the records are duplicated before being sent to committee members.

Send records of rare birds to the Colorado Bird Records Committee, c/o Zoological Collections, Denver Museum of Natural History, City Park, Denver, CO 80205.

