
Journal of the

Colorado Field Ornithologists

The Colorado Field Ornithologists' Quarterly





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Back Cover: Female Varied Thrush seen at Crow Valley Campground, Weld County, in October 2001. Photo by Steve Messick.

**COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS’
MISSION STATEMENT**

The Colorado Field Ornithologists exists to: promote the field study, conservation, and enjoyment of Colorado birds; review sightings of rare birds through the Colorado Bird Records Committee and maintain the authoritative list of Colorado birds; publish the *Journal of the Colorado Field Ornithologists*; and conduct field trips and workshops, and hold annual conventions.

CONVENTION 2002

This is a reminder about the CFO Convention in Durango, May 24-27. Get your registrations in soon. Go on great field trips, see great birds, and join Kenn Kaufman at the banquet. Hotel reservations need to be made at the Durango Doubletree by April 24 to receive the discounted convention rate. Bids are still being taken for the special field trip with Kenn Kaufman. The trip is co-led by Colorado Bird Records Committee members, Chris Wood and Tony Leukering. \$50 minimum bid please.

The pre-convention trip from Pueblo will meet at the K-Mart parking lot on US 50 and I-25 at 7 A.M. and will be led by Chris Wood. Check out the CFO website at www.cfo-link.org for the convention schedule and registration forms. You can also download the registration brochure at: www.cfo-link.org/convention2002.pdf. E-mail Mark Yaeger at conventions@cfo-link.org for more information. Hope to see you there!

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

June 1, 2002 **Bugs, Birds and Owls** - Join Dave Leatherman to explore the Bobcat Fire area west of Loveland, followed by an evening search for Flammulated Owls. Meet Dave at 1:00 P.M. at the Chili's Restaurant parking lot, northwest quadrant of the US34 exit from I-25. Bring a small hatchet (to hunt for bark beetles and wood borers) and rain gear. We will explore the Bobcat Fire area for insects and other invertebrates that are using the burned trees and the birds that may be associated with them. After a break for supper, we will meet again at 7:30 to drive into the foothills west of Fort Collins in search of the owls, returning to town at approximately 10:30 P.M. RSVPs and questions may be directed to Dave at dleather@lamar.colostate.edu or 970-491-6303.

July 27, 2002 **Black Swifts** - Join Sue Hirshman to view Black Swifts near Ouray in the beautiful San Juan Mountains of southwest Colorado. Sue will guide us to active nests of these fascinating birds, where we can observe adults and, possibly, recently-hatched nestlings. American Dippers also nest in this area. Depending upon current bird activity, there may be additional birding after we see the swifts. Meet Sue at the Box Canyon parking lot at 10:00 A.M. From the north, take Hwy 550 through Ouray. After the road makes a sharp turn you will see County Road 361. Go right on CR 361 and follow it to the park. For more information and to RSVP, email Sue at blkswiftbirder@aol.com.

CFO BOARD MINUTES

Sherry P. Chapman, Secretary

The regular quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors was held on Saturday, February 2, at 11:00 A.M. at the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Brighton, CO with the President in the chair and the Secretary being present. Board members attending: BB Hahn, Norm Lewis, Doug, Faulkner, Rich Levad, Cheryl Day, Dona Hilkey, Rachel Hopper, Bob Spencer and Tony Leukering. The minutes of the prior meeting were approved as read.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President reported that our membership brochures were mailed to about 20 retail outlets of Wild Birds Unlimited and Wild Bird Centers.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer reported that our current assets are \$25,483.23. Our assets weathered the stock market well over the past year and the bond fund reported an increase of 17% for the year ending October 31, 2001.

COLORADO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

Tony Leukering reported at length on the progress the committee has made with updating their bylaws, revising the review list, the addition of the position of CBRC Secretary, and the circulation of year 2000 submitted records. The board approved the changes to the committee bylaws and a copy is on file with the minutes.

The new review list will be published in the Journal when all final decisions have been made and Tony will write a reminder to CFO members that the main purpose of the records is for the archives. The committee has worked long and hard to reduce the number of species that will be included on the review list (currently approximately 130) in hopes of encouraging a greater number of reports on species that will remain on the list. The committee has also suggested conditional additions to the CBRC review list with the area of the state in which it is recommended that reports of the species be reviewed. This information will also be published in the Journal when it is completed.

In addition to retaining the records at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, the records committee would like to begin the process of archiving slides, photographs, etc. onto CD-ROM for purposes of security. Bob Spencer moved that CFO purchase a scanner and slide adapter, with expenses limited to \$300, for CFO business. Motion seconded and passed unanimously.

The Board approved the recommendation of the records committee to appoint Ric Olson to serve from 2002-2004 and also to renew the term of Chris Wood for the same time period.

FIELDTRIPS

Norm Lewis reported that he has several field trips arranged for later this year. Rich Levad will lead an owl trip in April in the Grand Junction area. Brandon Percival will lead warbler trips to southeast Colorado in May and Sue Hirshman will lead a Black Swift trip to Box Canyon near Ouray in July. Norm is also working on arranging gull, raptor, and shorebird identification workshops.

JOURNALEDITOR

Doug will begin the series, "Little-Known Birding Areas," in the April issue. Bluff Lake will be featured.

MEMBERSHIP

The President reported for Ray Davis that the membership stands at 362 as of December 31, 2001. Of the 59 that expired, he expects approximately 30 to renew.

WEBSITE

Rachel Hopper reported that our domain name has been re-registered. The board approved her request to establish a second FTP account for the records committee at a monthly cost of \$5.00. This will allow them to upload and download files in a secure environment..

Rachel is working to find a new host for COBIRDS. Topica is not working to her satisfaction and she is investigating an alternate host. The new company has reasonable monthly charges and she is, at this point, pleased with the support they offer. The board approved the use of the new server with a cost increase of \$5.00 per month.

NOMINATINGCOMMITTEE

Bob Spencer reported that Sharon Dooley is willing to serve as Membership Chairman with Ray Davis continuing to maintain the records. Vice-president Norm Lewis volunteered to serve a second term which will expire in 2003. Directors Rich Levad, Dona Hilkey, Bob Spencer, Treasurer BB Hahn and Secretary Sherry Chapman are willing to serve second terms which will run through 2004. The terms of Cheryl Day and Sharon Dooley will expire in 2005. The committee is working to find a candidate for President.

FUNDED PROJECTS COMMITTEE

BB Hahn reported for Pearle Sandstrom-Smith that the committee received only one request for funding. They recommend funding \$840 to Heather Swanson's project, "Effects of Natural Patchiness and Urbanization on Ponderosa Pine Forest Bird Resource Use and Community Composition." BB Hahn moved that the recommendation be approved. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2002 Convention - BB Hahn reported that the six-color Convention T-shirts with artwork designed by Drew Smith will sell for \$16.00.

BB Hahn reminded the board that we will need to "pass the hat" during the Convention to replenish the Landowner Appreciation Plaque Fund. She also announced that Drew Smith will donate the funds from the sale of his original artwork with the stipulation that it be used for a pamphlet-style Colorado checklist. A copy will be included with each registration packet and additional copies will be sold during and after the Convention.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 P.M.

**CFO SUPPORTS ETHICS CODES**

The Colorado Field Ornithologists is dedicated to the conservation of avian species and to increasing the public awareness of human impact on birds. As one step toward achieving these goals, the CFO Board has endorsed the American Birding Association's (ABA) *Birding Code of Ethics* and the Ornithological Council (OC) of North American Ornithological Societies' *Code of Ethics*. The full text of the ABA *Code* and a synopsis of the OC *Code* can be found in the October 1999 issue of the *JCFO*.

FIRST RECORD OF COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRD (*CALYPTE COSTAE*) FOR COLORADO

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Abstract--Season and weather converged on 17 May 2001 to create ideal spring birding conditions in the area encompassing southeastern Wyoming, western Nebraska, and northeastern Colorado. Among the birds we observed that day was Colorado's first Costa's Hummingbird (*Calypte costae*). We describe our observations of the Costa's Hummingbird, its status in the Great Plains, weather conditions, and other birds we observed that day.

Sighting of Costa's Hummingbird

At approximately 2 P.M. on 17 May 2001 we arrived at Crow Valley Campground (CVCV) in Weld County, Colorado. We soon saw a group of people looking at something in the southwest corner of the campground. When we got closer, we finally saw the bird they were looking at - a hummingbird perched in a Russian olive tree. Any hummingbird at CVCV is unusual, but this bird was a brilliant adult male Costa's Hummingbird (*Calypte costae*). Apparently, the bird had been spotted by a couple from Denver moments before we pulled into the campground. We studied the Costa's Hummingbird during two 15-minute periods in which it perched and actively foraged on blooming currant bushes. We were fortunate to get extremely good looks from less than 10 meters.

The hummingbird was quite small, even for a hummingbird, with a large gorget. When we first saw the hummingbird, our eyes were immediately drawn to the gorget, which was brilliant purple and extremely conspicuous. At one point the bird flew towards us such that all we could see was a brilliant purple ball. As with any hummingbird, the color of the gorget was not always discernable. Fortunately, we had numerous point blank views of the perched bird as it turned its head, revealing the intense metallic purple color of the gorget. The gorget covered the forehead and throat and extended back beyond the throat, projecting posteriorly to the side of the head. The anterior portion of the crown, nape, and superciliary area were a metallic green while the upper

portion of the breast was white. The nape was slightly more greenish-gray and contrasted mildly with the pure green of the anterior crown, back, and tail coverts. The white from the breast extended into the lower portion of the auricular region. The projection of the gorget cut across the white lower auriculars of the bird, creating a distinct white area below the eye. The combination of the large, flanged gorget and isolated white area gave the bird the appearance of being masked. This appearance was quite distinctive and obvious to us, especially when we observed the bird face on. Another general impression of the face was that it was quite blunt. The area where the bill met the face seemed much more flat than on other hummingbirds. Additional details noted in the facial region included a small black area just behind and above the eye as well as faint white eye crescents. The forecrown was flecked with the same brilliant purple color of the gorget. The dark bill was about twice the length of the head and slightly decurved throughout its length.

The back of the bird was distinctly green. As mentioned earlier, the upper portion of the breast was pure white. The flanks, lower breast, and belly were white with a greenish wash. The wash was most prominent on the flanks, giving them more green coloration than the breast and belly. No buffy wash was present on the underparts. When perched the folded wings extended beyond the tail by less than 1 cm. This reinforced our impression that the bird was quite small. The primaries had a brownish tinge, perhaps an indication of feather wear. In flight, the tail was seen quite well several times. No rufous color was noted in any of the rectrices. When fanned, the outer rectrices were white-tipped with extensive black above the white tips. The uppertail coverts were pure green. The shape of the tail was rounded with the central rectrices being the longest. *The Sibley Guide to Birds* (Sibley 2000) describes the tail as being "paddle-shaped." This is quite apt and succinctly describes what we saw. The legs were black in color. In flight, we heard the bird give a few weak, metallic "tink" notes, but the bird was otherwise mostly silent.

Status of Costa's Hummingbird in the Great Plains

This bird represents the first report of a Costa's Hummingbird for Colorado (Wood and Semo 2001) and one of very few records east of the Rocky Mountains. We were able to locate four other records north of New Mexico and Texas: Summer 1993 in Kansas, November 1993 in Kansas, August 1998 in Alberta, and October-November 2001 in Nebraska. Costa's Hummingbirds are early nesters with many birds breeding in March-April in Arizona and southern California (Baltosser and Scott 1996). Adult males may leave the breeding grounds up to one month before adult females and juveniles disperse in June (Baltosser and Scott 1996). The sighting of the Costa's Hummingbird on 17 May is consistent with this post-breeding dispersal pattern.

West of the Rocky Mountains, Costa's Hummingbird has shown a pattern of vagrancy in the Pacific Northwest with >30 records for Oregon, fewer records for Washington and British Columbia, and six records for Alaska. Several Oregon records included birds returning to the same location in successive years (Baltosser and Scott 1996). Additionally, a preponderance of the Pacific Northwest records has involved adult males in the spring. Whether this is due to identification difficulties with females and juveniles or represents an adult male dominated vagrancy pattern is unclear.

The breeding range of Costa's Hummingbird encompasses a small portion of the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico. Sonoran desert and chaparral are the habitats most commonly used by nesting Costa's Hummingbirds. This species rarely nests in southern Nevada, southwestern Utah, and southwestern New Mexico.

Weather Conditions and Migrants Observed on 17 May 2001

The phenomenon of passerine fallouts, where migrants are grounded due to inclement weather, takes on an almost mythical significance among birders due to the rarity of the event and the high number of birds involved. Although the weather conditions associated with fallouts in the eastern United States are reasonably well understood, the conditions leading to fallouts in the western Great Plains are less well known. On the evening of 16 May, a strong cold front passed southeastward through northeastern Colorado bringing with it abundant precipitation and low cloud cover. Based on this unusual weather pattern, we elected to check several local "migrant traps" in hope of finding a few unusual migrants.

We began our day at Lions Park in Cheyenne, Wyoming where we had many western migrants (Table 1). From there we went to the Wyoming Hereford Ranch, east of Cheyenne, which is an impressive migrant trap. It is located on Crow Creek and has a well-developed woodlot which is isolated from Cheyenne. Wyoming Hereford Ranch was loaded with migrants, indicating that there had been a substantial passerine fallout the previous night. From the second we got out of the car we could see thrushes and *Empidonax* flycatchers flitting around. By the time we left we had seen many western migrants as well as several of the more common eastern warblers (Table 1). From Wyoming Hereford Ranch we drove east to Oliver Reservoir in Kimball County, Nebraska where we encountered the same conditions as at the Wyoming Hereford Ranch. There were large numbers of common western migrants, especially Yellow Warblers and Swainson's Thrushes (Table 1).

After Oliver Reservoir, we zoomed down to CVCG located in Weld County, Colorado where the story was very different. There were almost no western migrants present but there were some very “high-octane” birds present. After ogling the Costa’s Hummingbird for 15 minutes, we began to check the rest of the campground. In the ensuing 90 minutes we saw a number of unusual eastern warblers and had another 15-minute observation of the Costa’s Hummingbird. The combination of two southeastern warblers (Worm-eating and Hooded Warblers), four northern warblers (Bay-breasted, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, and Black-throated Blue Warblers), and the southwestern Costa’s Hummingbird created an incredibly unusual assemblage of species.

Located in northeastern Colorado, CVCG hosts many eastern warblers each spring. However, the co-occurrence of birds with such disparate breeding ranges must have been due to the weather and the time of year. Presumably, these unusual birds were moving northward on a southerly or southeasterly wind. At some point during the night of 16-17 May the wind shifted to the north or northwest, grounding these birds. The contrast of species observed at these three closely spaced locales led us to speculate that many migrants, predominantly western species, must have been moving ahead of the front while the birds observed at CVCG were traveling behind the front.

Table 1. Summary of selected species seen 17 May 2001 at four locations in the western Great Plains: Lion's Park and Hereford Ranch, WY; Oliver Reservoir, NE; and Crow Valley Campground, CO.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Wyoming</u>	<u>Nebraska</u>	<u>Colorado</u>
Western Wood-Pewee	2	3	0
Least Flycatcher	5	3	0
Plumbeous Vireo	3	0	0
Swainson's Thrush	34	18	4
Yellow Warbler	34	47	4
Yellow-rumped Warbler	20	14	1
Blackpoll Warbler	1	0	0
American Redstart	2	1	1
Northern Waterthrush	1	2	0
MacGillivray's Warbler	1	1	0
Common Yellowthroat	8	26	2
Wilson's Warbler	1	2	0
Yellow-breasted Chat	0	1	0
Lincoln's Sparrow	3	3	4
White-crowned Sparrow	2	1	2

Literature Cited

- Baltosser, W. H. and P. E. Scott. 1996. Costa's Hummingbird (*Calypte costae*). In *The Birds of North America*, no. 251. (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, and The American Ornithologists' Union, Washington.
- Sibley, D. A. 2000. *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. New York.
- Wood, C. L. and L. S. Semo. 2001. News from the field: Spring 2001 report (March - May). *Journal of the Colorado Field Ornithologists* 35:183-202.



A BIT OF JCFO HISTORY

10 Years Ago in the Journal...

Dan Bridges recounted the discovery of multiple Black Rails at Bent's Old Fort. At the time, there had been fewer than 10 sightings of this species in Colorado.

15 Years Ago in the Journal...

An *In Memoriam* recognized the contributions of Allegra Collister to Colorado ornithology, including the initiation of a banding station in Lykins Gulch, which still operates today.

20 Years Ago in the Journal...

Bruce Webb provided a detailed look at the distribution and nesting requirements of the Northern Saw-whet Owl in Colorado.

35 Years Ago in the Journal...

1967 was the first year for the *Journal*. At the time, it was published only semi-annually and was entitled *C.F.O. Journal*.

PROBABLE BLACK SWIFT (*CYPSELOIDES NIGER*) NESTING COLONY FOUND IN THE WET MOUNTAINS, PUEBLO COUNTY

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Years ago, while hiking in a deep canyon along the St. Charles River downstream from Lake Isabel, my father and his friends came upon a narrow section where the stream cascaded over two very large boulders. This general area became known to them as “The Place,” and as years passed, they continued to visit this area with their friends and families.

So what does this have to do with Black Swifts? Well, you guessed it – the cascade! Many have long suspected that Black Swifts breed in the Wet Mountains (Dave Silverman, pers. comm.), given that they are regularly seen in the Rye area just a few miles south of “The Place.” However, there are no confirmed Black Swift breeding records for the Wet Mountains (Andrews and Righter 1992, Boyle 1998, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory unpub. data).

After having expressed to my father that I thought the area held potential as a nesting site, he told me a story of a young, all black bird with a wide mouth and very delicate, small feet which he had found clinging to the nearly vertical canyon walls below the cascade roughly 29 years ago. He had no idea what it was, but after hearing about Black Swifts, he and I both suspected it was a fledgling swift.

On 1 September 2001, Kate Johnson and I grabbed some rope and made the trek down into “The Place.” After many risky stream crossings and wading through chest deep ice water, we made our way downstream to the top of the cascade. There, with the aid of the rope we were able to descend down to a ledge situated below the cascade and just above some small falls. Here, two large caverns were formed by the boulders. Both had water flowing beneath them, however, a brief inspection of the first cavern revealed no Black Swift nests. The cavern formed by the second boulder had two entrances. One facing downstream, such that only winged creatures could overcome the surrounding vertical rock and waterfalls to access it. The other opening was located on the side adjacent to the cascade just above the waterfall, which must be entered via very wet, slippery rocks above the falls.

Inside of this second cavern on the south wall, two moss nests matching the size, shape and expected location of Black Swifts nests were observed, roughly 6-8 feet in from the main entrance and between 6-10 feet up the wall. Below, in the rocks near the cascading water, were two other nests that had apparently fallen. One of the nests was damaged by the water and the other, which had not yet been exposed to the water, was in good shape. The latter nest was retrieved and given to the Denver Museum of Nature & Science.

Discussion

Based upon these findings, we are relatively certain that Black Swifts have at least attempted to nest at this location recently; however, further investigation is needed to reveal their success at this site and roughly how many pairs nest here each year. No adults, eggs or hatchlings were seen at this site during our investigation, which was unexpected given the time of year.

For birders wishing to see Black Swifts, I would certainly not recommend visiting this colony. Just to get within view of the site requires some dangerous stream crossings and the bottom of a deep, secluded canyon is no place to get injured. Besides, the last time an actual swift was seen at this location was over 29 years ago! For anyone who would like to see Black Swifts, I would suggest that they contact the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory and ask about volunteering to search for Black Swift colonies. The more we know about this species, the better we can protect the colonies here in Colorado.

Literature Cited

- Andrews, R. and R. Righter. 1992. *Colorado Birds*. Denver Museum of Natural History, Denver.
- Boyle, S. 1998. Black Swift. In Kingery, H. K. (ed.). *Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas*. Colorado Bird Atlas Partnership and Colorado Division of Wildlife.

CFO WEBSITE

We invite you to browse the Colorado Field Ornithologists' website. If you don't own a computer, check your local library. Check the site regularly, because new items and changes appear regularly. The Internet address is:

<http://www.cfo-link.org>



Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory

Occasional Paper Number 7

INVENTORIES OF COLORADO'S GREAT BLUE HERONS: 1999-2001

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Introduction

The seminal paper on distribution and numbers of Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) breeding colonies in Colorado was published in this journal (Miller and Gaul 1987). The authors conducted surveys of breeding herons in the period 1978-1983, visited 85 sites (81 historic), and documented nesting in that period at 66 sites. The state's population size at that time, based on the sum of each site's highest annual nest count in the study period, was 1604 nesting pairs.

As part of Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's (RMBO) *Monitoring Colorado's Birds (MCB)* program, we conducted annual surveys of all of the state's colonial waterbirds, including Great Blue Herons. Here we compare our Great Blue Heron survey results of 1999-2001 with the baseline provided by Miller and Gaul (1987).

Methods

Before beginning surveys, we compiled a database of sites at which Great Blue Herons had been reported nesting in the previous 20 years. The primary sources of information were inventories conducted by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Miller and Gaul 1987),

notes gathered in the preparation of *Colorado Birds* (Andrews and Righter 1992) and provided by Bob Righter, the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas (Kingery 1998), and a database of Great Blue Heron sites in northwestern Colorado maintained by CDOW. In addition, we circulated inquiries to a number of knowledgeable birders throughout the state and requested information from members of COBIRDS, an Internet listserver for Colorado birders. During the winter months, we inspected major river corridors for clusters of nest platforms and entered these locations into the database. RMBO field workers also discovered a number of sites while conducting riparian transects and other monitoring activities.

During the 1999, 2000, and 2001 field seasons, we surveyed historical and potential Great Blue Heron nesting sites in early spring before trees leafed out to insure the greatest probability of accurate counts. We conducted those counts from the perimeter of the colonies at a distance sufficiently close to get an accurate count yet distant enough to avoid disturbance of nesting activities. Observers recorded the number of nest platforms, the number of active nests, and the number of adults. We defined "active nests" as those in which adults and/or young were present during our visit(s). RMBO field workers and volunteers supplemented counts by various other contributors (e.g., agency personnel) who were, or had been, conducting such counts prior to our efforts.

In analyzing our 1999-2001 data, we calculated the sum of the highest counts in order to compare our results with those collected earlier by Miller and Graul (1987). The sum of highest counts, however, can be considerably higher than the actual size of the population and its degree of variance is unpredictable. Therefore, we use the sum of highest counts in this paper only for comparison purposes with the earlier data; we have elected to use a multi-year average to monitor population trends of this species. We compute this average by summing the averages of the counts at each colony over the span of years.

Results

In 1999, we surveyed 94 of 119 sites in our database and counted 886 active nests at 40 sites (Table 1). A shortage of field workers during that season hampered the surveys and we were unable to visit several historical sites on the Yampa River and in the South Platte drainage. We were also unable to gain access to a few sites on private land. We added several sites to the database from observations during the field season and from information gathered during the subsequent winter.

In 2000, we surveyed 136 of 144 sites in the database and counted 1250 active nests at 66 sites (Table 1). Empire Reservoir was the only unvisited historic site with the probability of supporting more than ten nests. None of the unvisited historic sites had ever hosted more than ten nests and most had been inactive recently. We again added some sites to the database from observations during

the field season and from information gathered during the subsequent winter. In 2001, we surveyed 154 of 159 sites in the database and counted 1198 active nests at 77 sites (Table 1). Again, the only unvisited historic site with the potential and/or history of supporting more than ten nests was Empire Reservoir and most unvisited sites had been inactive recently.

In the period, 57% (72 of 127) of the colonies were on the West Slope, with 68 of those along watercourses with only four on lakes or reservoirs (Table 2). On the east side of the state, 44 of 55 colonies (80%) were on lakes or reservoirs (Table 2). Despite the larger number of colonies on the west side versus the east side, the east side colonies averaged larger, and thus supported a larger percentage (63%) of Colorado's Great Blue Herons.

In the surveys we conducted during this period, we visited 103 sites that were active for at least one of the three years. The sum of highest counts was 1913 nests and the three-year average was 1301 nests. The three-year average of the 10 largest colonies accounted for 650 nests, almost exactly 50% of the population (Table 3).

Discussion

Great Blue Heron nesting in Colorado has been documented since the late 19th century (Bailey and Niedrach 1965). The earliest extensive surveys, which were conducted in 1965 and 1973, noted 23 and 18 colonies respectively, mostly in the northeast quarter of the state (Ryder et al. 1979).

In surveys conducted in 1978-1980, Miller and Graul (1987) found 54 sites that were active for at least one of the three years. The sum of the highest counts at each colony among the three years was 881 active nests, and the seven largest colonies accounted for more than 50% of the population. In 1981-1983, Miller and Graul (1987) found 55 sites that were active for at least one of the three years. The sum of highest counts for these years was of 1448 nests, and the seven largest colonies accounted for more than 50% of the population.

The number of active nests that we found in the 1999-2001 counts was higher than in those conducted in 1978-1983; however, the level of effort that we could marshal in locating colonies was certainly greater than in previous efforts and the results are probably not strictly comparable to those of Miller and Graul (1987). In addition, our knowledge of locations is cumulative, as we had information not only from Miller and Graul (1987), but also from the extensive efforts of the CDOW, Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas (Kingery 1998), and our own network of cooperators and volunteers. The result is that we were able to locate a larger number of sites than did earlier efforts. Although we suspect that Great Blue Heron populations have been relatively stable since Miller and Graul's surveys, we are not able to support that contention, as the efforts expended in the two studies were different.

Table 1. Counts of active Great Blue Heron nests in Colorado by drainage, 1999-2001, compared to those from Miller and Graul (1987), 1978-1983. Percentages represent the proportion of all Great Blue Heron nests found on either slope.

Drainage	Sum of highest counts				Sum 1999	Sum 2000	Sum 2001	Average of Sums 1999-2001	Sum of Averages 1999-2001
	'78-'80	'81-'83	'99-'01						
South Platte	610	1021	953		496	614	574	561	651
Arkansas	9	3	246		75	185	140	133	174
Republican	6	20	1		0	0	1	1	1
North Platte	4	5	0		0	0	0	0	0
Rio Grande	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
East Slope totals	629 (71%)	1049 (72%)	1200 (63%)		571	799	715	695	826 (63%)
Colorado	185	245	542		295	349	364	336	361
Yampa	50	113	101		4	66	57	42	64
White	17	41	37		16	31	29	25	29
San Juan	0	0	33		0	5	33	13	21
West Slope totals	252 (29%)	399 (28%)	713 (37%)		315	451	483	416	475 (37%)
State totals	881	1448	1913		886	1250	1198	1111	1301

Great Blue Herons establish and abandon colonies each year, with neighboring colonies growing and shrinking, often in concert. This transience of Great Blue Heron colonies greatly affects the efficacy and results of monitoring efforts and, particularly, our ability to interpret results across years. Movements often coincide with changes in the nesting substrate, as when old nest trees fall; pressure from predators, either direct predation or from raptors [e.g., Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*)] nesting within colonies; and human disturbance near colony sites, such as that associated with recreational trails, golf courses, and lakeside residential developments (Butler 1992). At other times, colonies move for no apparent reason. The immediate cause for the establishment of new colonies is often difficult to discern, other than the need to move somewhere to avoid predation or disturbance. New food supplies, such as fish-hatchery ponds, account for some movements.

The sum of highest counts for 1999-2001 exaggerated the number of active nests by approximately 50% statewide and by more than 100% locally, largely due to year-to-year movements among colonies. For six colonies in the Grand Valley, for example, totals for the three years remained fairly stable: 62 in 1999, 74 in 2000, and 64 in 2001. Despite the relatively stable number for the valley, numbers for individual colonies fluctuated greatly. The Rhone Island colony had 24 nests in 1999, but was abandoned in 2000 and remained vacant in 2001 after a pair of Bald Eagles built a nest in the midst of the colony. The Skippers Island colony five miles downstream had 20 nests in 1999, grew to 48 nests in 2000, probably augmented by birds moving from Rhone Island colony, and then was itself abandoned in 2001. At the same time, two other nearby colonies grew from two and five nests in 1999 to 22 and 34 nests, respectively, in 2001. These fluctuations pushed the sum of highest counts to 140, approximately 210% of the three-year average.

A multi-year average is more precise when nearly all sites are monitored annually, a level that we believe we have attained in the past two seasons. In Colorado, except for one instance of ground nesting on an island at Riverside Reservoir, Great Blue Herons nest exclusively in tree tops (Dexter 1998). Their nests are sturdy enough to withstand weather through several years and are usually visible during the winter because they nest mostly in deciduous trees. This pattern, along with their habit of initiating nesting before nests are concealed by leaves, makes any sizeable Great Blue Heron colony readily observable and nearly complete monitoring coverage possible. Locating colonies is also facilitated because a high percentage of the state's riparian woodlands and lake shores are visible from public roads. At this time, a limited amount of privately-owned riparian woodland far from public roads constitutes the only conceivable areas where significant, undetected nesting sites could be located. These woodlands are almost entirely on the main stems of the South Platte River downstream from Greeley and the Arkansas River downstream from Pueblo.

Table 2. Numbers and proportions, by drainage and slope, of Colorado Great Blue Heron colonies on streams/ivers and lakes/reservoirs, 1999-2001.

Drainage	Streams/Rivers	Lakes/Reservoirs
South Platte	5 (13%)	33 (87%)
Arkansas	5 (45%)	6 (55%)
Republican	1 (20%)	4 (80%)
East Slope totals	11 (20%)	44 (80%)
Colorado	41 (98%)	1 (2%)
Yampa	20 (91%)	2 (9%)
White	5 (83%)	1 (17%)
San Juan	2 (100%)	0 (0%)
West Slope totals	68 (94%)	4(6%)

Of the two methods of computing a three-year average, 1) averaging the sum of the total counts of all colonies for each of the three years, and 2) summing the three-year average of the counts at each colony, the second most closely represents the actual population. Averaging the sums assumes that a site contains no active nests in years that it is not surveyed. This is not likely to be the case for many unsurveyed sites; this method, therefore, produces an undercount. Summing the averages assumes that a site contains the average number of active nests for that site in years that it is not surveyed. This procedure may produce overcounts or undercounts for individual sites, but the absolute difference between the computed average and the actual population is less than that produced when averaging the sums. Ideally, all colonies will be surveyed every year, in which case the two methods will produce identical results; however, the vagaries of logistics and weather make the ideal an unlikely scenario. In any case, if the coverage attained in 2000 and 2001 can be continued, the difference will be negligible (4.62% between these two years).

Although the population at any given site may fluctuate greatly, the total population of complexes of colonies within a drainage or among a group of reservoirs may remain fairly constant if the colonies are undisturbed and if availability of nesting structures and prey remains stable. To monitor this species, it will be more useful to focus on such clusters than on individual colony sites. A comparison of counts in the three largest river drainages suggests that the Colorado population is shifting, with numbers increasing in the Arkansas and Colorado river drainages and decreasing in the South Platte River drainage.

Table 3. Highest counts for three year periods and annual counts for 1999-2001 for sites averaging at least 20 active nests. Sites from counts in 1978-1983 may not be identical to those with the same name in 1999-2001. In some cases, e.g. Chatfield Reservoir, the colony is known to have moved as much as 1/2 mile.

Drainage	County	Site	Highest counts			Annual counts			Avg. 99-01
			78-80	81-83	99-01	1999	2000	2001	
South Platte	Boulder	Boulder Valley Farms	78	95	244	244	205	107	185
South Platte	Weld	Milton Reservoir	5	31	138		138	59	99
Arkansas	Bent	John Martin Reservoir			79		79	40	60
South Platte	Weld	Barbour Ponds	6	2	102	31	40	102	58
Colorado	Delta	Confluence Park			70	55	70	40	55
Colorado	Garfield	Silt	29	29	49	43	42	49	45
Colorado	Gunnison	Gunnison	24	105	57	57	34	32	41
South Platte	Adams	Barr Lake	45	37	63	22	31	63	39
South Platte	Jefferson	Chatfield Reservoir	71	111	56	56	47	11	38
Arkansas	Kiowa	Neesopah Reservoir			40	23	40	27	30
Arkansas	El Paso	Fountain Cr. Reg. Park			51	51	34	0	28
South Platte	Larimer	Timnath Reservoir	2	22	36	36	18	22	25
South Platte	Denver	Marston Reservoir			31	31		19	25
Arkansas	Pueblo	Pueblo Reservoir	8	0	26		21	26	24
South Platte	Weld	Riverside Reservoir	1	7	23			23	23
Colorado	Mesa	Skippers Island	38	8	48	20	48	0	23
South Platte	Logan	North Sterling Reservoir	10	0	25		18	25	22
Colorado	Grand	Elephant Island			20		19	20	20

It seems unlikely that the enormous growth in the Arkansas River numbers can be explained by disparity of effort, thus the increase is probably real. The surveys of 1978-1983 indicate a small population with the sum of highest counts being 17 (1978-1980) and three (1981-1983) active nests for the entire drainage. In 1991, only two minor sites were known in the Arkansas Valley (Andrews and Righter 1992), but the Breeding Bird Atlas project (1987-1995) confirmed nesting at four reservoirs there (Dexter 1998). Through the 1990s, numbers grew and our counts for 1999-2001 averaged 174 active nests in the valley each year, with the sum of highest counts reaching 246.

In the Colorado River drainage, which includes colonies on several tributaries, including the Eagle, Roaring Fork, Gunnison, Cimarron, and lower Dolores rivers, the 1999-2001 sum of highest counts is more than twice as great as that of 1981-1983. However, increased effort in locating colonies combined with an unusual degree of year-to-year movement among colonies may account for much of the difference. The recent three-year average for this drainage was 361 active nests, which is 91 greater than even the sum of highest counts for the 1981-1983 period.

The slight decrease in the sum of highest counts in the South Platte drainage from 1021 in 1981-1983 to 953 in 1999-2001 may signal some cause for concern, particularly in parts of the drainage. Dividing this drainage into four subsets (the Boulder-Longmont area; the Denver metropolitan area; the "northern triangle," from Greeley to Ft. Collins to Loveland; and the I-76 corridor from Adams to Logan counties) reveals some major population shifts within this drainage in the past 20 years. The Boulder-Longmont population appears to have increased nearly fourfold over the earlier counts. The sum of highest counts was 98 in 1981-1983 and 371 in 1999-2001, largely due to the growth of two major colonies, one on Boulder Creek and one on St. Vrain Creek. With 244 active nests in 2000, the Boulder Creek colony was the state's largest in the three-year period 1999-2001. The sum of highest counts was inflated by a major movement between these two colonies in 2001, but the recent average annual count in the area was 259, well above the totals from the earlier surveys.

The Denver metropolitan area showed a slight increase from a sum of highest counts of 111 in 1981-1983 to 143 in 1999-2001, with a recent three-year average of 104. An increase this small could be attributed to differences in effort and site fidelity between the two periods.

The "northern triangle" shows a marked decrease. Through most of the twentieth century the northeast quarter of the state hosted Colorado's greatest concentrations (Ryder et al. 1979). The sum of highest counts was 255 in 1978-1980 and 408 in 1981-1983. This figure dropped to 141 in 1999-2001. The average number of active nests for the latest three-year period was 89. The high count of 115 active nests in the 1981-1983 period at Fossil Creek Reservoir in Larimer County dropped to one in 1999 and zero thereafter.

A less drastic decrease along the major reservoirs between Barr Lake in Adams County and Jumbo Lake in Logan County primarily reflects the rise and fall of two major colonies, one at Jumbo Lake and one at Prewitt Reservoir. Both of these sites supported more than 100 nests in the early 80s, but had high counts of only one and nine active nests, respectively, in the 1999-2001 period. The sum of highest counts in this region went from 191 in 1978-1980 up to 404 in 1981-1983 and down to 271 in 1999-2001, with a three-year average of 199.

A striking difference in colony location stands out in the data and may have implications in the long-term conservation of Great Blue Herons in Colorado and the West. On the West Slope of Colorado, 94% of the colonies (68 of 72) are located on the major rivers (Table 2). The damming of rivers has disrupted the regeneration of cottonwoods (*Populus fremontii* var. *wislizenii*) (Knopf et al. 1988), the primary nesting substrate for Great Blue Herons in Colorado. Populations decreased in the Lower Colorado River Valley of Arizona and California after dams were built upstream (Rosenberg et al. 1991), and the long-term concern in western Colorado may be to insure continued availability of an adequate number of mature cottonwoods.

On the East slope, 80% of the active colonies (44 of 55) are located on reservoirs. This pattern apparently emerged through the past century, as records that antedate the establishment of the Barr Lake colony placed large colonies on the Platte River and Box Elder Creek in Adams County (Baily and Niedrach 1965). Now, only the colony upstream from Chatfield Reservoir is known on the main stem of the South Platte. However, we have received word of small colonies on the river downstream from Greeley (J. Dennis pers. comm.), but to date we have received no specifics or numbers. Additionally, there are rumors of colonies on the main stem of the Arkansas away from reservoirs but, again, no substantiation.

As the state's human population grows, development of lakeshore property and pressure from recreational activities may become increasing threats to colonies throughout the region. These activities have been documented as causes of abandonment of nesting sites in the past (Ryder et al. 1979), and will no doubt remain a concern in the future. Although herons may again be able to find secluded sites in the relatively extensive stands of plains cottonwood (*Populus sargentii*) along the rivers and streams as lakeshore sites become less suitable, the populations of these trees are also decreasing, especially in the Arkansas River drainage (Snyder and Miller 1991).

Acknowledgments

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benefitted greatly from the work done by earlier researchers, especially that of Gary Miller and Walt Gaul of CDOW. We are grateful for the cooperation and assistance of RMBO field technicians, volunteer ColonyWatchers, agency biologists, and landowners. We appreciate the thoughtful reviews of previous versions of this manuscript by Gary Miller, Ron Ryder, and George Wallace.

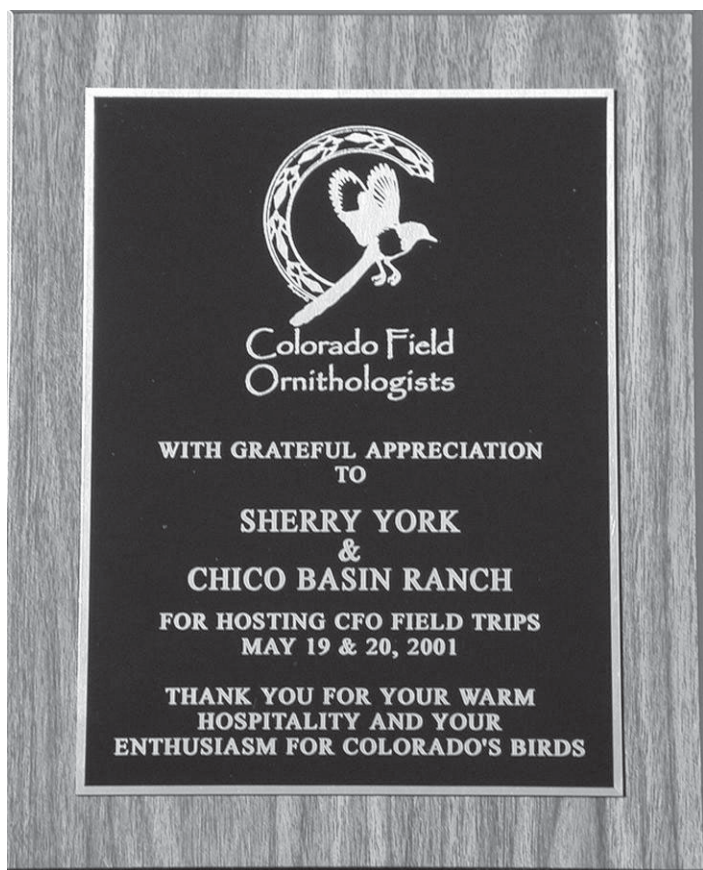
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Volunteers Needed

To enhance continuing monitoring of Colorado's Great Blue Herons and other colonially-nesting birds, we developed a volunteer program entitled *Project ColonyWatch*. This project has been endorsed by the CFO Board of Directors, and members are encouraged to participate. ColonyWatchers conduct counts following established protocols, determine the level of productivity, and monitor colonies for disturbances and threats to their security.

Volunteers can adopt colonies by contacting project coordinator, Rich Levad, at ColonyWatch@rmbo.org or see contact info at the head of this article. Also check the RMBO website at www.rmbo.org. A ColonyWatch page, featuring information on all of Colorado's colonially-nesting species will soon be online.



Those who went on the field trips to Chico Basin Ranch during the 2001 Convention will remember the hospitality (and fantastic migrant fallout!) shown to us by Sherry York and Ranch personnel, especially Duke Phillips the Ranch manager who allowed us to visit this private area. This Landowner Appreciation Plaque was presented to them last December. Thank you Sherry, Duke, and everyone involved at Chico Basin Ranch.

Photo by Chris Wood.

LITTLE-KNOWN BIRDING AREAS

BLUFF LAKE NATURE AREA

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The Bluff Lake Nature Area (BLNA) is located on part of the old Stapleton International Airport property in northeast Denver. This site is in the city and county of Denver. The city of Aurora borders it on the east edge. It is located north of the first major easterly curve on Havana Street, approximately one mile south of I-70 (Exit 280). Parking is available just inside the entrance off of Havana Street (Fig. 1).

While BLNA is not a new area, it was opened to the public only after the closure of old Stapleton International Airport. Previously closed for more than 60 years as part of the airport, BLNA opened to the public in 1997 as a 123-acre wildlife refuge. Long-term plans call for the addition of a nature center/office facility on-site and acquisition of the property bordering Sand Creek and BLNA to the east at Peoria Street. Currently, BLNA's administrative office is located at 3401 Quebec Street, Suite 8100, Denver.

Bluff Lake Nature Center does maintain a schedule of times in which it is open; otherwise, it is gated and locked. Typically, their hours are dawn to dusk - seven days a week. This schedule is subject to change with the seasons, though. The BLNA ranger has indicated that it is okay to enter the property during closed hours, but you will have to park about a mile away to walk in.

The various habitats of the area are composed of riparian (cottonwood, willow, and Russian olive), Sand Creek, Bluff Lake and surrounding cattail marsh, and open areas with grasses and other herbaceous vegetation. There are several miles of paths in the refuge and several interpretive signs that provide ecological and environmental information for the general public. In addition,

there is a convenient boardwalk going into the marsh on the northern edge of Bluff Lake.

Areas adjacent to BLNA are often worth scanning for birds. There is a large prairie dog town just across Havana Street to the south that occasionally attracts raptors. This site is in the vicinity of the old Stapleton runway. It is not part of BLNA, but it can be easily viewed from the parking area or from the roadside. The area bordering Sand Creek and BLNA to the east is great for a number of reasons. The area is loaded with Russian olive and woody brush piles and, of course, Sand Creek runs through here providing some habitat diversity. Because of this variety of habitats, birding can be fairly decent. During migration it can be hopping with an assortment of interesting migrants, including shorebirds and warblers. Besides the birds, there is also a population of mule deer that occupy the area.

The birder should consider a few points while birding at BLNA. Be well prepared for mosquitoes during the warmer summer months as they can be quite bothersome. During the heat of summer, you might also want to pack a water container, as there are several miles of paths to traverse through BLNA. The adjacent, eastern area (this is not BLNA, but, still accessible and can be fairly good for birds) bordering Sand Creek and BLNA is occasionally inhabited by a few homeless individuals. This will probably not present a problem in birding that particular area, but one might want to visit this area with a companion to be on the safe side. There is often a ranger on duty within BLNA. There is a bird and plant checklists available at the administrative office. The bird checklist was last updated in 1999.

Bird Species List

The summarized data for the list of Bluff Lake birds was collected from various sources, including the author's personal records, field observers, and the BLNA bird checklist. This list yields a total of 148 species recorded to date, with many species breeding locally (indicated by *). In several instances breeding has not been documented for species occurring during the summer months, but they can be readily observed on nearly every trip (the author found them on at least 90% of the trips there). There is a good chance that these species are breeding in the area or, possibly, somewhere close by. Certain species (indicated by +) have only been observed on just a few trips during the summer (found on less than 30% of the trips there). If Bluff Lake's water level is drawn down exposing mudflats, especially during late summer and early fall, there is a chance for a good assortment of shorebirds.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Migration</u>
*Pied-billed Grebe	X		
Eared Grebe			X
Western Grebe			X
Am. White Pelican			X
+Double-crested Cormorant	X		
Great Blue Heron	X		
+Snowy Egret	X		
Black-crowned Night-Heron	X		
White-faced Ibis			X
Turkey Vulture			X
Snow Goose		X	
*Canada Goose	X	X	X
Wood Duck			X
Gadwall		X	
American Wigeon		X	
Mallard		X	
Northern Shoveler		X	
Blue-winged Teal			X
Cinnamon Teal			X
Green-winged Teal		X	
Redhead		X	
Ring-necked Duck		X	
Lesser Scaup		X	
Bufflehead		X	
Common Goldeneye		X	
Ruddy Duck			X
Osprey			X
Bald Eagle		X	
Northern Harrier		X	
Sharp-shinned Hawk		X	
Cooper's Hawk		X	
Red-tailed Hawk	X	X	X
Swainson's Hawk	X		
Ferruginous Hawk		X	
Rough-legged Hawk		X	
Golden Eagle			X
American Kestrel	X	X	X
Merlin		X	
Prairie Falcon		X	
Virginia Rail			X
*Sora	X		

<u>Species</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Migration</u>
*American Coot	X		
*Killdeer	X	X	X
*American Avocet	X		
Greater Yellowlegs			X
Lesser Yellowlegs			X
Solitary Sandpiper			X
Spotted Sandpiper			X
Western Sandpiper			X
Baird's Sandpiper			X
Pectoral Sandpiper			X
Stilt Sandpiper			X
Long-billed Dowitcher			X
Common Snipe			X
Franklin's Gull			X
Ring-billed Gull		X	
Rock Dove	X	X	X
*Mourning Dove	X		
*Great Horned Owl	X	X	X
Common Nighthawk	X		
White-throated Swift			X
Chimney Swift	X		
*Belted Kingfisher	X	X	X
*Downy Woodpecker	X	X	X
*N. Flicker	X	X	X
+Western Wood-Pewee	X		
[Western] Flycatcher			X
Say's Phoebe			X
*Western Kingbird	X		
*Eastern Kingbird	X		
Loggerhead Shrike			X
Northern Shrike		X	
[Solitary] Vireo			X
Warbling Vireo			X
Red-eyed Vireo			X
Blue Jay	X	X	X
*Black-billed Magpie	X	X	X
American Crow	X	X	X
Common Raven			X
Horned Lark		X	
Tree Swallow			X
Violet-green Swallow			X

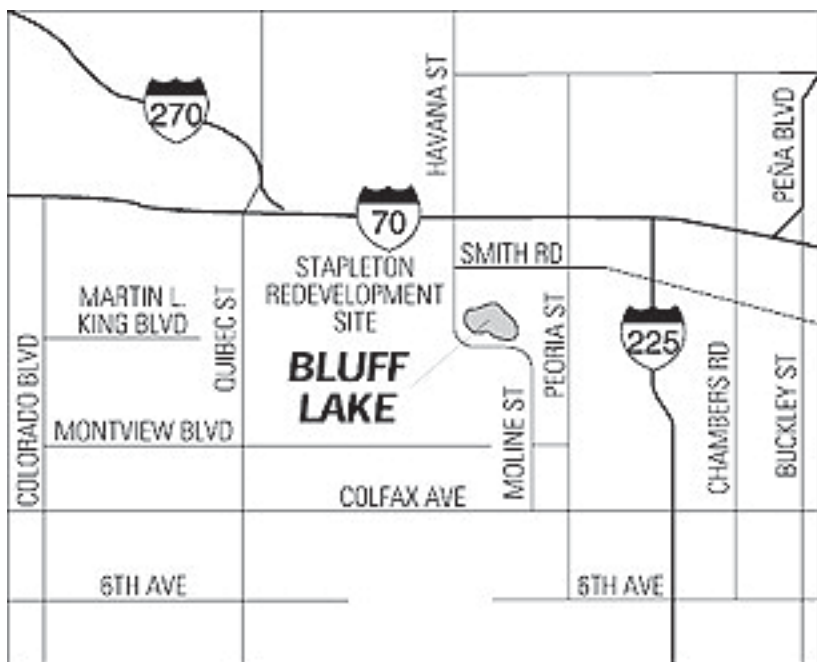
<u>Species</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Migration</u>
Bank Swallow			X
N. Rough-winged Swallow	X		
Cliff Swallow	X		
*Barn Swallow	X		
*Black-capped Chickadee	X	X	X
Red-breasted Nuthatch			X
Brown Creeper			X
Rock Wren			X
*House Wren	X		
Marsh Wren			X
American Dipper			X
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			X
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher			X
Townsend's Solitaire			X
Veery			X
Swainson's Thrush			X
*American Robin	X	X	X
Gray Catbird			X
Northern Mockingbird			X
Sage Thrasher			X
Brown Thrasher			X
*European Starling	X	X	X
Cedar Waxwing			X
[Brewster's] Warbler			X
Orange-crowned Warbler			X
Northern Parula			X
*Yellow Warbler	X		
Yellow-rumped Warbler			X
Townsend's Warbler			X
Blackpoll Warbler			X
*Common Yellowthroat	X		
MacGillivray's Warbler			X
Wilson's Warbler			X
Yellow-breasted Chat			X
Western Tanager			X
Green-tailed Towhee			X
Spotted Towhee			X
American Tree Sparrow		X	
Chipping Sparrow			X
Clay-colored Sparrow			X
Brewer's Sparrow	X		X

<u>Species</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Migration</u>
Field Sparrow			X
Lark Sparrow			X
Lark Bunting			X
Savannah Sparrow			X
*Song Sparrow	X	X	X
White-crowned Sparrow			X
Dark-eyed Junco		X	
Black-headed Grosbeak			X
Blue Grosbeak			X
Lazuli Bunting			X
Indigo Bunting			X
*Western Meadowlark	X	X	X
+Yellow-headed Blackbird	X		
*Red-winged Blackbird	X	X	X
Brewer's Blackbird			X
*Common Grackle	X		
*Brown-headed Cowbird	X		
Orchard Oriole			X
*Bullock's Oriole	X		
House Finch	X	X	X
*American Goldfinch	X	X	X
House Sparrow	X	X	X



Adult Mountain White-crowned Sparrow. Photo by Tony Leukering.

Fig. 1. Location map of Bluff Lake Nature Area. North is at top of map.



BLNA contact information:

Bluff Lake Nature Center

3401 Quebec St., Suite 8100

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e-mail: pduran@stapletoncorp.com

website: <http://www.blufflakenaturecenter.org>

MEET THE COLORADO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

Karleen Schofield, Denver

Kansas is my birthplace. I enjoyed a farm life with three brothers and a sister until I was 17. A large windbreak and small orchard on the homestead harbored lots of birds and, by the time I was 10 years old, I had memorized the entire contents of an illustrated bird book I found in the school library. Since I didn't know about binoculars, birders and bird lists in those days, this interest faded. Fresh out of college in 1966, I moved to Denver to begin a 20-year nursing career at St. Luke's Hospital with a brief hiatus for graduate school. I retired in 1986 to hike and travel with my husband, Jim. We've been married 24 years.

Outdoor recreation has always been as important to me as work. Tennis and mountaineering provided personal challenges until sports injuries and health changes in the early '90s curtailed those activities. By chance in December 1990, a tennis buddy, Urling Kingery, invited me to join her and Hugh on the Count at Chatfield State Park, where a Virginia Rail nearly walked over our boots. What a come-on! That field trip, plus three previous years as a Barr Lake Eagle Watch volunteer with the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, provided enough exposure to the birder's life to convince me I was ready to commit more time to birding.

I joined the Denver Field Ornithologists in January 1991, served as Director from 1993-1996 and as coordinator for the field trip schedulers for the past five years. I have led over 50 field trips for the DFO and greatly enjoy sharing my knowledge and experiences with other birders. Birding friends encouraged me to join the American Birding Association (2/92) and Colorado Field Ornithologists (1/93). I regularly attend conventions and field trips when I'm not traveling, have served on the CFO Nominating Committee for two years and on the Ron Ryder Award Committee for one year.

Some people loosely refer to me as a "serious birder", others seriously refer to me as a birder on the loose! Either way, since 1992, I have averaged nearly 200 days a year birding in Colorado (state list at 408), out-of-state (mostly western states), Canada and overseas.

I am pleased to be asked to serve on the CBRC and look forward to working with the committee members.

Chris Wood, Brighton

I grew up in Morrison and began birdwatching when I was four or five years old. I first learned about the rare bird alert and Denver Field Ornithologists when I was in sixth grade. Not much later, I attended a fall count at Chatfield Reservoir where I met Joey Kellner, Steve Stachowiak, Jack Reddall, and many other Colorado birders. For some reason, Joey and the others liked me and took me birding all around Colorado. With their assistance, I was able to lead my first trip (with my parents) when I was 14. My parents supported my birding habit and took me on trips all over the US. By the time I entered college, I had seen most of the North American breeders.

I received an undergraduate degree from Ripon College in Wisconsin, where I majored in Political Science, Global Studies with an emphasis on Global Political Economy, and Environmental Science. I attended graduate school at the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University, Bloomington, where I completed a Master's in Public Affairs with concentrations in Information Systems and Bird Conservation Biology. I have worked extensively on the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas, spent one season as the seabird counter for Cape May Bird Observatory and on numerous projects for the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory.

I most enjoy identification, understanding bird distribution and learning differences and similarities in vocalizations. I enjoy county and state listing as they allow me to study distribution, identification and vocalizations.

I am a senior tour leader for WINGS Inc. (www.wingsbirds.com) and a research associate for Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (www.rmbo.org).



Providing a first park record, this Northern Saw-whet Owl was seen at Barr Lake State Park, Adams County, in October 2001. Photo by Chris Wood.

REPORT OF THE COLORADO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE: 2000 RECORDS

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Introduction

In 2000, the Colorado Bird Records Committee (hereafter, CBRC or Committee) received reports from 65 contributors covering 168 occurrences of 91 species. Due to certain organizational matters, the Chair held back a small number of these submissions for review at a later time. The records held were all from 2000 and comprised all jaeger reports (record numbers 2000-42, 2000-43, 2000-44, 2000-45, and 2000-46), an Arctic Tern report (2000-66), and one Baird's Sparrow report (2000-151). One record of a female *Archilochus* hummingbird (documented with photographs; 2000-168) has been tabled, pending external expert review. Another record, of Eurasian Collared-Dove (2000-72), has been tabled in anticipation of the receipt of documentary photographs. The CBRC decided to archive, but not review, a report of Cassin's Vireo from Grand Junction (2000-105). Though the Committee allowed as how there are few specific West Slope records of this species, it felt that the species is common enough throughout the state to not warrant review. If you are looking for the results of the CBRC's review of 2000 reports of the Jackson Reservoir Long-tailed Jaeger, either Iceland Gull (*Pueblo* or *Boulder/Weld*), or the Union Reservoir Arctic Tern, be aware that none was submitted for inclusion in the 2000 circulation. It is not too late!

This CBRC report covers the evaluation of 216 reports from 53 contributors of 158 occurrences of 85 species. The vast preponderance of reports in this circulation (164 of 168), which was effected in 2001 and early 2002, was from the year 2000, but with reports dating back to 1998. Of these, 143 records of 78 species were accepted and reports on 15 occurrences of 12 species were not accepted. This year's acceptance rate is 90.5%, which is similar to those of previous years (e.g., 89.5% in 1997; Janos 1999). Per CBRC bylaws, all

“accepted” records received final 7-0 or 6-1 votes to accept, or, in the case of records that remained undecided after two rounds, received no more than one “not accept” vote at the Committee’s annual meeting. Each record that was “not accepted” received fewer than four votes to accept (3-4, 2-5, 1-6, 0-7) in the final vote for that record, or in the case of records that remained undecided after two rounds, received more than one “not accept” vote at a Committee meeting.

A total of 35 counties was represented among the accepted records. As one would expect, the I-25 corridor and the plains Arkansas River counties provided the majority of the rare-bird occurrences reported herein, with 14 of those 16 counties getting into the action. This result is due mostly to the extensive birding effort in those areas. The only ones neglected were *Huerfano* and *Crowley*. The former is expected as it is little birded, but the latter is quite odd, as the county hosts Lake Henry, the site of many a goodie in the past. The top ten counties in numbers of accepted records herein (with the number of records in parentheses) are *Bent* (18); *Pueblo* (13.5); *Larimer* (12); *Prowers* (10); *El Paso* (9); *Adams*, *Otero*, and *Weld* (8 each); *Jefferson* (7); and *Baca* (6). The reason for the half-record in *Pueblo* is that the county had to share its reliable Pueblo Reservoir-wintering Great Black-backed Gull with *Arapahoe*, where the beast spends its autumns.

Within these “well-birded” counties, the distribution of records is amazingly focused. The majority of *Bent* records were from the John Martin Reservoir vicinity (though admittedly, that reservoir takes up a goodly portion of the county). *Pueblo* records were either between Pueblo Boulevard and the center of Pueblo Reservoir or in the vicinity of David Silverman in the southern part of the county. *Prowers* records were almost entirely from Lamar and *El Paso* records were mostly from where Alan Versaw birded, though Big Johnson Reservoir provided a couple reports that were not submitted by Alan. *Adams* records were at or in the vicinity of Barr Lake SP, *Otero* records were mostly in or near Rocky Ford, and *Weld* records were dominated by Crow Valley campground. *Jefferson* records were nicely scattered, but *Baca* records were almost all from below the dam at Two Buttes SWA. These data illustrate that we certainly do have our favorite places and that there is probably an interesting site or two going unbirded!

The distribution of reports by observers was fairly typical for recent years, with twelve birders submitting at least five reports. The 12 were Leukering (30 submissions), Wood (23), Janos (18), Semo (16), Leatherman (12), Faulkner (11), Schofield (9), Mammoser (7), and Olson, Quesenberry, Silverman, and Versaw (5 each). Unfortunately, these 12 observers submitted 67.6% (146 of

216) of all the documents considered for the 158 occurrences on which the CBRC reached decisions. The Committee would truly like to see more participation in the CBRC's archival and review process by the Colorado birding community.

The majority of records are submitted by only one observer. One may think that this is an efficient use of energy, as then birders can cooperate to submit a larger number of records. However, this is not necessarily preferred by the Committee. The CBRC greatly appreciates receiving multiple viewpoints on individual records as, almost invariably, one observer omits something important from her/his report that a second reporter might include. Thus, more of the important bits get written in the record somewhere. This is critical, as the CBRC views each record in its entirety, not just one submission at a time. Of the 15 records that were not accepted in this circulation, 14 of them were one-reporter submissions. This is a good illustration of why multiple submissions are a very good thing!

Western Colorado remains very much under-represented among all records, not just accepted ones, due simply, one hopes, to the fewer birders resident there. However, the submission rate from southwestern Colorado jumped tremendously in 2001, thanks mostly to a small coterie of birders in Durango. This is a very welcome change, as that corner of the state has huge potential and, other than a few spectacular records (e.g., those of Green Violet-ear and Pyrrhuloxia), very little information has come out of that area recently. The acceptance rate of submissions from west of the I-25 corridor counties (84.2%; 16 of 19) was about the same as the overall acceptance rate (90.5%). What little difference there is can be attributed to the small sample size of western reports (one additional accepted report would have made the rate 89.5%) and the larger percentage of western reports that are one-reporter submissions. *Gunnison* and *Ouray* led the west with two accepted records each; 12 other western counties each had one accepted record.

As a result of the 2001 circulation, one species, Slaty-backed Gull, was added to the state list, bringing the all-time species total for Colorado to 470. One additional species was provisionally accepted, that being Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. The CBRC bylaws do not permit the acceptance of a first state record without physical evidence (e.g., photograph, tape recording, or specimen) or an accepted sight record with more than one submitting observer. With the subsequent acceptance of at least one additional record meeting the qualifications of a first state record, the provisionally-accepted record of that species is elevated to "accepted" status and becomes the first state record. Other highlights of this report include second accepted records

of Tufted Duck, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, and Barred Owl, and first West Slope records of Bell's Vireo and Red Fox Sparrow.

Committee News

The Committee's membership at the close of 2001 was: Peter Gent, Tony Leukering (Chair), Brandon Percival, Karleen Schofield, Larry Semo (Secretary), John Vanderpoel, and Chris Wood. In 2000, Percival and Vanderpoel were appointed to three-year terms, replacing Joey Kellner and John Rawinski, whose terms had expired and both of whom had elected not to serve another term. Also, Bill Lisowski moved to Kentucky and stepped down as Chair, with Leukering being appointed to complete Bill's term. Larry Semo was appointed to the CBRC to replace Lisowski. Finally, Peter Gent was added to the Committee to complete the final year of the term that Vic Zerbi resigned. So, have you got it all straight, now? The terms of Gent and Wood expired at the end of the year. Chris was appointed for another three-year term and Ric Olson was appointed to fill the other vacancy. The Chair, on behalf of the whole CBRC, would like to thank outgoing members Gent, Kellner, Lisowski, Rawinski, and Zerbi for their efforts; they are much appreciated. Additionally, the Committee welcomes Ric to its membership! The members' term-expiration dates and contact information are printed on this journal's masthead.

Committee Functions

All records received (written documentation, photographs, videotapes, and/or sound recordings) by the CBRC are archived at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (formerly the Denver Museum of Natural History), 2001 Colorado Boulevard, Denver, CO 80205, where they remain available for public review. The Committee solicits documentation of records in Colorado for all species published in its review list, both the main and supplementary lists (Semo et al. in prep.), and for records of species with no prior accepted records in Colorado. Please send your documentation to Tony Leukering (PO Box 660, Brighton, CO 80601) or to the CBRC c/o the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (address above). Documentation forms are available on the inside of this journal's mailer and on the CFO web site (<http://www.cfo-link.org>). Though handwritten and typed documentations are greatly appreciated, electronic versions make the Committee's job much easier (and with >160 reports/year, we definitely appreciate ease). Documentation can be submitted via the CFO web site.

Report Format

The organization and style of this report are similar to those used in past reports (e.g., Janos 1999), but with aspects influenced by various California Bird Records Committee reports (e.g., Bevier 1990), and is presented in four

parts. Part I consists of accepted records and Part II the (very short) list of provisionally-accepted records. The records that were not accepted are listed in Part III, with all such records this time being due to questions concerning identification (origin questions are also an option for non-acceptance). Part IV lists reports that were tabled for later action.

The nomenclature and sequence of these lists follow the A.O.U. Check-list (A.O.U. 1999) and its supplement (A.O.U. 2001). An asterisk preceding a species name indicates that the species is not currently a review candidate. The numbers in parentheses after each species' name represent the total number of accepted records for Colorado followed by the number of accepted records in the past ten years (1991-2000). The latter number is of importance, as it is one of the criteria for a species' placement on the CBRC Review List, which is being reviewed and updated (Semo et al. in prep.). However, note that the number of accepted records will decline for some species as the CBRC tackles the backlog of determinations as to how many of the accepted records are simply recurrences in subsequent years of a known individual. The best example is provided by the wintering Great Black-backed Gull that has been documented at Pueblo Reservoir (and at Cherry Creek Reservoir during migration) each year of that bird's life, but for which the annual reports, all accepted, are currently entered in the database as separate records.

Within each species account, records are listed chronologically by first date of occurrence. Each record presents as much of the following information as possible: number of birds, age, sex, locality, county, and date or date span. In parentheses, we present the initials of the contributing observer(s), the official record number, and the vote tally in the first, and, if relevant, second round (with "accepted" votes on the left side of the dash).

The initials of the finder(s) of the bird(s) are presented first if that person (those people) contributed documentation; additional contributors' initials follow in alphabetical order by name. If the finder(s) is (are) known with certainty but did not submit documentation, those initials are underlined, but presented last. Observers who submitted a photograph or video capture have a dagger (†) following their initials and initials of those that submitted videotape are followed by a lower-case, italicized "v" (v). Thus, the parenthetical expression "(JD v; RA†; 2000-178; 4-3, 5-2)" has the following meaning: JD found the bird(s) and submitted documentation (including video) and as the finder is first in the list of those that submitted details; RA, though alphabetically first of the two submitting observers was not the finder, so comes second. RA also submitted, at least, photographic documentation of the bird(s); the record number assigned to the occurrence was 2000-178; and in

the three rounds of voting, the first-round vote was four “accepted” votes and three “not accepted” votes, the second-round vote was 5-2 in favor of accepting the record. If the indicated record is in Part I, then the report garnered fewer than two “not accept” votes in the final vote at the CBRC meeting. If the record is in Part III, then it was not accepted due to receiving more than one “not accept” vote. Most records are decided in the first round.

In this report, county names are italicized, in keeping with the style established for the *News from the Field* column in this journal (e.g., Wood and Semo 2002). We have attempted to provide the full date span for individual records, with the seasonal reports in *North American Birds* and this journal being the primary sources for these dates. The Committee has not dealt with the question of full date spans as compared to submitted date spans. Comments on this topic would be much appreciated.

Abbreviations used in the report are: **BJR**=Big Johnson Res., *El Paso*; **BLSP**=Barr Lake State Park, *Adams*; **CCR**=Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe*; **CR**=County Road; **CVCG**=Crow Valley campground, Pawnee National Grassland, *Weld*; **FLWE**=Ft. Lyon Wildlife Easement, *Bent*; **JMR**=John Martin Res., *Bent*; **LCC**=Lamar Community College, *Prowers*; **NWR**=National Wildlife Refuge; **PPWG**=Prospect Park in the Wheatridge Greenbelt, *Jefferson*; **PR**=Pueblo Reservoir, *Pueblo*; **Res.**=Reservoir; **SP**=State Park; **SWA**=State Wildlife Area; **TBSWA**=Two Buttes SWA, *Baca/Prowers* (below the dam is in *Baca*).

Part I. RECORDS ACCEPTED

RED-THROATED LOON *Gavia stellata* (28/17). An alternate-plumaged adult was at JMR 3-21 May 2000, with submitted documentation covering only the last date (TL, **BKP**; 2000-1; 7-0). Another alternate-plumaged adult was at Ramah Res., *El Paso*, 5-8 June 2000, with documentation received only for 6 June (AV, **DSu**; 2000-2; 7-0). The final record for the year was of a juvenile at PR, 3 November – 16 December, but with documentation covering only 3 November (TL; 2000-3; 7-0). The Ramah occurrence establishes only the second summer record for the state, the previous being from 1999.

YELLOW-BILLED LOON *Gavia adamsii* (15/9). One molting into alternate plumage was at BJR 25 March-28 April 2000 (DI†; GL†; LN; **BM**; 2000-4; 7-0). Despite this bird's long stay, few observers submitted details to the CBRC and documentation spans 26 March-18 April.

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena* (18/7). The presence of an individual at PR 5 October – 23 November was the only 2000 Colorado occurrence of the species for which a record was submitted (for 3

November only) this year (TL; 2000-5; 7-0).

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* (12/4). A juvenile was at Neesopah Res., Kiowa, 6 August 2000 (MJ; 2000-6; 7-0).

LEAST BITTERN *Ixobrychus exilis* (15/2). A singing bird was documented on 15 May 2000 at the marshes south of HH Road at the west end of JMR (CLW; BKP 2000-7; 6-1). There had evidently been at least two birds here on a previous date.

LITTLE BLUE HERON *Egretta caerulea* (36/15). An adult and a molting subadult were together at Blue Lake (Adobe Creek Res.), Bent, on 10 May 2000 (CLW†; BKP; 2000-8; 7-0). Another molting subadult was at Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR, Adams, on 14 May 2000 (HEK; UK; LW†; 2000-9; 7-0). Another adult was near Evans, Weld, 19-20 May 2000 (JH, DM†, SH; 2000-10; 7-0).

TRICOLORED HERON *Egretta tricolor* (17/6). A Tricolored "not in full breeding plumage" was at Russell Lakes SWA, Saguache, 28 June-24 July (DeL, DF, RLe; 2000-11; 7-0). This report provides the first county record and only the second San Luis Valley record.

REDDISH EGRET *Egretta rufescens* (5/4). A juvenile pranced along the edges of Lake Cheraw, Otero, 3-17 September 2000 and was seen by many, though often at great distance (MJ; 2000-13; 7-0).

WHITE IBIS *Eudocimus albus* (3/2). An adult that was more of a will-o'-the-wisp than a bird for the first week of its stay was present at BLSP, 17-30 April, with submitted documentation covering 25-30 April (DF, TL†, JMa, LS†, EY; 2000-14; 7-0). This record corresponded with an incredible influx of up to 2000 at Red Slough, OK, peaking on 19 April, and Nebraska's second on 17 May (Grzybowski 2001a). Hundreds remained in Oklahoma through the summer season, with nesting confirmed at Ward Lake, OK, providing the state with its first breeding record (Grzybowski 2001b).

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus* (23/19). Two different individuals, with different ibis flocks, dropped into the same flooded field at Ft. Lyon, Bent, 16 April 2000 (TL, CLW†, MJ; 2000-16; 7-0). Another was on the west side of Lake Cheraw, Otero, 21 April 2000 (CLW†; 2000-17; 7-0). One was east of the Squaw Creek wastewater facility, Eagle, 24-28 April 2000 (JMe, JA; 2000-18; 7-0), though submissions only detail occurrence on the 25th. Singles were seen in Weld in late May 2000, with one on 22 May near CRs 57 and 60.5 (KS; 2000-19; 7-0) and the other along CR 48 at Lower Latham Res. on 23 May (JF; 2000-15; 7-0).

All individuals reported were adults in alternate plumage. Undoubtedly, the species occurs in the state in autumn but is being overlooked due to the extreme difficulty of identification at that

season. The identification criteria for separating Glossy and White-faced ibises in alternate plumage have been well presented in various works (e.g., Kaufman 1990, Patten and Lasley 2000). However, the field identification of these species in juvenile plumage is currently considered virtually impossible. Because juveniles and immatures cannot be safely identified, the utility of eye color as an identification feature is greatly diminished, at least in identifying Glossies.

*ROSS'S GOOSE *Chen rossii*. An adult was a late-season surprise up high at Walden Res., Jackson, 23 May 1999 (DSm, MH; 2000-20; 7-0). The CBRC would appreciate documentation of high-elevation and out-of-season records of this species.

TRUMPETER SWAN *Cygnus buccinator* (19/12). Two adults were documented at Buckingham Lake, Larimer, on 5 February 2000 (LS†; 2000-21; 7-0) during a long winter stay (5 January - 16 February 2000). As will be noted in Semo et al. (in prep.), the CBRC is requesting documentation for all swans recorded in the state. Recently, the present species has greatly increased in occurrence in the state whereas Tundra Swan seems to have greatly decreased. This has created the situation of near parity in Colorado as far as abundance of the two species. Combined with the identification problems inherent in all-white birds, this change is certainly warranted. Additionally, the Committee hopes to deal with the very real problem of Trumpeters arriving in the state from populations that are the result of "reintroductions" that are not yet established.

EURASIAN WIGEON *Anas penelope* (22/9). A first-year male was present on the Arkansas River in Pueblo, Pueblo, 8 December 1999 - 21 April 2000 with the period covered by documentation being 9 January - 21 April 2000 (TL, CLW†; 2000-22; 7-0). Since this individual must have been documented for inclusion on the Pueblo CBC in December 1999, it is unfortunate that those details were not forwarded to the Committee, which hereby specifically requests all such documents in the future (and for past records).

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula* (2/2). Among a huge mass of scaup, Schofield managed to extract the sighting of an adult male at BLSP on 28 March 2000 (KS; 2000-23; 7-0). The excellent documentation provided included some lovely sketches of the bird awake, asleep, and in flight and is a model for all such rarity documentations.

*SURF SCOTER *Melanitta perspicillata*. An adult female at Paonia, Delta, on 3 November 2000 (DG; 2000-24; 5-2, 7-0) provided one of few documented West Slope records.

BLACK SCOTER *Melanitta nigra* (19/9). The CBRC received only one documentation for this species in 2000, that of a 1998 sighting

(despite at least three reported 2000 occurrences). The individual, an adult male, was at Walden Ponds, *Boulder*, for a week prior to its documentation date of 28 November (TL; 2000-25; 7-0).

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK *Buteo lineatus* (16/10). Two reports were received and both were accepted. The first was of a juvenile along the S. Platte River in southernmost *Adams* 1-8 January 2000 (TL, RO, KS, DSc; 2000-26; 7-0). The second individual was a long-staying juvenile at Cherry Creek SP, *Arapahoe*, that was present from 1 January 2000 (or before) to at least the documentation date of 11 March 2000 (DQ, KS; 2000-27; 3-4, 1-6).

The second bird provides a good illustration of the workings and mind set of the CBRC, so bears explaining. The Committee originally received only one documentation on this individual, despite the bird's presence for months and its being seen by a large number of Colorado birders. That description enumerated most useful field characters of a juvenile Red-shouldered, though many Committee members felt that too much was left out or not described with enough precision to be convinced of the bird's identity. Some felt that juveniles of other raptor species, particularly Northern Goshawk, Broad-winged Hawk, and Red-tailed Hawk had not been sufficiently eliminated by the details provided. However, in the document's favor, it did mention some characters, such as wingtip to tailtip ratio, that are little-used by general birders, but that are well-known in the raptor-fanatic world (in which at least one of these authors admits membership).

The description of the bird left little doubt that it was a juvenile buteo as it was said to have translucent wing panels. However, the shape of these panels was not described and the reporter noted that Broad-winged was eliminated by that feature. As most North American buteo species exhibit translucent wing panels in juvenal plumage, this statement, more than any other in the documentation, caused CBRC members to vote to not accept it in the first two rounds. The shape of the various species' wing panels is often the key to identification of young buteos. The Committee received a second document detailing the same occurrence and the record was accepted.

Both of these Red-shoulders were tallied on the Denver Urban CBC of that year (1 January 2000), but the two reports were recorded on that count as representing a single individual. This despite the

distance between the two being at least 12 miles as the crow flies, but in different drainages and thus at least 15 miles as the river-hugging Red-shouldered Hawk flies. Interestingly, the same CBC recorded adult Mew Gulls (see below) in both of the same places, but the two reports of this highly-mobile species were recorded as different individuals. As for the Eurasian Wigeon, above, the CBRC did not receive any of the CBC documentation for the Cherry Creek Red-shoulder (or the Mew Gull) and we repeat the same plea to compilers to copy documentation that goes to the National Audubon Society and submit those records to the Committee. Though individual observers **might** also submit that documentation, we would prefer two copies to none. We sincerely thank you.

HUDSONIAN GODWIT *Limosa haemastica* (25/12). One, a probable female, was found at Thurston Res., *Powers*, on 16 April 2000 (CLW†, TL; 2000-30; 6-1). Another, a male, was at Bonny Res., *Yuma*, on 13 May 2000 (BR; 2000-31; 7-0).

RUDDY TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres* (28/13). An adult in Definitive Alternate plumage was on a small island on the north side of JMR on 6 May 2000 (MJ, TL; 2000-32; 7-0). Though this species is detected annually in Colorado in both spring and fall migrations, the CBRC has received very few submissions in recent years.

RED KNOT *Calidris canutus* (19/9). Two juveniles were present at the Rocky Ford sewage ponds, *Otero*, 3-10 September 2000 and seen by a number of observers (MJ; 2000-34; 7-0). Another individual was present 4-10 September 2000 at the "Sharp-tailed Sandpiper spot" in the marshes along JJ Road at the northwestern corner of JMR (MJ; 2000-35; 7-0). This bird, too, was seen by many. The final accepted record of the year involved an unaged bird documented from Jackson Res., *Morgan*, 23 September 2000 (BR; 2000-33; 7-0). Presumably, the individual bird documented was responsible for reports at this locale for at least a few days subsequent to the documentation date. At least one of the subsequent observers apparently saw it well enough to age the bird as a juvenile, which is the expected age at that time of year; adults migrate south ahead of the juveniles.

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER *Calidris acuminata* (2/1). A juvenile, seen by many Colorado birders, was videotaped during its lengthy stay in a marsh on the north side of CR JJ on the north side of JMR (MJ, JV v, VT; 2000-36; 7-0). The bird was present 3-7 October 2000, but was documented only on the 4th. Thus accepted, the event provides only the second Colorado record for this Siberian breeder, and the first since the *Boulder* occurrence in 1975. So, come 2025, we fully expect all Colorado birders to be out looking for the third record!

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER *Tryngites subruficollis* (23/8). An adult graced Prewitt Res., *Washington*, on 31 July 2000 (CLW; 2000-37; 7-0). Two juveniles were found at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 12 September 2000 (DF; 2000-38; 7-0) with these birds apparently present for at least a few additional days. As noted by the observer, the acceptance of the first report provides probably the first conclusive record of an adult in the state in fall; all other reports are from later in the fall and are definitely or probably referable to juveniles.

AMERICAN WOODCOCK *Scolopax minor* (5/1). A displaying male made Rocky Ford SWA, *Otero*, a very popular birding destination in the evenings from 13 April to 10 May 2000 (SO, LS; 2000-39; 7-0). Stan Oswald found this bird and submitted documentation and a wonderful record of the bird's occurrence at the site, with appearance times, descriptions of weather conditions on different dates, and a running log of the numbers of birders witnessing the spectacle. He provided data on the detection of the bird on "28 straight days" and noted that it "was seen or heard by at least 106 persons." The CBRC received two documents.

RED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicaria* (22/8). One molting adult female was videotaped at the west side of Jumbo Res., *Logan*, on 19 July 2000 (CLW†, JF; 2000-40; 7-0). Another Red Phalarope, a juvenile molting into first basic plumage, was found at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 3 October 2000 (DF; 2000-41; 7-0) and was present for at least one additional day.

LAUGHING GULL *Larus atricilla* (24/12). Documentation for one in first alternate plumage at JMR 7 July 2000 (CLW; 2000-47; 7-0) was the only one provided to the CBRC in 2000.

*FRANKLIN'S GULL *Larus pipixcan*. One in definitive alternate plumage graced the BLSP area from at least 22 January 2000 into February (DF; 2000-48; 7-0). That a Franklin's Gull was in the state in January is odd enough, but the bird was in full Definitive Alternate with even the wonderful pink cast to the underparts typical of the species in newly-molted feathers. One wonders what hormonal or innate abnormality caused this event. Interestingly, there were at least two in *Larimer* in early to mid-March 2000 that were also in definitive alternate and were well ahead of typical spring arrival dates. This record also illustrates exactly the kind of odd occurrences of common Colorado birds on which the CBRC would appreciate receiving submissions.

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus* (20/11). A juvenile graced BJR 24-27 September 2000 and the four submissions documented the bird for the period 25-27 September (MJ, JJ, TL, LS; 2000-49; 7-0).

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus* (4/2). An adult in basic plumage visited BLSP for about 20 minutes on 9 October 2000 (DF, TL; 2000-50; 7-0) but, unfortunately, did not linger and was not seen again. Each of the past two Colorado records of Black-headed Gull were seen only by the original finders. Hopefully, the next one will be more cooperative.

MEW GULL *Larus canus* (20/14). An adult was at one of the many gravel pit ponds in the S. Platte valley in southern *Adams* on the Denver Urban CBC on 1 January 2000 (TL; 2000-51). The other sighting on that CBC was not submitted to the CBRC.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus* (39/37). Eight records, all of single birds, were accepted by the CBRC in the 2000 circulation. Interestingly, *Larimer* hosted at least six individuals in winter/spring 2000 with at least one individual in each identifiable age class (see Leukering and Wood 2001). Of these, three have been submitted, all at Lake Loveland on 12 March, though all were present for weeks, if not months: a first-basic bird (LS; 2000-53; 6-1), a second-basic bird (LS; 2000-52; 6-1); and a third-basic bird (LS; 2000-54; 7-0). An adult in basic plumage was at PR from 8 October 2000 into the CBC period and documented twice, on 8 October and 3 November (DF, TL; 2000-55; 7-0). One adult was at CCR at least 15 October - 12 November 2000 (TL, DF; 2000-60; 7-0). Another adult in basic plumage was at Baseline Res., *Boulder*, on 21 October 2000 (BS; 2000-56; 6-1). Yet another basic-plumaged adult was at CCR on 12 November 2000 (TL, JK; 2000-57; 6-1) and was seen in the same flock as the previous bird (2000-60). Finally, a basic-plumaged adult (what else?) was found at Taylor Lake, *Jefferson*, on the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory Barrow's Goldeneye count (Leukering et al. 2001) on 3 December 2000 (TL; 2000-59; 7-0).

Due to the great and sudden increase of the occurrence rate of Lessers, the CBRC has removed the species from the main review list. However, we still consider it a review species away from the eastern plains (Semo et al. in prep.) and outside of the typical seasonal occurrence pattern (October through April). In eastern North America, summering individuals are now found in many locations since the species has become regular in those areas. Colorado birders should certainly be on the lookout for them.

SLATY-BACKED GULL *Larus schistisagus* (1/1). In what was certainly the event of 2000, an adult in definitive basic was present in *Larimer* for at least a month (6 March - 6 April) in spring of 2000 (DAL, RH†v, TL, JMa, LN, RO, LS†, DEy; 2000-164; 7-0).

This bird provided a first state record and enabled hundreds to catch up with this species, which is of regular occurrence in Alaska, but which is rare to exceedingly rare south and east of there. Birders from as far away as Indiana (at least) got to see the bird, as it was very reliable at a few locations: the Larimer County Landfill, usually in the mornings; Horseshoe Lake during much of the rest of the day; and at Lake Loveland, where it roosted. The latter two locations are in the city of Loveland. The CBRC hopes that a history of the event will be published in *JCFO* for posterity, though we have not gotten wind of such an effort to date.

GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL *Larus glaucescens* (8/4). One in first-basic plumage was in *Larimer* for at least the period 9 March - 2 April 2000 (BL, JMa, CLW v, SMI v; 2000-61; 7-0). This bird was seen at Horseshoe Lake and the Larimer County landfill. This March record makes the fourth of eight accepted records to fall in that exciting gull month. The other four are evenly distributed among January, April, May, and July (1981 - the first record).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus* (20/15). A bird in first basic was at Arvada Res., *Jefferson*, 4 January 1998 (TL, NK; 2000-62; 7-0). The returning *gran dame* of Colorado Great Black-backs was documented from CCR 15 October - 12 November 2000 on its annual trip to PR to spend the winter, where it was documented on 16 December 2000 on the PR CBC (TL, LS†; 2000-63; 7-0). The first record had languished in Leukering's field notebook until 2000 when he noticed in the CBRC records files that he had never submitted it. Records are never too old to submit! Hint, hint!

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla* (24/12). One in juvenal graced JMR 19-22 January 2000 (CLW, RO; 2000-64; 7-0). One in definitive basic was present at Chatfield SP, *Douglas*, 25-28 2000 but was documented only on 27 October (KS, LS†; 2000-65; 7-0). The second record provides one of very few records for the state that does not involve a juvenile.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto* (11/11). The first documented record for *Weld* was of a single bird in New Raymer on 19 March 2000 (DW, JW; 2000-67; 7-0). The first for *Sedgwick* was provided by another single bird at Ovid on 1 April (LS, CLW†, TL; 2000-68; 7-0). Another county first, this one for *Kit Carson*, was garnered by Siebert when he found two at the Flagler City Park on 15 April 2000 (RS†; 2000-69; 7-0). Though the species has been reported from Lamar for a couple years, the bird near the Lamar Cemetery, *Prowers*, on 21 April 2000 (CLW†, TL; 2000-70; 7-0) was the first from that town that was documented and accepted. *Bent* recorded its first

when two were videotaped near mile marker 401 on US 50 east of Las Animas (CLW†, KH; 2000-71; 7-0). Finally, the last of the newly-accepted county records was the one from *Fremont* involving at least two birds in Cañon City for all of fall 2000. However, these birds were documented only on 17 December 2000 on the Penrose CBC (TL; 2000-73; 7-0).

So, that is five new county records out of six records accepted. A potential sixth county record, from *Rio Grande*, was tabled by the CBRC while it waits for the submission of photographs that apparently were taken (R. Ryder pers. comm.). The CBRC requests the assistance of all Colorado's birders in documenting the inexorable spread through the state of this exotic. Please see Semo et al. in this issue for details.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE *Zenaida asiatica* (24/17). One visited Versaw's back yard in Colorado Springs, *El Paso*, on 6 May 2000 (AV; 2000-74; 7-0). Another single was seen and heard singing on 10 May 2000 in Campo, *Baca*, for a first local record (DO; 2000-75; 7-0). Though the reporter of the latter is no Bateman, the sketches provided made this an easy record to accept. The latter bird was, apparently, present through much of the summer at this location, but the CBRC received no further submissions.

INCA DOVE *Columbina inca* (12/12). At least two were present in Rocky Ford, *Otero*, from 27 February 2000 through the end of the year (SO, BL, DQ; 2000-76; 2000-76). A single bird was at Willow Creek Park in Lamar, *Prowers*, on 16 April 2000 (TL, CLW†; 2000-77; 7-0). The third record of the year was provided by a single bird in Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, 20-31 December 2000 (TM, LZ, TL, LS†; 2000-78; 7-0).

The Rocky Ford birds apparently nested successfully, as up to six birds were present from some point in summer through the CBC period. However, the CBRC has received no documentation of more than two birds, no documentation of their presence after 5 March 2000, and no documentation of nesting activity. The Ft. Collins bird was present into January 2001 and, apparently, after a long absence, returned in spring.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* (14/1). After discussion at the meeting, the CBRC accepted the sighting of a Black-billed in the unlikely place of the *Grand* CR 1 crossing of the Blue River just south of Kremmling (TL; 2000-79; 4-3, 5-2). Interestingly, the only other West Slope report of the species comes from nearly the same location (Andrews and Righter 1992). This record is the only one of

this species that has been submitted and accepted in the past decade. SNOWY OWL *Nyctea scandiaca* (9/2). One north of SH 14 between *Weld* CRs 97 & 99 was videotaped nicely during its stay, 4-6 February 2000 (BL, RH_v, DM†; 2000-80; 7-0). BARRED OWL *Strix varia* (2/1). A pair was at the Colorado-Kansas border along the Cimarron River, *Baca*, on 20 January 2000 (CLW, BKP; 2000-81; 5-2, 5-2).

This record provides only the second for the state of this fairly sedentary and retiring species. The previous record involves the collection of an adult and eggs from a nest in Holyoke, *Phillips*, in March 1897. Andrews and Righter (1992) believed that, since the specimen (though we are unsure as to whether that means just the adult or also the egg set) was no longer extant, the record should be included on the state list. Leukering and Semo checked on the egg set at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (on 21 March 2002) and it is still present and is, apparently, a set of Barred Owl eggs. Spotted Owl is probably ruled out by the size of the eggs.

The two observers were trying to find owls in southwestern-most Kansas when they decided that since "Barred Owl had been collected in the area in 1992 (Cable et al. 1996)...to try to call one in" by giving a few Barred Owl calls. Two owls responded by flying in to a tree near them. Though the birds and the observers were in Kansas, both birds eventually flew "well into Colorado."

The CBRC discussed this record at its meeting, trying to determine the possibilities that needed to be excluded to accept such an exceptional record. The main possibilities were that the birds were mis-identified Great Horned or Spotted owls. The description provided stated that the eyes were dark, but the harsh lighting that a strong flashlight in darkness provides was considered a possible cause of misconception as to the true eye color. Obviously, the two *Strix* owls and *Flammulated*, are the only dark-eyed owls to regularly occur in North America. Additionally, the wide-winged flight silhouette and the lack of ear tufts eliminated Great Horned. Thus, we were left with the possibilities of Barred and Spotted owls. Feeling that the presence of one Spotted Owl at this location would be exceptional, the presence of two seemed to be virtually impossible. It was felt important by many that Barred Owl ranges in Kansas much closer to the *Baca* location than does Spotted Owl in Colorado and that the species had been collected previously in Kansas very near to

the location. Additionally, the field marks detailed also ruled out Spotted Owl. Finally, Wood has had extensive experience with this species in the eastern U.S. (Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Indiana) and that fact was considered important by many Committee members. In the end, the record was accepted at the meeting.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD *Archilochus colubris* (5/5). The Paulsen residence north of Lamar in *Prowers* near Thurston Res. produced reports of a number of individuals of this species in September 2000. Present were at least two adult males on the 10th (MJ; 2000-82; 7-0) and an immature male from the 14th to the 17th (DF, JV v; 2000-83; 7-0). Additionally, a report of a female *Archilochus* from this site has been tabled pending comment by outside experts. Another female *Archilochus* was reported from the northeast corner of the state in fall 2000, but the CBRC received no report.

As Colorado's birders become more proficient at hummer identification and snoop around in more of the far-flung eastern corners of the state, we predict that Ruby-throats will be found to be regular migrants. Leukering has talked to multiple home-owners in far eastern towns (e.g., Springfield, *Baca*) that report having hummers in spring and fall at their feeders. I suspect that these birds are as likely to be out-of-range Ruby-throats (particularly the spring birds) as they are to be out-of-range Rufous or Broad-tails. Regardless, these birds are certainly worth a second look!

ACORN WOODPECKER *Melanerpes formicivorus* (6/6). One was found along the Mace Trail in Pueblo Mountain Park, *Pueblo*, on 20 May 2000 (PH; 2000-85; 7-0). The reporter included a nice color sketch that made it easy for the Committee to determine that this first county record was of a male.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER *Pyrocephalus rubinus* (15/3). A breeding pair at the Higbee cemetery, *Otero*, provided one of the most enjoyable events of the year, as the birds were readily observed for months (LZ, DER†v, JMa, DQ, LS, TM; 2000-87; 7-0). Leatherman (2001) should be consulted for further details on what was probably the first recorded successful breeding by the species in Colorado. The birds were first found on 26 March 2000 and the CBRC received documentation on occurrence through 13 August 2000, though only one document detailing occurrence after mid-April. As always, records of the "Red Flamehead" are much appreciated by the CBRC, though reporting of this species seems to have declined quite a bit, as the parenthetical numbers can attest (though wait until you see the plethora of reports submitted in 2001). The Committee would also like to take this

opportunity to correct a widespread misunderstanding on the spelling of this species' name. Despite the color being spelled with two "L"s, "Vermilion" in the bird name is, for some unknown reason, spelled with only one. Would that great Colorado bird historian, Bob Righter, have any insight into this problem?

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER *Tyrannus forficatus* (15/10). An adult female graced Pickney Road east of Colorado City, *Pueblo*, on 16 May 2000 (DSi; 2000-88; 7-0). *Pueblo* recorded another individual in 2000, with a female or young male along Little Burnt Mill Road on 1 July 2000 (PSS; 2000-89; 7-0). In a very different place, one was photographed on 26 July 2000 near Yampa, *Routt*, for a first county record (VD†; 2000-90; 7-0). This species can seemingly show up anywhere in the state and anytime from April to October (accepted records span 24 April to 5 October). Unfortunately, all three of these birds were typical – they were seen only by the finders on the original date. Very few records in Colorado have pertained to lingering birds.

WHITE-EYED VIREO *Vireo griseus* (32/25). Five reports from 2000 were submitted to the CBRC in this circulation and all were accepted. The first was a silent adult 26 April at Bear Creek Regional Park, *El Paso* (AV; 2000-91; 7-0). It took 3.5 weeks before the next one, another silent bird, was found at CVCG on 20 May 2000 (LS; 2000-92; 7-0). The next day, one was singing at PPWG (KS; 2000-93; 7-0). On 12 June 2000, another singing bird was a surprise along the Purgatoire River east of Lorencito (TL; 2000-94; 7-0) as this bird provided a first county record for under-birded *Las Animas*. Schofield found her second of the year on 27 October at Chatfield SP on the *Jefferson* side of the S. Platte River (KS; 2000-95; 7-0).

The last individual, above, was very late, as there are only three later reports on record: one 30 October 1995 in Colorado City, *Pueblo*; one on 1 November 1991 at BLSP, and one on the incredible date of 13 November 1980 in Ft. Morgan, *Morgan*. Also interesting is that this species was apparently very rare in the state prior to the 1990s, but the CBRC has now accepted 25 reports since 1990. Additionally, a large percentage of the individuals found in Colorado still seem to get reported to the CBRC, unlike reports of many other similarly-rare (or common) eastern passerine vagrants (e.g., Worm-eating Warbler).

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO *Vireo flavifrons* (28/20). Despite a large increase of records of Yellow-throated Vireos in the state since 1990, the only one found in 2000 was a short-staying, silent bird at Rocky Ford SWA, *Otero*, on 4 May 2000 (DSc; 2000-96; 7-0).

*BELL'S VIREO *Vireo bellii*. The first record for the West Slope was found by

Faulkner and Levad while conducting a floating transect on the White River for Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's bird-monitoring program. This bird was seen and heard singing for about 15 minutes on 13 June 2000 about ½-mile west of Kenney Res., *Rio Blanco* (DF, RLe; 2000-97; 7-0).

BLUE-HEADED VIREO *Vireo solitarius* (8/7). One was along the Poudre River trail in Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, on 9 September 2000 (DAL; 2000-100; 7-0). Another was found 20 September 2000 on the Paulsen property, *Prowers* (DAL; 2000-102; 7-0), while the finder was searching for Ruby-throated Hummingbird. And, finally, Leatherman got photos of one at the "Locust Grove" at Neenoshe Res., *Kiowa*, on 28 September 2000 (DAL†; 2000-103; 7-0). Please see the discussion about this species in Part III, below.

PHILADELPHIA VIREO *Vireo philadelphicus* (24/11). One was at the LCC grove on 17 September 2000 (DAL; 2000-106; 7-0). Another was at Crystal Lake in Rocky Ford, *Otero*, on 1 October 2000 (MJ, BKP; 2000-107; 7-0). The third of the year was along the Poudre River trail in Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, on 6 October 2000 (DAL; 2000-108; 7-0). The last of the year was found 8 October 2000 at the FLWE (MJ, VZ; 2000-109; 7-0). Note how many rare vireos Leatherman found in one fall!

CAROLINA WREN *Thryothorus ludovicianus* (23/12). The DeCesares videotaped a Carolina Wren at their residence in Greenwood Village, *Arapahoe*, during the period 19 December 1999 - 5 March 2000, with the bird still present as of the submission of documentation on the latter date (FD; 2000-113; 7-0). The CBRC thanks Hugh Kingery for submitting supporting documentation upon his review of the videotape. One was smartly videotaped (with some nice captures submitted) in the Poudre Canyon near LaPorte, *Larimer*, on 17 January 2000 (RH†; 2000-110; 7-0). Another was at Ovid, *Sedgwick*, from 25 March to at least 1 April 2000 with documentation supporting the occurrence only on the latter date (LS, JK; 2000-111; 7-0). The oddest record of the year was of a bird heard singing by Lambeth upon waking up one morning at his home in Grand Junction, *Mesa*, on 18 May 2000 (RLa; 2000-112; 7-0). Not only does this provide a first county record, but a first West Slope record, as well.

*WINTER WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*. One was singing east of Brainard Lake, *Boulder*, on 21 June 2000 (LAG, MF; 2000-114; 5-2, 6-1). Another was singing in upper Endovalley, Rocky Mountain National Park, *Larimer*, on 1 July 2000 (WR; 2000-115; 6-1).

These two occurrences provide the first two summer records of Winter Wren in Colorado. The first bird was found on the Indian

Peaks summer count, the latter on an American Birding Association convention field trip. The *Boulder* bird was found prior to the date of documentation, but that date was not provided by the reporter. Interestingly, both birds were singing, as if on territory, and provided poor (2000-114) or no (2000-115) views, thus the reporters were forced to describe in words that wonderful, but complex, song the species sings. The second bird was felt to be singing the song of the eastern form of Winter Wren, not the faster, less musical song of the western birds. Though there was some internal disagreement, the CBRC felt that both observers did a good job in a difficult situation, with Russell's description of his bird's song being particularly apt.

VARIED THRUSH *Ixoreus naevius* (15/8). A female was present and seen by many at Jackson SP, *Morgan*, for at least the period of 9 January - 12 February 2000 though with details provided to the CBRC only for the period 9-11 January (DQ†, RO; 2000-116; 7-0). A second bird was along the St. Vrain Greenway in Longmont, *Boulder*, on 14 March 2000 (JY; 2000-117; 5-2, 4-3).

The second record caused heartburn in a number of Committee members, due partly to the lack of supplementary documents provided by other observers of the bird. If the species were at all an identification problem, it would probably have not have been accepted. The CBRC felt that it had to make a leap of faith that the bird was a thrush, as the details provided did not indicate that, as a short listing of pertinent field marks was all that was provided. However, since no one on the Committee could come up with a species with at all similar field marks, other than Siberian Accentor, the report was finally accepted at the annual meeting. The CBRC truly appreciates the time invested in documentation by submitting observers, but requests details additional to the two or three field marks required to identify the bird (see Wood et al. in prep.).

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER *Vermivora pinus* (33/16). A singing male was at the FLWE 28-29 April 2000 (RO; 2000-119; 7-0). Another was near Colorado City, *Pueblo*, on 16 May 2000 (DSi; 2000-120; 7-0). Still another was along the Arkansas River at the Goodnight Avenue river trail in Pueblo, *Pueblo*, on 20 May 2000 (MJ; 2000-121; 7-0). The first *Gunnison* record was provided by an individual at the Gunnison wastewater plant 25-27 August 2000 (JB; 2000-122; 7-0). The latter documentation provided very brief details, but the crude sketch illustrating the location and appearance of various important field marks was more than sufficient to enable the Committee to vote unanimously to accept the record. As mentioned in Wood et al. (in

prep.), even those with little or no artistic ability, such as the authors of this article, can make the CBRC's job of analysis of records much easier by providing a simple sketch illustrating the features seen.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER *Vermivora chrysoptera* (31/14). Incredibly, the only report of Golden-winged submitted from 2000 was from the same observer and location of the last Blue-winged, above! This first *Gunnison* record was provided by a male present on 25 August 2000 (JB; 2000-118; 7-0). Another sketch was provided by Berry, again making our job easy.

***TENNESSEE WARBLER** *Vermivora peregrina*. One very tardy immature peregrinated to the town of Ouray, *Ouray*, and was found there on 7 November 2000 (TL; 2000-123; 7-0). This bird was one of a large number of late and out-of-range birds found in that town in early November 2000 (Levad and Leukering 2001).

CAPE MAY WARBLER *Dendroica tigrina* (20/6). An immature male was found in Boulder, *Boulder*, and was present at least 15-16 November, but with details only reported on the latter date (TL, JV v, BK; 2000-124; 7-0).

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER *Dendroica fusca* (35/19). The first of a good showing of Blackburnians in 2000 was a singing male at the Environmental Learning Center in Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, on 9 May 2000 (JMa; 2000-125; 7-0). The next was a female at CVCG on 20 May 2000 (LS; 2000-126; 7-0). The first of two fall records was provided by an immature female at Belmar Park in Lakewood, *Jefferson*, 1-2 September 2000 (KS; 2000-128; 7-0). Finally, the latest was a laggard immature male near Colorado City, *Pueblo*, on 18 October 2000 (DSi; 2000-127; 7-0).

PRAIRIE WARBLER *Dendroica discolor* (18/12). A singing adult male was found at the "Wood Thrush Grove" on the southeast corner of CRs JJ & 16, *Bent*, on 14 May 2000 (MJ; 2000-129; 7-0). Another singing male was at TBSWA below the dam, 6-8 June 2000 (DAL, TL; 2000-130; 7-0), with submitted details covering the entire period.

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER *Dendroica castanea* (32/8). An adult male provided Versaw a lovely surprise at Fountain Creek Regional Park, *El Paso*, on 14 May 2000 (AV; 2000-131; 7-0). A female at CVCG on 24 May 2000 (JF, CLW; 2000-132; 7-0) provided the only other report of 2000.

The tremendous increase in birder effort, interest, and knowledge that Colorado has experienced in the past decade has resulted in much larger numbers of various review species being found in the state, as evidenced by reports to COBIRDS and the seasonal reports

in this journal and in *North American Birds*. However, for many of these species, particularly eastern vagrants, the reporting of details to the CBRC has not kept pace and the number of accepted records in the past ten years does not, as it should, greatly outnumber the accepted records from previous decades.

The two numbers within the parentheses after the scientific name indicate that the number of reports of Bay-breasted Warblers submitted to and accepted by the CBRC has declined from that in previous years. One of the reasons for this is, undoubtedly, the low rate at which current observers submit documentation to the Committee. However, this species formerly was truly more numerous in the state and elsewhere. Bay-breasted Warbler is a spruce budworm specialist and its population cycles over long periods and with great absolute population size variation due to the vagaries of the population size of spruce budworm. The budworm, the larva of a tortricid moth (*Choristoneura fumiferana*), periodically undergoes incredibly rapid and extensive population outbreaks, causing foresters no end of heartburn. When these outbreaks happen, Bay-breasted Warbler numbers can increase tremendously (such as the 12-fold increase in numbers in one study in New Brunswick (Morris et al. 1958) and, thus, provide more birds available to become vagrants to Colorado. However, since 1952, there has been widespread spraying of spruce-fir forests in eastern Canada (Busby et al. 1991) that has caused a decrease in budworm outbreaks (Williams 1996).

Breeding Bird Survey data illustrate a slight increase in population prior to 1980 that “was probably related to the spruce-budworm outbreaks of the 1970s” (Williams 1996). Williams (1996) also states that the subsequent decrease “could be due to the lack of... outbreaks, perhaps caused by spraying programs and to changes in habitat due to cutting.” The beginnings of the CBRC saw the tail end of the last great Bay-breasted population surge, as illustrated by the number of records accepted by the Committee in each year since its inception in 1973: 1973-6, 1974-9, 1975-1, 1977-1, 1978-3, 1979-1, 1988-1, 1990-3, 1991-1, 1995-5, 1997-1, 1998-2, 2000-3. Interestingly, the only state breeding record occurred in 1978 in the midst of a minor upward blip in the trend that saw only six accepted records between 1975 and 1990.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER *Protonotaria citrea* (33/17). An adult male brightened the LCC on 22 April 2000 (MJ, JK; 2000-133; 7-0). Another was at the grove on the northeast corner of CRs JJ & 16, Bent, 7-8

October 2000, though documentation was submitted only for the second date (MJ, IS; 2000-134; 7-0). The last of the year was seen 9 October 2000 along the Monument Creek trail in Colorado Springs, *El Paso* (AV; 2000-135; 7-0).

WORM-EATING WARBLER *Helmitheros vermivorus* (26/17). Of numerous individuals apparently found in 2000, the only submitted report was of a silent individual below the dam at Prewitt Res. in *Logan* (JMa; 2000-136; 7-0).

*OVENBIRD *Seiurus aurocapillus*. A singing male was tape-recorded by Potter at the Yampa River Preserve, *Routt*, on 2 June 2000 (KP; 2000-137; 7-0). Please see Potter (2001) for further details. One addendum: John Toolen told Leukering that he had found or obtained a dead Ovenbird at the same location about a decade earlier. He had it delivered to the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, but we are currently unaware of that specimen's whereabouts.

KENTUCKY WARBLER *Oporornis formosus* (27/13). A visually-uncooperative, but very vocally-cooperative singing male at PPWG on 14 May 2000 (KS; 2000-138; 7-0) provided the only documented record of the year.

MOURNING WARBLER *Oporornis philadelphia* (19/12). An adult male was just below the dam at TBSWA on 4 May 2000 (CLW; 2000-139; 7-0). The only other one reported was another adult male at "Van's Grove" (the woodlot on the north side of HH Rd between Rds 17 & 18), *Bent* (CLW; 2000-140; 7-0). Unfortunately, no one submitted details on the long-staying bird at LCC in May 2000, despite being seen by numerous observers, though by none of these authors (darn it!).

*HOODED WARBLER *Wilsonia citrina*. A singing male was at Aiken Canyon Preserve, *El Paso*, on 6 May 2000 (GC; 2000-141; 7-0).

*SUMMER TANAGER *Piranga rubra*. An adult male enlivened the area below the dam at Prewitt Res. in *Logan* on 7 May 2000 (JMa; 2000-142; 7-0).

HEPATIC TANAGER *Piranga flava* (16/10). An adult female was at Fairmount Cemetery in Lamar, *Prowers*, on 14 May 2000 (DAL, CLW; 2000-143; 7-0). None of the other 2000 reports was submitted.

SCARLET TANAGER *Piranga olivacea* (22/11). Four were found in the state in spring 2000 in a five-day period. An adult male visited the area below the dam at TBSWA on 16 May 2000 (CLW; 2000-144; 7-0). Another was along Dry Creek near Monte Vista, *Rio Grande*, on 20 May 2000 (D&DB; 2000-145; 7-0) for a first county and San Luis Valley record. Also on 20 May, a female was found along the Arkansas River at the Goodnight Ave. river trail, *Pueblo* (MJ; 2000-146; 7-0). The fourth of the spring was an adult male at Willow Creek

Park in Lamar, *Prowers* (MJ, BKP; 2000-147; 7-0).

EASTERN TOWHEE *Pipilo erythrophthalmus* (9/7). A male was found near Colorado City, *Pueblo*, 6-16 November 2000 (DSj; 2000-148; 7-0).

The CBRC has shown willingness to accept fall and winter records of this very-rare-in-Colorado species, given decent views and, preferably, a bird giving typical call notes. However, the Committee's feelings are very different concerning late spring and summer birds. We believe that extensive introgression of Eastern Towhee genes into Spotted Towhee populations reaching into the northeastern part of the state makes for some very difficult situations. These birds should be meticulously described with good details on songs (if relevant) and calls.

*SAGE SPARROW *Amphispiza belli*. Though this species is reported along the Colorado Front Range in most springs, one of the few well-documented records there was provided by a bird at the Dinosaur Ridge Hawkwatch, *Jefferson*, 6-7 April 2000 (CLW†; 2000-149; 7-0).

*SAVANNAH SPARROW *Passerculus sandwichensis*. This is a common breeder and migrant in Colorado, but wintering in the state has not been well documented. Thus, a Savannah present through much of February 2000 in *Bent* is of considerable interest. Leatherman found the bird, 3-5 February 2000, in association with the Le Conte's Sparrows (see below) present near JMR that winter (DAL; 2000-150; 7-0); many others were able to see it in their treks to see the Le Conte's Sparrows.

BAIRD'S SPARROW *Ammodramus bairdii* (9/2). A relatively cooperative bird was a complete surprise at BJR 26-27 September 2000 (MJ, LS; 2000-153; 7-0), though details were submitted only from the sightings on the 26th. One spring 2000 report from *Baca* was held for later circulation awaiting additional documentations.

As Baird's Sparrow breeds to the north of the state and winters to the south of Colorado, it is, undoubtedly, of regular occurrence in migration. However, the birding habits of Colorado's birders mostly preclude our chances of finding the species, except in serendipitous events such as the BJR sighting, above. As can be seen by the parenthetical numbers, we have found very few Baird's Sparrows in the past decade. There have been some recent attempts to find this species in spring on the eastern plains with some success. Probably the best chances to find the species is by getting a number of observers together to search likely habitat on the plains in late April through much of May and again in fall, probably from mid-September

to early October. Since Baird's prefers medium-height, but patchy, grass (T. Leukering pers. obs., C. Wood pers. obs.), migrants would have a lot of choices in eastern Colorado. Baird's Sparrows are like most other nocturnal migrants in that if there is no preferred habitat available at the end of a nocturnal flight, they will utilize whatever is available and could be found in some seemingly odd places.

LE CONTE'S SPARROW *Ammodramus leconteii* (9/6). A largish group of Le Conte's was found wintering in a sedge-grass marsh north of JMR west of CR 16, *Bent*, 3 February to at least 11 March 2000 (DAL†, PG, DQ†, CLW; 2000-154; 7-0). The minimum number estimated at the site was four, by the original observer, but careful estimates ranged up to nine! This site also supported a couple Swamp Sparrows, making it a real sparrow Mecca. We congratulate Leatherman and Quesenberry for obtaining such excellent photos to make the Committee's decision a no-brainer.

*RED FOX SPARROW *Passerella iliaca iliaca/zaboria*. One at Ouray, *Ouray*, 6-8 November 2000 provided an exciting first West Slope record (TL; 2000-155; 7-0).

While this form has always been considered a quasi-review species in Colorado, in anticipation of a future split of what is currently considered Fox Sparrow, the CBRC is formalizing the review status of Red Fox Sparrow (Semo et al. in prep.) - that is, the reddish birds whose breeding range encompasses the Canadian taiga part of the complex's whole breeding range. In addition, the Committee would appreciate reports on any Fox Sparrows on the eastern plains and/or out-of-season and/or oddly-plumaged, as the split that may happen could create more than just two species and we would like to get ahead of the curve on this one.

GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW *Zonotrichia atricapilla* (14/8). Faulkner monopolized the finding of this species in Colorado in 2000, digging up both individuals: an adult at the former Colorado State University research station on Comanche National Grassland near Pritchett, *Baca*, on 30 April (DF; 2000-156; 7-0) and an immature at the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory office at BLSP on 9 October (DF; 2000-157; 7-0). The latter bird was present until at least 12 October.

*ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK *Pheucticus ludovicianus*. An odd bird visiting the feeders of Sandi and Ed Ziegler in December 2000 turned out to be an immature Rose-breasted Grosbeak (EZ†, SZ; 2000-158; 7-0). The season is odd enough, but the feeders were some 10+ miles south of Como, *Park*! The Grosbeak was present from 1 December until at least Christmas and a photograph of the bird was published in

the January 2001 issue of *JCFO* (page 16).

PAINTED BUNTING *Passerina ciris* (20/14). What was probably a returning individual was in the *Las Animas* part of Cottonwood Canyon on 1 June 1999 (TL; 2000-159; 7-0). Another adult male was at the Lake Hasty campground, *Bent*, on 7 May 2000 (MJ; 2000-160; 7-0). The oddest Painted Bunting record of the year was provided by an adult male at the US Forest Service office in Silverthorne, *Summit*, 28 April - 5 May 2000 (SMi†; 2000-161; 7-0). The latter report provides the first county record and one of very few in Colorado away from the eastern plains and the Front Range foothill edge.

The Cottonwood Canyon bird had been reported in May of 1999, but the CBRC received no documentation from that report. Additionally, 1999 was about the sixth consecutive year that a single male Painted Bunting had been reported from the location, though it was not documented to the Committee in either 1996 or 1997 (having been documented in 1994, 1995, 1998, and 1999).

Part II. RECORDS PROVISIONALLY ACCEPTED

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER *Empidonax flaviventris*. A bird seen and heard well in Pueblo, *Pueblo* (MJ; 2000-165; 5-2, 6-1), was well-described by the reporter and represents the first record of the species accepted by the CBRC. Unfortunately, the bird was seen by only one birder, thus cannot currently be considered as accepted to the Colorado list (see discussion in the introduction).

PART III. RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED DUE TO QUESTIONABLE IDENTIFICATION

TRICOLORED HERON *Egretta tricolor*. One was reported from near Branson, *Las Animas*, on 5 September 2000 (2000-12; 2-5). Unfortunately, the few details provided by the experienced observer did not permit the CBRC to determine that the bird was correctly identified, particularly not eliminating the more-expected Great Blue Heron or a partial albino Little Blue Heron.

RUFFED GROUSE *Bonasa umbellus*. Though the observers provided extensive details of the sighting, there was a number of questionable aspects concerning the report of a "male" with chicks near Drake, *Larimer*, on 28 June 2000 (2000-28; 0-7). Firstly, males of most grouse species, including Ruffed, have nothing to do with females or young other than providing half the genetic material of the young, so a male consorting with a brood would be quite odd. Secondly, the typical behavior of a female Ruffed Grouse with a brood upon being

approached by humans, is to go into an incredibly impressive distraction display, not to fly to a nearby low tree and watch the proceedings. The described behaviors and plumage characters are typical of female Blue Grouse which are obviously much more likely in the locality than are Ruffed Grouse, which, to date, has only been found in the state at Hoy Mountain in extreme western *Moffat*.

BLACK RAIL *Laterallus jamaicensis*. An individual was reported at Manitou Lake, *Teller*, on 11 August 2000(2000-29; 4-3, 0-7), being seen in the presence of adults of both Sora and Virginia Rail. Black Rail is a denizen in Colorado of marshes in the Arkansas River valley, mostly in *Otero* and *Bent*, thus the CBRC was very intrigued by a report in montane *Teller*. The reporter provided numerous details on the sighting and on the bird and stated that the bird was not a downy chick. The observer apparently had very good looks at the bird, yet did not mention eye or leg colors, which would have been definitive and should certainly have been observable, considering the plumage details that were provided. Some on the Committee felt that the plumage features described could also have been matched by a downy young of either Sora or Virginia Rail molting into juvenal plumage. In the second round, the CBRC was unanimous that the observation, while very suggestive, was not definitive enough for such an odd record (a potential first montane record in Colorado).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus graellsii*. Despite lengthy observation by the reporter and extensive discussion by the Committee, a report of an adult at Boulder Reservoir, *Boulder*, on 24 November 2000 was not accepted by the CBRC (2000-58; 5-2, 4-3). Many felt that the description, while suggestive, was not definitive, particularly as the report did not discuss how California Gull was eliminated. This factor, alone, was considered critical as that is the species that, in many situations in Colorado, is most similar to Lesser Black-backed.

GREAT GRAY OWL *Strix nebulosa*. A report of an individual near Rabbit Mountain, *Boulder*, on the Eagle Wind Trail on 27 August 2000 was not accepted (2000-167; 0-7). Though many features of Great Gray were described (yellow eyes, "white bars" at bottom of face, and no "ears"), these features are also consistent with the plumage of a juvenile Great Horned Owl, which would be much likelier on that date and in that location. Additionally, some features described were inconsistent with the identification (e.g., "sienna brown tones and off-white colors on top"). Though Great Gray Owl is a potential vagrant to the state as it has been found in southwestern Wyoming, August in *Boulder* is probably unlikely.

*BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD *Archilochus alexandri*. A very late hummingbird at Redlands, *Mesa*, 22 October -10 December 2000 was probably a member of this species (2000-84; 3-4) and as such would have provided a state record-late date. Unfortunately, the reporter provided very few plumage or structure details and these were limited to "partial gorget on his right side." The CBRC had no choice but to not accept this report, despite being submitted by a very experienced hummingbird fanatic.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER *Empidonax flaviventris*. An immature Empie fairly well described from LCC on 6 October 2000 (2000-166; 0-7) was not accepted as a Yellow-bellied. The observer did a good job in determining the age of the bird by observing buffy wingbars typical of juvenile *Empidonax*. Unfortunately, the extensive description provided a combination of field marks not usually shown by this species in this plumage. The bird was described as having a "yellow-green throat" which, if the bird had been an adult, would have been very suggestive of Yellow-bellied. However, young-of-the-year Yellow-bellies tend to have dull whitish-buff throats and are generally not the "lime green" bird that was described. Additionally, a number of other supporting features was not noted, particularly the primary projection, which would have helped eliminate either of the two "Western" Flycatchers (Cordilleran and Pacific-slope). Finally, the CBRC tends to be quite a bit more conservative when dealing with a potential first state record, particularly of individuals of a notoriously difficult genus such as *Empidonax*. While the entire CBRC membership believes that this species is a likely visitor to Colorado, acceptance will require exhaustive details on all aspects of the bird's plumage and structure.

ALDER FLYCATCHER *Empidonax alnorum*. The report of an individual near Palmer Lake, *El Paso*, on 31 July 2000 (2000-86; 5-2, 4-3) made for some lively Committee discussion. The bird sang a number of times from a Mountain Mahogany- and Gambel's Oak-covered hillside, habitat typical of Dusky Flycatcher. After two rounds without resolution, the CBRC finally decided to not accept the report. Though the observer is very experienced with this and all similar Empies, the Committee had a couple of concerns. The first was that the bird was not seen, so no plumage features were described to either pigeonhole the bird to at least "Traill's" Flycatcher (Alder or Willow) or to eliminate congeners of more likely occurrence, particularly Dusky Flycatcher. Secondly, members felt that the fact that many *Empidonax* produce some very odd songs in late summer made even the excellent song description suspect. Unfortunately, as

the observer reported, the bird did not call, which would have provided very definitive evidence.

BLUE-HEADED VIREO *Vireo solitarius*. One individual reported from the LCC on 17 September 2000 was not accepted in the second round (2000-101; 3-4, 0-7). The CBRC had an extensive discussion about all three reports of Blue-headed Vireo (of seven submitted) that were brought to the Committee meeting. These discussions could result in the re-review of all past Blue-headed records, as the Committee feels that the extreme similarity of some Cassin's Vireo plumages to that of Blue-headed makes identification in the field more difficult than most realize. The chief instigator of this discussion was a bird caught and banded at the RMBO banding station at Barr Lake, *Adams*, in September of 2001. Both Leukering and Wood, who saw the bird in hand, agreed that it appeared very similar in many respects to Blue-headed but that there was a number of features that were just not quite right and that it was a Cassin's. The Committee was able to view pictures of this bird in comparison to pictures of a true Blue-headed and see what the differences were but also how similar the individual was to the Blue-headed.

With this experience under its belt, the CBRC proceeded to not accept all of the records before them: one at Valco Ponds SWA, *Pueblo*, on 19 May 2000 (2000-98; 6-1, 4-3); one at Mineral Palace Park, *Pueblo*, on 22 August 2000 (2000-99; 6-1, 3-4); and one at LCC 16-17 September 2000 (2000-104; 5-2, 4-3). Features of the reports that caused non-acceptance of the various records include, but are not necessarily limited to, lack of firm notation of precise head pattern, particularly throat/auricular contrast and crown/nape/back contrast and the lack of details on the brightness and extent of the pale edge to the outer web of the outermost rectrix.

One report also reported a tentative identification of the Appalachian race, *alticola*. This form is less contrasty than is nominate *solitarius*, so bright, contrasty Cassin's Vireos would even more closely approach that taxon in appearance. Combined with the low likelihood of this form's occurrence in the West, the identification of *alticola* in the state will remain suspect.

BAIRD'S SPARROW *Ammodramus bairdii*. The most interesting report of the 2000 circulation was of a single Baird's Sparrow seen near Colorado National Monument, *Mesa*, on 27 May 2000 (2000-152; 2-5, 4-3). The observers were, unfortunately, new to documenting birds and were hard-pressed to convince the Committee of the correctness of their

identification. However, due to comments of a couple Committee members in the first round, the Chair sent the report around for a second round where it garnered additional support. However, at the CBRC meeting, members felt that the report just did not have enough details described in unambiguous terms to accept the report of such an apparently rare species on the “wrong” side of the state. The Committee, though, would like to commend the observers for making the valiant effort at documenting a very difficult species in a very odd situation. As one member commented in the first round, “I certainly would not want my first documentation to be of such a difficult species as Baird’s Sparrow!”

*BALTIMORE ORIOLE *Icterus galbula*. An immature female described from a Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, backyard was heard and, apparently, photographed (2000-162; 1-6). Unfortunately, the CBRC did not receive the photographs and the description did not eliminate Bullock’s. The breast was described as orange, which is certainly suggestive of Baltimore, but many other details were not provided, particularly the color of the belly, the back pattern, head color and pattern, and greater coverts pattern and color. The bird was heard to call once and the observer felt that the vocalization was “more like Balt[imore].” However, vocalizations of hybrid Baltimore x Bullock’s Orioles could match either parental species and these hybrids must be considered when looking at an out-of-range or out-of-season oriole or, on the eastern plains, any oriole. Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to suggest that observers of winter orioles in Colorado consider Streak-backed. This Mexican species does occasionally disperse north for the winter and is of somewhat regular occurrence in Arizona at that season. In addition, there is a recent winter record of an immature Streak-backed found dead in WISCONSIN!

PURPLE FINCH *Carpodacus purpureus*. A brown-plumaged bird (female or immature male) was reported from Colorado City, *Pueblo*, on 6 February 2000 (2000-163; 6-1, 4-3). This report, submitted by an experienced and respected birder, is a good example of how the CBRC often works. The report’s initial circulation went through the Committee with only one dissenting vote, yet the Chair felt that the comments (on seemingly contra-indicating features) from that dissenting voter might sway other members, so sent the report around, again. In the second round, members paid more specific attention to the features in the report and the observation lost support. At the Committee meeting, the members felt that, while the bird reported was almost certainly a Purple Finch, the details

provided were ambiguous and the CBRC declined to accept it.

The following exposition is respectfully submitted as a learning experience to readers on the pitfalls to avoid in documentation and an explanation to the reporter as to the CBRC's decision. The Committee hopes that it is not taken negatively. Specific features that concerned the Committee were the description of the head pattern, the description of the bill, and the apparent reliance on the identification value of the bird's unstreaked undertail coverts. The description of "white stripes on face" caused the Committee some confusion as to what, exactly, the phrase meant. Members felt that even if it was understood what was meant (the superciliary and malar stripes, *sensu* Sibley 2000), the description only compared the prominence of them to that on House Finches. It was felt that this comparison was inadequate, as most any species would have more prominent supercilia than do female House Finches. The bill description was difficult to comprehend and seemed to point more toward Cassin's Finch than to Purple. Finally, the Committee felt that too much reliance is placed by most observers on the pattern of the undertail coverts in Purple and Cassin's finches (streaked and unstreaked, respectively). Many members believe that the variation inherent in this feature in both species, particularly that Purple can show very faint streaks on these feathers that might not be visible in the field, makes the character an indicator but not a firm identifier of these two species. Finally, while the CBRC in no way requires submission of photographs, video captures, or video of individual birds to accept records as valid, these materials make the Committee's job much easier and enables the CBRC to work around the ambiguous aspects of most descriptions.

PART IV. RECORDS TABLED FOR LATER ACTION

POMARINE JAEGER *Stercorarius pomarinus*. One juvenile at Standley Lake, *Jefferson*, 31 October 1999 (2000-42); one adult at PR on 29 June 2000 (2000-43); one adult at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, 30 September - 1 October 2000 (2000-44); and one adult at Chatfield Res., *Douglas/Jefferson*, 8-12 October 2000 (2000-45).

PARASITIC JAEGER *Stercorarius parasiticus*. One juvenile at Chatfield Res., *Douglas/Jefferson*, 11-12 October 2000 (2000-46).

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*. Two juveniles at Chatfield Res., *Douglas*, 9 October 2000 (2000-66).

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*. Two at Monte Vista, *Rio Grande*, 11 August 2000 (2000-72).

Archilochus HUMMINGBIRD *Archilochus* sp. One immature female near Thurston Res., *Prowers*, 20 September 2000 (2000-168).

BAIRD'S SPARROW *Ammodramus bairdii*. Two or three at Comanche National Grassland, *Baca*, 22 April 2000 (2000-151).

Contributing Observers

John Amoroso, Linda Andes-George, James Berry, Dave & Dru Binney, George Cresswell, Frances DeCesare, Virginia Dionigi, David Elwonger (DEr), Dave Ely (DEy), Doug Faulkner, Mike Figgs, Joe Fontaine, Dick Guadagno, Joe Himmel, Susan Himmel, Ken Hollinga, Rachel Hopper (nee Kolokoff), Mark Hubinger, Paul Hurtado, Dunning Idle, Mark Janos, Jeff Jones, Bill Kaempfer, Joey Kellner, Hugh E. Kingery, Urling Kingery, Nick Komar, Ron Lambeth (RLa), Greg Lasley, Dave A. Leatherman, Dean Lee, Tony Leukering, Rich Levad (RLe), Bill Lisowsky, Joe Mammoser, Tom Mathies, Dick Maxfield, Bill Maynard, Jack Merchant, Sue Miller, Steve Mlodinow, Larry Norris, Darrin O'Brien, Ric Olson, Brandon K. Percival, Dave Quesenberry, Bob Righter, Will Russell, Pearle Sandstrom-Smith, Bill Schmoker, Karleen Schofield, Dick Schottler, Larry Semo, Randy Siebert, David Silverman (DSi), Drew Smith (DSm), Donna Supinger (DSu), Van Truan, John Vanderpoel, Alan Versaw, John Wagner, Duane Weber, Larry Wilson, Christopher L. Wood, Jeff Yegian, Eric Yesko, and Laurie Zuckerman.

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This adult Long-tailed Jaeger was observed at Standley Lake, Jefferson County, 25-27 Aug, 2001. Photo by Andrew Spencer.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD: FALL 2001 REPORT (AUGUST - NOVEMBER)

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The 2001 fall season was very warm, with the only cold weather occurring right at the end in the last week of November. All four months were warmer than normal. The average temperature in August and November was about 3.5° F above normal, and September was 5.8° F above normal. This is despite the fact that the Denver meteorological data are now taken at Denver International Airport instead of the slightly warmer Stapleton Airport. The 2001 fall was also very dry, with all four months having below average rainfall. The total at DIA for the season was 2.50 in, just over half of the average of 4.87 in.

This season, there was only one report of Cassin's Finch out on the eastern plains - a female at Las Animas. They have almost disappeared from the foothills in Boulder County and from other counties along the northern Front Range. I would be interested to hear from Colorado birders where they think they have gone, or whether the population has crashed for some reason. If the latter, what is the cause?

Spinney Mountain and Elevenmile Reservoirs, both in Park County, were birded more extensively late in the season than I can remember in the past after good numbers of scoters were found there in late October. Unusual species found on these reservoirs were Pacific Loon, Red-necked Grebe, Tundra Swan, Eurasian Wigeon, Greater Scaup, all three scoters, and Thayer's Gull.

Several species made good showings this fall with more birds being reported than usual. These include Red-throated Loon, Red-necked Grebe with four together on Pueblo Res, Black Scoter, American Golden-Plover with an amazing 18 together at Jackson Res, Laughing, Mew, and Sabine's Gulls, Black-billed Cuckoo, Philadelphia Vireo, Pine, Prairie and Canada Warblers, and Scarlet Tanager.

In addition, the usual crop of rarities this season included Reddish Egret, Brant, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red Phalarope, Long-tailed Jaeger, Eastern Wood-Pewee, White-eyed Vireo, Carolina Wren, Wood and Varied Thrushes, Connecticut and Mourning Warblers, LeConte's and Golden-crowned Sparrows, and Purple Finch.

Thanks to everyone who sent me their sightings, and to Brandon Percival, who collected the postings off COBIRDS and elsewhere. The reader of this report should be aware that many of the sightings used in this report were taken from postings to the COBIRDS electronic bulletin board. Not all of the rare and unusual species have been supported by documentation sent to the Colorado Bird Records Committee. Underlined species are those for which the committee desires written documentation. If you need an electronic version of the rare bird documentation form, it can be retrieved from the CFO web site at <http://www.cfo-link.org/leadpage.html>. If you need a hard copy, use the one on the inside of this journal's mailer. Documentation should be sent to the chairperson, Tony Leukering (address on the form).

Notes: County names are italicized. Species for which documentation is requested by the CBRC are underlined. **A&R** = Andrews and Righter (1992); **alternate** = alternate (breeding) plumage; **basic** = basic (winter) plumage; **CVCG** = Crow Valley Campground; **FLWE** = Fort Lyon Wildlife Easement; **m.ob.** = many observers; **RMNP** = Rocky Mountain National Park; **SP** = State Park; **SWA** = State Wildlife Area.

Red-throated Loon: One was seen at John Martin Res., *Bent*, on 27 Oct (DN), one was at Standley L., *Jefferson*, 28 Oct-10 Nov (BPG, LS, m.ob.), one was at Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe*, 12-18 Nov (AS), and one was seen at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, on 19 Nov (CLW, BKP, JLD, m.ob.).

Pacific Loon: This was a good season for this species with 35 reports. The high count was five at Bonny Res., *Yuma*, on 29-30 Oct (HK).

Red-necked Grebe: A very good season for this species was highlighted by up to four birds seen at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, between 25 Oct-27 Nov (BKP, MJ, m.ob.). Also, one was at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, 26-29 Oct (JBH, m.ob.), one was at Elevenmile Res., *Park*, 28 Oct-3 Nov (AS, NP), one was at Hamilton Res., *Larimer*, on 3 Nov (DAL, JMa), one was at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, on 10-11 Nov (JKe), and one was seen at Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe*, on 17-18 Nov (BSp, AS).

Western Grebe: The high count in the reports was of 3184 at Standley L., *Jefferson*, on 25 Oct (LS).

American White Pelican: More than 300 were seen in *Kiowa*, *Bent*, and *Otero* on the very late date of 24 Nov (BKP, AS, LM).

Reddish Egret: The white-morph sub-adult that spent the summer at Neenoshe Res., *Kiowa*, was last seen on 19 Aug (DN).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: A juvenile was seen at Lower Latham Res., *Weld*, 10-23 Aug (NG, TL, CLW, m.ob.), and two juveniles were at Verhoeff Res., near *Hasty*, *Bent*, on 15 Sep (DN).

Greater White-fronted Goose: The high count reported this season was of 56 at Bonny Res., *Yuma*, on 29-30 Oct (HK).

Snow Goose: West Slope records this season included an adult at Ridgway Res., *Ouray*, on 11 Nov (TL, BPG, NG), and up to five at Connected Lakes SP, *Mesa*, 7-23 Nov (LA, RV, m.ob.).

Black Brant: An adult was found at Woods L., *Weld*, on 30 Nov (DF).

Trumpeter Swan: Two were seen at L. Avery, *Rio Blanco*, 3 Nov-3 Dec (DH photos, KP, m.ob.).

Tundra Swan: One was seen near Spinney Mountain Res., *Park*, on 3-4 Nov (LK, m.ob.), two were at L. Estes, *Larimer*, 30 Nov-2 Dec (DR, m.ob.), and six were seen at Elevenmile Res., *Park*, on 30 Nov (RL).

Eurasian Wigeon: A male was at Spinney Mountain Res., *Park*, on 4 Nov (AS, NK, JKe).

Greater Scaup: There were 20 reports from across the state this season, with a high count of five males and three females at Marston Res., *Denver*, on 29 Nov (TJ).

Surf Scoter: There were 14 birds reported from the Front Range and one from the West Slope this season. In addition, however, was a very unusual flock of 11 females or immatures seen at Spinney Mountain Res., *Park*, 28 Oct-7 Nov (AS, NP, m.ob.).

White-winged Scoter: Fifteen birds were reported from across the state, with the high count consisting of seven females or immatures and one adult male at Spinney Mt. Res., *Park*, 28 Oct-11 Nov (AS, NP, m.ob.).

Black Scoter: A very good season for this species, which is the rarest of the scoters in Colorado, with a total of nine birds seen. One female was seen at Standley L., *Jefferson*, on 27-28 Oct (DF, m.ob.), two females were at Luna Res., *Weld*, on 29 Oct (NK), two females were in Pueblo, *Pueblo*, 1-21 Nov (BKP, CSm, m.ob.), a female was at Spinney Mountain Res., *Park*, on 3 Nov (LK), an adult female was at Blue Mesa Res., *Gunnison*, on 12 Nov (BPG, TL, NG), a female was at Clear Creek Res., *Chaffee*, on 15 Nov (NEr), and a female was seen at Marston Res., *Denver*, 29-30 Nov (TJ).

Long-tailed Duck: An adult male was seen at Union Res., *Weld*, 10-21 Nov (BGu, JP, m.ob.), and possibly the same bird was at Long Pond in Fort Collins, *Larimer*, 23-28 Nov (RH, m.ob.). One was at Barr L., *Adams*, on 19 Nov (BPG), an immature was at Union Res., *Weld*, on 20 Nov (NK, RV), one was at Dillon Res., *Summit*, on 25 Nov (AS, JKe, NEr), and another adult male was at Bonny Res., *Yuma*, on 30 Nov (CLW).

Barrow's Goldeneye: High counts of this species were on the West Slope, with 16 at the west entrance to RMNP, *Grand*, on 19 Oct (TJ), 26 seen at Blue Mesa Res., *Gunnison*, on 12 Nov (TL, BPG, NG), and 22 at Blue L., *Eagle*, on 28 Nov (TL).

Hooded Merganser: Reports from the West Slope this season were up, with four at Connected Lakes SP, *Mesa*, 3-30 Nov (LA, m.ob.), 10 at Ridgway Res., *Ouray*, on 10-11 Nov (BPG, TL, NG), a female at Blue Mesa Res., *Gunnison*, on 11 Nov (BPG, TL, NG), and eight seen at Nucla, *Montrose*, 24-29 Nov (CD).

Broad-winged Hawk: The high count reported this season was of a flock of 11 at CVCG, *Weld*, on 19 Sep (DAL, DCE).

Red-shouldered Hawk: A juvenile was seen at the Pueblo Nature Center, *Pueblo*, on 10 Nov (AS, BSp).

American Golden-Plover: There were six reports from the Eastern Plains this season, away from Jackson Res. However, large numbers of birds were seen at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, 25 Sep-22 Oct, with an amazing 18 seen on 14 Oct (NK, BPG, m.ob.).

Piping Plover: One was at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, 9-11 Aug (JBH, m.ob.) and another was at the same location on 9 Sep (GW, BB, LAB).

Whimbrel: This species is rare in fall in Colorado, but one was seen at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 11 Aug (FL).

Ruddy Turnstone: One was at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 30 Sep (JKe, mob).

Red Knot: An adult in basic was at L. Holbrook, *Otero*, on 16 Sep (BKP, MJ), and one was at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 20 Oct (BB, LAB).

Dunlin: Fall 2001 was a good season for this species, with reports of four birds. Two were seen at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, 19-22 Oct (RO, LK, BPG, NK, m.ob.), one was at John Martin Res., *Bent*, 21-27 Oct (BKP, MJ, VAT, DN), and one was at Barr L., *Adams*, 29-31 Oct (BPG, DF, m.ob.).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: A juvenile was found at Prewitt Res., *Washington*, on 21 Sep (DAL).

Short-billed Dowitcher: One was seen at Lower Latham Res., *Weld*, on 10 Aug (CLW, TL), two juveniles were at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 29 Sep (TL, BPG), and one was at Prewitt Res., *Washington*, on 30 Sep (JKe).

Red Phalarope: A juvenile molting into first-basic plumage was seen at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 23-24 Sep (TL, mob), and an adult was at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, 14-19 Oct (BPG, m.ob.).

Pomarine Jaeger: A sub-adult, light-morph individual was seen at Windsor Res., *Weld*, 31 Oct-5 Nov (NK, m.ob.).

Long-tailed Jaeger: A beautiful adult, with full tail streamers, entertained many birders and boaters at Standley L., *Jefferson*, between 25-27 Aug (LS, m.ob.).

Laughing Gull: A good season for this species, with four birds seen. An adult was at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 3 Aug (CLW), one was at Big Johnson Res., *El Paso*, on 3 Sep (BGo), an adult was at Prewitt Res., *Washington*, on 9 Sep (AS, NP), and a first-year bird was seen on the South Platte River, *Adams*, on 30 Nov (HK, m.ob.) and then at

Standley L., *Jefferson*, the next day (LS video).

Mew Gull: It was also a good season for this species, with five reports. A juvenile was seen at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, 19-22 Nov (CLW, BKP, JLD, m.ob.), an adult was at Union Res., *Weld*, 20-23 Nov (NK, RV, m.ob.), another adult was at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, on 23 Nov (AS, GW), a juvenile was at Warren L., *Larimer*, on 30 Nov (NK), and one in first-basic plumage was at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, on 24 Nov (LK, IS, TE).

Thayer's Gull: There were 12 reports during the season, all from the Front Range and Eastern Plains, except for one from *Park*.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: An adult was seen at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, on 6 Oct (BKP, m.ob.), an adult was at Windsor Res., *Weld*, on 1-2 Nov (RH, JF, m.ob.), an adult was at Neegronda Res., *Kiowa*, on 1 Nov (DN), and two adults were at Timnath Res., *Larimer*, on 3 Nov (DAL, JMa). Another adult was at Union Res., *Weld*, 14-21 Nov (JP, CLW, BPG, m.ob.), an adult was at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, 19-25 Nov (BKP, CLW, JLD, m.ob.), and birds in third-basic plumage were at Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe*, on 23 Nov (AS, GW) and at Warren L., *Larimer*, on 30 Nov (NK).

Great Black-backed Gull: An adult was seen at Upper Queens Res., *Kiowa*, on 11 Oct (DN), and a bird in first-basic plumage was at Lower Queens Res., *Kiowa*, on 24 Nov (BKP, AS, LM).

Sabine's Gull: This was another very good year for this species in Colorado, with 50 reports from across the state. The high count was of six seen at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 19 Sep (DAL, DCE).

Black-legged Kittiwake: An adult in basic plumage was seen at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, on 23 Nov (AS, GW).

Caspian Tern: An unusual West Slope record was of one seen at Sweitzer L., *Delta*, on 2 Aug (JBy).

Band-tailed Pigeon: Unusual on the far Eastern Plains, one was seen at Two Buttes Res., *Baca*, on 3 Sep (MJ).

Eurasian Collared-Dove: This species continues its range expansion, with one photographed at Salida, *Chaffee*, on 28 Sep (PSS, CSm). Its numbers are also increasing quickly, with 26 seen at Limon, *Lincoln*, on 8 Oct (SO), and a flock of 75 was at Blende, *Pueblo*, for most of the fall season (RM, MY, m.ob.).

White-winged Dove: One was seen in Pueblo, *Pueblo*, on 21 Aug (JS), one was at Blende, *Pueblo*, 16 Oct-30 Nov (RM), and one was near Rye, *Pueblo*, 4-30 Nov (NH, SC, DSi).

Inca Dove: The birds that bred at Rocky Ford, *Otero*, were seen through 10 Sep, but could not be found in Oct and Nov (SO, m.ob.). One was seen east of John Martin Reservoir, *Bent*, on 25 Oct (DG).

Black-billed Cuckoo: This was a good season for this species, with three reports. One was seen at Tamarack Ranch, *Logan*, on 12 Aug (FL), one was at Rocky Ford SWA, *Otero*, on 22 Aug (SO), and one was at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, on 9 Sep (RK) and 20 Sep (AS).

Magnificent Hummingbird: A female was seen at Fruitgrowers Res., *Delta*, on 2 Aug (JBy).

Blue-throated Hummingbird: A female or immature bird was seen at Coal Creek Canyon, *Jefferson*, on 28 Sep (PHy).

Red-headed Woodpecker: An immature, at the unusually high elevation of 10,000 feet, was seen near Ward, *Boulder*, on 24 Sep (AC).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Fall 2001 was a good season for this species, with seven reports. A male was at Zink's Pond, near Durango, *La Plata*, on 1 Oct (JBy), an immature female was at Valco Ponds in Pueblo, *Pueblo*, 15-17 Oct (BKP), and another was at Hatchett Ranch, *Pueblo*, 13 Sep-18 Oct (BBH). A female was at Lyons, *Boulder*, on 7 Nov (David Waltman), a male was at Pueblo City Park, *Pueblo*, 10-17 Nov (AS, BSp, m.ob.), another male was at Fort Carson, *El Paso*, on 15 Nov (BM), and an immature was seen at the Fairmount Cemetery in Lamar, *Prowers*, on 21 Nov (DAL).

Three-toed Woodpecker: Two unusually large gatherings of this species were the seven seen in Routt National Forest, *Jackson*, on 8 Sep (SJD), and another seven at Pine Valley Ranch, *Jefferson*, on 18 Nov (BSc).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: One was seen at Two Buttes Res., *Baca*, on 3 Sep (MJ).

Gray Flycatcher: There were six reports of this species this season from the northern Front Range and the Eastern Plains. Reports from these regions are increasing. Are the birds being seen more often or are they just being reported more?

Black Phoebe: The only report was of one seen at Grand Junction, *Mesa*, on 21 Aug (LA).

Vermilion Flycatcher: An adult male was seen north of Navajo Res., *Archuleta*, on 12 Aug (AS), and another male was at the Higbee Cemetery, *Otero*, on 15 Aug (BKP, BBH, DSm).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: One was on Road M, *Baca*, on 30 Aug (T&LH).

White-eyed Vireo: One was seen at Bohart Ranch near Ellicott, *El Paso*, on 22 Sep (DEL, m.ob.), and one was in Boulder, *Boulder*, on 1 Nov (JKI).

Blue-headed Vireo: One was seen at Prewitt Res., *Washington*, on 9 Sep (AS), one was at Valco Ponds, *Pueblo*, on 15 Sep (BKP, MJ), one was in Las Animas, *Bent*, on 16 Sep (DN), and one was at the FLWE, *Bent*, on 21 Oct (MJ, BKP).

Philadelphia Vireo: This was a good season for this species, with six reports. One was seen at Barr L., *Adams*, on 2 Sep (CLW) and 16 Sep (BPG), one was in Pueblo, *Pueblo*, on 24 Sep (BKP), one was at Valco Ponds,

Pueblo, on 5 Oct (BKP), one was at Golden Ponds in Longmont, *Boulder*, on 5 Oct (JP), one was in Cañon City, *Fremont*, 5-13 Oct (VAT, SM), and one was at Two Buttes Res., *Baca*, on 5 Oct (DAL).

Steller's Jay: Flocks in unusual locations this season were one of 12 birds at Lathrop SP, *Huerfano*, on 29 Sep (SO), and one of 21 at FLWE, *Bent*, on 21 Oct (VAT, MJ, DN, BKP).

Western Scrub-Jay: Out-of-range birds included, one all season and two during November south of Walcott, *Eagle*, at 9,000 feet elevation (PHn, JMe).

Juniper Titmouse: A rare Front Range species, an individual was seen west of Horsetooth Res, *Larimer*, on 3 Nov (DSt, CSi).

Carolina Wren: One was seen at LaPorte, *Larimer*, on 23 Aug (SJD), and another was at Colorado City, *Pueblo*, between 30 Oct and 22 Nov (DSi, m.ob.).

Bewick's Wren: Rarely seen along the Front Range, one was banded at Chatfield Res., *Douglas*, on 27 Sep (DD).

Winter Wren: The bird seen at Calypso Cascades in Rocky Mountain National Park, *Boulder*, during the summer was last seen on 13 Aug (RV). Other sightings were of one in Routt National Forest, *Jackson*, on 9 Sep (SJD), one at Milton Res., *Weld*, on 15 Sep (RO), one at Chatfield Res., *Douglas*, on 14 and 20 Oct (DD, AS), one at Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe*, on 18 Nov (AS), and two at Two Buttes Res., *Baca*, on 21 Nov (DAL).

Eastern Bluebird: Unusual sightings included a flock of over 20 birds at Neenoshe Res., *Kiowa*, on 1 Nov (DN), one at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, on 2 Nov (DSi, BKP), three at Valco Ponds, *Pueblo*, 15-27 Nov (MA, m.ob.), and six seen at Walden Ponds, *Boulder*, 24-30 Nov (JP, PG).

Wood Thrush: One was seen and photographed along the Cache la Poudre River in Fort Collins, *Larimer*, on 13 Oct (DAL).

Varied Thrush: A beautiful female was easily seen and photographed at CVCG, *Weld*, 16-23 Oct (HK, DAL, m.ob.).

Curve-billed Thrasher: Well north of this species' normal range, one with an injured foot came to a feeder near Windsor, *Weld*, 11-30 Nov (MM).

Bohemian Waxwing: The only report this season was of a single bird at Wray, *Yuma*, on 30 Nov (CLW).

Blue-winged Warbler: A male was banded at Grand Junction, *Mesa*, on 24 Aug (GG), and one was seen at Barr L., *Adams*, on 2 Sep (CLW).

Golden-winged Warbler: An immature female was banded at Barr L., *Adams*, on 31 Aug and seen until 3 Sep (TL, m.ob.).

Tennessee Warbler: A lingering female was seen along Boulder Creek in Boulder, *Boulder*, 1-4 Nov (BK, PG, m.ob.).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: A male was banded at Grand Junction, *Mesa*, on 14

Sep(GG).

Magnolia Warbler: A female was also banded at Grand Junction, *Mesa*, on 17 Sep(GG).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: There were nine reports this season from the Front Range and Eastern Plains. More unusual was the male seen at the Alamosa Golf Course, *Alamosa*, on 14-15 Oct (J&LR).

Black-throated Green Warbler: A first-fall male was seen at Valco Ponds, *Pueblo*, on 5 Oct (BKP).

Blackburnian Warbler: An immature male was seen at Prewitt Res., *Washington*, on 9 Sep (NP, AS), and an immature female was along the Arkansas River in Pueblo, *Pueblo*, 18-21 Sep (BKP, m.ob.).

Pine Warbler: One was seen at CVCG, *Weld*, on 23 Aug (CLW), and an immature male was at the Fairmount Cemetery in Lamar, *Prowers*, on 3 Sep (MJ) and again on 22 Sep (AS).

Prairie Warbler: A male was seen near Steamboat Springs, *Routt*, on 4 Aug (RH), another male was at Grand Junction, *Mesa*, 10-16 Aug (LA), one was at CVCG, *Weld*, 1-2 Sep (JHi, JMa, BB, LAB), and an immature female was seen at Spinney Mt. Res., *Park*, on 6 Nov (RV).

Palm Warbler: Individuals of the western race were seen at Neenoshe Res., *Kiowa*, on 27 Sep (DN), at Pastorius Res., *La Plata*, on 2-3 Oct (JBy), one in Pueblo, *Pueblo*, on 11 Oct (DSi), and another was banded at Barr L., *Adams*, and seen between 13-16 Oct (BPG). An individual referable to the eastern race was at Chatfield Res., *Douglas/Jefferson*, on 27 Oct (AS, JKe, BB).

Bay-breasted Warbler: One was seen at Colorado City, *Pueblo*, 7-9 Sep (DSi, m.ob.) and another was along the Arkansas River in Pueblo, *Pueblo*, on 19 Sep (BKP, DSi, m.ob.).

Prothonotary Warbler: A female was seen at Rocky Ford, *Otero*, on 17 Sep (SO), a male was at Last Chance, *Washington*, on 22 Sep (LK), a female was at Pastorius Res., *La Plata*, on 3 Oct (JBy), and an immature female was banded at Woodland Park, *Teller*, on 17 Oct (JHo, DA).

Worm-eating Warbler: One was seen at Prewitt Res., *Washington*, on 9 Sep (AS), and a very unusual sighting in the San Luis Valley was of one at the Alamosa Golf Course, *Alamosa*, 14-16 Oct (J&LR).

Connecticut Warbler: The only sighting of this rare migrant in Colorado was of one at Prewitt Res., *Washington*, on 1 Sep (JKe, DSc, AS).

Mourning Warbler: An immature was banded at Barr L., *Adams*, on 25 Sep (JBn, TL, CLW ph., m.ob.).

Canada Warbler: An immature male was also banded at Barr L., *Adams*, and seen 28 Aug-3 Sep (CLW ph., m.ob.). Another individual was seen at CVCG, *Weld*, 31 Aug-1 Sep (DAL, m.ob.).

Scarlet Tanager: This was a good season for this species in Colorado, with five sightings. A male in basic plumage was seen at Valco Ponds, *Pueblo*, on 7 Sep (BKP), another was at Chatfield Res., *Douglas*, on 16 Sep (AS), a female or immature was at Pueblo City Park, *Pueblo*, on 19 Sep (BKP, DSi), one was at Veteran's Park in Brighton, *Adams*, on 30 Sep (CLW), and a basic-plumaged male was seen at Rocky Ford SWA, *Otero*, on 9 Oct (SO).

Eastern Towhee: The only reported sighting this season was that of a female at Tamarack Ranch, *Logan*, on 12 Aug (FL).

Rufous-crowned Sparrow: A new location for this species was the State Wildlife Area south of Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, where two were regularly seen from 24 Sep into the winter period (RM, m.ob.).

Field Sparrow: An unusual sighting away from the Eastern Plains was of one at the Mount Sanitas trail in Boulder, *Boulder*, 5-9 Nov (MB, m.ob.).

LeConte's Sparrow: One was seen 11-21 Oct in the same John Martin Res., *Bent*, location as last year (DN, m.ob.).

Fox Sparrow: Single individuals of one of the red races were seen this fall, with one at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, on 14 Oct (AS), one banded at Barr L., *Adams*, on 22 Oct (BPG), and another at the Mount Sanitas trail in Boulder, *Boulder*, on 6 Nov (BK).

Swamp Sparrow: There were 20 reports from the Front Range and Eastern Plains this season. A report from the West Slope was of one at Ouray, *Ouray*, on 14 Oct (TL).

White-throated Sparrow: This was a good season for this species, with over 30 reports from the Front Range and Eastern Plains. An interesting sighting on the West Slope was of five or six seen at Naturita, *Montrose*, 16 Oct-14 Nov (CD, BW).

Harris's Sparrow: This was a relatively poor season for this species, with only nine reports from the Front Range and Eastern Plains. On the West Slope, one was seen at Naturita, *Montrose*, on 1 Nov (CD, BW), and another was at Grand Junction, *Mesa*, on 19 Nov (LA, m.ob.).

Golden-crowned Sparrow: One was seen at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson*, on 16 Sep (HK), and an immature bird was seen at the Lamar Community College, *Prowers*, on 18 Nov (CLW).

Lapland Longspur: A spectacular gathering of this species was the 19,100 seen near Idalia, *Yuma*, on 30 Nov (CLW).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Unusual West Slope sightings of this species were the male seen at Craig, *Moffat*, on 3 Sep (FL), and one seen at Carbondale, *Garfield*, 3-4 Oct (DC).

Indigo Bunting: An unusual sighting of this species on the West Slope was of a male seen at Unaweep Seep, *Mesa*, 4 Aug (JBy).

Baltimore Oriole: An adult male was seen at Neenoshe Res., *Kiowa*, on 19

Aug (BKP, MJ), and a male in first-fall plumage was at Valco Ponds, *Pueblo*, on 4 Sep (BKP).

Black Rosy-Finch: After the large invasion of this species last year, the only report this fall was of one at Fort Carson, *El Paso*, on 9 Nov (BM).

Purple Finch: A female or immature and an adult male were seen at the Lamar Community College, *Prowers*, 18-28 Nov (CLW, BKP, MJ, m.ob.), and a female was at Naturita, *Montrose*, 15-30 Nov (CD, BW).

Cassin's Finch: Last year there were many reports of this species from the Eastern Plains, but this year the only report was of one female seen at Las Animas, *Bent*, on 22 Oct (DN).

White-winged Crossbill: An unusual sighting of this very elusive species was of a flock of 25 at RMNP, *Larimer*, on 17 Nov (CLW, SH).

Common Redpoll: There were two reports of single individuals this fall, with one seen at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, 15-21 Nov (KH, BKP), and one at Colorado Springs, *El Paso*, on 24 Nov (K&DS).

Lesser Goldfinch: Unusual out on the Eastern Plains were four seen at Limon, *Lincoln*, on 25 Aug (DAL).

Contributing Observers

Mymm Ackley, Doug Allen, Larry Arnold, Jason Beason (JBn), Jim Beatty (JBy), Maggie Boswell, Bob Brown, Lea Ann Brown, Tamie Bulow, Richard Bunn, David Clark, Andy Cowell, Susan Craig, Dan Derbyshire, Coen Dexter, Stephen J. Dinsmore, Sharon Dooley, Jon L. Dunn, Tammy Ellsworth, David C. Ely, David Elwonger (DEl), Norma Erickson (NEn), Norm Erthal (NEr), Doug Faulkner, Joe Fontaine, Peter Gent, Brian P. Gibbons, Glenn Giroir, Nancy Gobris, Bob Goycoolea (BGo), Dave Groat, Bryan Guarente (BGU), BB Hahn, Pat Hammon (PHn), Paula Hansley (PHy), Stephanie Hanson, Nancy Hardcastle, J.B. Hayes, Tyler & Leon Hicks, Dona Hilkey, Joe Himmel (JHi), James Hollingsworth (JHo), Rachel Hopper, Mark Janos, Dave Johnson, Tina Jones, Bill Kaempfer, Joey Kellner (JKe), Loch Kilpatrick, Hugh Kingery, Joanie Kleypas (JKl), Nick Komar, Ray Korpi, David A. Leatherman, Tony Leukering, Rich Levad, Forrest Luke, Marcia Maeda, Joe Mammoser (JMa), Bill Maynard, Jack Merchant (JMe), Rich Miller, Larry Modesitt, SeEtta Moss, Duane Nelson, Kent Nickell, Rick Olson, Stan Oswald, Brandon K. Percival, Nathan Pieplow, Kim Potter, John Prather, John and Lisa Rawinski, Joseph Rigli (JRi), Joe Roller (JRo), Dave Rubenstein, Gene Rutherford, Ira Sanders, Pearle Sandstrom-Smith, Karleen Schofield, Bill Schmoker (BSc), Dick Schottler (DSc), Larry Semo, Jack Short, David Silverman (DSi), Carol Simmons (CSi), Clif Smith (CSm), Drew Smith (DSm), Andrew Spencer, Bob Spencer (BSp), Dave Steingraeber (DSt), Kathy and Don Stevens, Van A. Truan, Randy Vernon, Glenn Walbek, Jim and Rosie Watts, Jeff Webster, Christopher L. Wood, Brenda Wright, Mark Yaeger, Eric Zorawowicz.



The top photo is of two adult and three juvenile Trumpeter Swans that visited Tom Frost Reservoir, Adams County, during the winter of 2001-02. The bottom photo is of one of the adults. These birds, along with at least 5 other reports totaling as many as another 9 swans, were part of a minor invasion of this species into Colorado this past winter. Photos by Bill Schmoker.

