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## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR RONALD A. RYDER AWARD

On February 25, 1995, the CFO Board of Directors passed a resolution establishing the Ronald A. Ryder Award and presenting the first of these awards to Dr. Ryder. The award was presented to Dr. Ryder for distinguished service to the Colorado Field Ornithologists organization and goals, for scholarly contribution to Colorado field ornithology, and for sharing knowledge of Colorado field ornithology with the people of the state. These criteria were established as those which would govern presentation of the award to others in the future. Recipients of the Ronald A. Ryder award are presented a plaque at the annual CFO convention and are granted a life-time membership in the organization. Details are published in CFO's journal, and that issue features a cover photograph of the award recipient.

The award, which is presented when nominations have been presented to and recommended by the Awards Committee and approved by the Board of Directors, has been presented to four distinguished members of the Colorado birding community since that time: Harold R. Holt, Hugh E. Kingery, Bob Righter, and Dr. Stephen G. Martin.

Members of CFO are encouraged to submit nominations for the award. Nominations may be submitted to Rich Levad, Awards Committee Chair, by U.S. mail or e-mail [levadgj@gvii.net](mailto:levadgj@gvii.net). Nominations should include a full description of the nominee's contributions to the Colorado Field Ornithologists and to Colorado field ornithology.

Rich Levad  
Awards Committee Chair  
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Grand Junction, CO 81504



## UPCOMING CFO FIELD TRIPS

### November 8, 2003 – “Digiscoping” with Bill Schmoker

Curious about how some of our local birders are getting all those remarkable photos that are posted on the CFO website and elsewhere? Find out how it’s done! Join Bill Schmoker at 8:00 A.M. at the parking lot area at Cottonwood Marsh, Walden Ponds, in Boulder, for a demonstration and workshop on digiscoping. With any luck there will be lots of beautiful (and stationary!) waterfowl present for subject matter. After practicing on ducks, Bill may take us around the area to try somewhat more challenging material. If you plan to attend, please RSVP with Bill at [bill.schmoker@bvsd.k12.co.us](mailto:bill.schmoker@bvsd.k12.co.us).

### May 23, 2004 – “Butterflying” with Lynne Forrester

Lynne will lead an outing to a location (to be determined in May) in Boulder County to observe and identify numerous species of butterflies. The field trip will begin at 10:00 A.M.; those who wish can join Lynne at 8:30 for a “prep” session, at which she will give us an overview of what we might see, review a field guide, and discuss how we will identify the butterflies.

### 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 *JCFO*.

## PELAGIC BIRDING WITH COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

Join CFO for a birding trip to North Carolina in June 2004. Most of us will travel to the area on Wednesday, June 16, to do landbirding on Thursday and Friday. On Saturday and Sunday, June 19th and 20th, we will join Brian Patteson of Seabirding Pelagic Trips (<http://www.patteson.com/vertnavbar.htm>) for two days on the water. The field trip will end when we return to shore on Sunday afternoon. On the pelagic portion of the trip, possible sightings include four gadfly petrels, a variety of shearwaters, tropicbirds, boobies, skuas, terns, as well as whales and other marine life.

Cost will depend upon the number of birders attending, but will range from \$85-115 per day. A \$170 deposit will reserve your place on the trip and is fully refundable until Jan. 25, 2004. Please send remittance payable to CFO to BB Hahn, CFO Treasurer, 8230 Mule Deer Dr., Pueblo, CO 81004.

Travel and lodging arrangements are the responsibility of the individual. CFO will furnish information on airlines that serve the area and on local hotels. Arrival and departure dates are flexible but the pelagic birding dates are fixed. All other aspects of the trip are up to individual preference. CFO will organize the landbirding portion and provide a trip leader, but participation on these two days is optional.

For more information, contact Norm Lewis at 303-988-5544. We hope to see you on the high seas in June!

### CFO WEBSITE

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

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

## PROJECT FUND GUIDELINES

CFO has a limited amount of money, the Project Fund, from which to make grants to qualifying individuals or organizations for projects that will have a lasting benefit to Colorado birds and the habitats upon which they rely. CFO urges those applying for grants to become members of Colorado Field Ornithologists. CFO Project Fund grants can be considered matching funds for other grants. The Project Fund Committee requests that the recipients of funding publish a short year-end summary of their funded work in *Colorado Birds* and/or present some of their findings at the CFO convention of the next calendar year.

The Project Fund Committee reviews and rates all applications in terms of which have best met the criteria for CFO's mission. The data are tabulated and applications are ranked by the Project Fund Committee. Grants are divided among the highest-ranking applications with the amount of support provided dependent on the Project Fund budget.

1. All applications should contain name, address, and telephone of person or organization applying for grant.
2. Applications should include a description of the project - what will be done, who will direct the project, who will actually do the work, timetable, and rationale (explaining how the project will support CFO's mission).
3. All applications must be postmarked no later than December 1, and must be submitted directly to chairperson of Project Fund committee.
4. All projects must have an anticipated start and completion date. Applicants should be realistic in terms of time required to complete project.
5. Applicants must submit a complete budget. Projects should be realistic in terms of financial and volunteer resources. Applications should contain all items that the project requires and the items the applicant is seeking funding from CFO for and should contain amount requested from CFO.
6. Travel expenses, equipment readily available from private sources (such as camera, spotting scopes and office equipment) are usually not funded.
7. Application should contain amount already funded from other sources.

8. Following the receipt of a grant and completion of the project, the applicant, must submit a final report, in writing, to the chairperson of Project Fund by February of the next calendar year. This report should include a full description of the project activities and an accounting of money spent.

All monies not used must be returned to CFO treasurer.

Please include 3 copies of the grant proposal. If there are additional brochures or copies of financial reports included in the grant application, please include three copies, one for each of the committee members.

Applicants will be notified after the winter (February) CFO Board Meeting, whether or not their project has been funded.

Committee Members:

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**DR. STEPHEN G. MARTIN:  
RECONCILING BUSINESS WITH HABITAT**

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**Introduction**

The Colorado Field Ornithologists created the Ronald A. Ryder Award in 1995 to recognize individuals for distinguished service to the birds and people of Colorado. At the CFO 2003 Convention, this award was presented to only the fifth recipient, Dr. Stephen G. Martin, of Wellington, Colorado. The authors interviewed Dr. Martin after he received the award, so that we might share with you more details about Steve himself and his remarkable career and accomplishments.

**Award Citation**

Dr. Martin was nominated for the Ronald A. Ryder Award by Rachel Hopper. She also prepared and read the citation when presenting the award. The citation states as follows:

“This year’s winner of The Ronald A. Ryder Award for Distinguished Service to Colorado Field Ornithology is a most deserving and special person who has dedicated much of his life to the study and preservation of Colorado’s birds and their habitats.

I am sure that many of you in this room have been to his home. On numerous occasions, inviting individuals and groups from inside and outside of the state, he has shared interesting and sometimes rare birds found at his farm. And, after meeting him, I am also sure you came away with a better understanding of his deep and devoted love for Colorado’s birds. His study and understanding of their behavior and his active participation in their protection certainly has enriched us all.



This year's winner is Dr. Stephen G. Martin, here tonight with his wife Kathy. Steve received his M.S. and Ph.D. in zoology doing research on the Bobolink, and throughout his professional career he has held a special interest in the icterids. He was principal author of the Birds of North America account for the Bobolink and also the Brewer's Blackbird.

Steve was an assistant professor of zoology at Colorado State University from 1970-1973. He has published many scientific papers and also received the A. Brazier Howell Award of the Cooper Ornithological Society. Named Conservationists of the Year in 1999 along with his wife Kathy, the Ft. Collins/Larimer County Soil Conservation District recognized their successful development and restoration of habitats on their farm for Bobolinks and other birds.

His work on the Bobolink throughout the state, but especially at The Nature Conservancy's Carpenter Ranch in Hayden, has certainly helped to save this bird from extirpation in Colorado. His work there has included nest searching, nest monitoring, banding, advising on field methods, training interns to conduct field studies, advising students on study design, and reviewing prepared reports.

Steve also revised and updated the bird list distributed at the Carpenter Ranch, and also nominated the ranch and the Yampa River Preserve for designation as an Audubon Society Important Bird Area. This designation helped to raise funds to hire two interns to continue work in Routt County on Bobolinks in the summer of 2000.

I nominated Dr. Martin because he represents the best of the scientific community in Colorado and certainly meets and exceeds all of the criteria for this award. His passion for Colorado and its birds is very special. Recognition for his life's work is only appropriate.

Tonight, on behalf of Colorado Field Ornithologists, I am very privileged to present Dr. Stephen Martin with this year's Ronald A. Ryder Award for Distinguished Service to Colorado Field Ornithology."

### **Bobolinks Since Boyhood**

Much of Steve's research, writing, and conservation success has involved Bobolinks. He has loved Bobolinks since childhood. Steve began birding on his own, without any mentor or birding companion, in 1949 as an eight-year-old. While growing up in Madison, Wisconsin, he acquired an old Peterson

guide with black and white plates, used his father's World War II binoculars, ten power with no central focus, and rode around on his bicycle looking for birds.

Then he obtained the next edition of Peterson, with color plates which he constantly studied. He noted that he never saw two species which ought to be in his area—Peregrine Falcon and Bobolink. As a young boy, not having any counsel on such matters and being naive concerning the plight of the falcon and the special needs of Bobolinks, he concluded that Peterson must be wrong about their distribution. Why wasn't he seeing these birds?!

At age twelve, he acquired a three-speed bicycle and would wander farther from home. He took his longest ride, to the Wisconsin River bottom, where there was a field by the railroad tracks. It was filled with Bobolinks! He was captivated by them and later did his field work for both his M.S. and Ph.D. on Bobolinks in that very field. It is still there and so are the Bobolinks. This initial encounter with Bobolinks was a seminal event in his life: it strongly influenced him to become a researcher of birds, which has resulted in publication of more than 20 peer-reviewed articles and his being recognized with three national awards for bird research.

After Steve arrived in Colorado, he began to do field studies in northwestern Colorado, and was lead author of "Recent Records of Birds from the Yampa Valley, Northwestern Colorado" (Martin et al. 1974; *Condor* 76:113-116). This included information about the Bobolink, which he found to be a common nesting species, not rare and irregular as previously reported. He exclaims that there is still a "wonderful population" in the Yampa Valley, especially on the Carpenter Ranch which now belongs to The Nature Conservancy.

A major threat to the Bobolink in Colorado and elsewhere is that hay fields are cut too early, before nesting has been completed. His research has shown that delaying the first cutting in grass fields by only 1-1/2 to 2 weeks will allow nesting to be completed, without reducing the total hay yield or the protein content. Ranchers are gradually accepting this change in their haying practices.

One new and very serious threat to Bobolinks and other birds in protected areas such as The Nature Conservancy property is the great increase of small predators, such as skunks. Traditional ranchers controlled predators by shooting them on sight. This provided a more healthy balance between small predators and prey (since the larger predators which might have controlled small predators had already been eliminated). A similar predator problem exists

near housing developments, which causes a great increase in outdoor cats. Control of small predators, though, is a very controversial topic, especially with pet owners and animal rights advocates.

Steve maintained his interest in Bobolinks and other icterids over the years. Hugh Kingery, director of the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas, asked Steve to be the peer reviewer for the Bobolink account. Steve volunteered to provide peer review for other icterids as well, and did this for all but the orioles. Steve and his wife, Kathy, who is also an avid birder, did fieldwork for five Atlas blocks. In one mid-elevation spruce-fir block, a female Goshawk repeatedly attacked Steve! They even took horse pack trips into remote Atlas blocks.

Kathy has been a volunteer for many years for the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program. In the early years of her involvement, she presented as many as 70-80 programs a year about raptors (and related conservation issues) to kids and adults. They have two adult children, Lance and Tami, but neither of them is hooked on birds.

### **Environmental Consulting**

Dr. Martin's principal career for the past thirty years has been to provide environmental management consultation to businesses on complex environmental issues or disputes. This offered him the unusual opportunity to counsel his clients on ways in which they could reduce or avoid environmental damage while still accomplishing their business objectives.

One of his tasks was to reconcile requirements by the regulators with the needs of his clients. He was respected by regulatory authorities for his knowledge and research on environmental matters, which made his efforts on behalf of his clients more successful. He assisted clients to find creative ways to meet these regulations, using research and science-based methodologies. For example, a power company wanted to build a dam west of Craig, Colorado, to provide "make-up" water, which would have destroyed the Big Bottom - a nesting area for the Greater Sandhill Crane. He wrote a report to the power company, his client, severely criticizing the proposal and suggesting an alternative way to provide the water. The power company's president invited Steve to meet to discuss the project. The power company ended up supplying the water from another existing reservoir and not destroying Big Bottom.

Steve is proud of his work in the last ten years to convince Dole Food Company to change some of its banana growing practices in order to save the Honduran Emerald, a hummingbird, from extirpation. This critically endangered species is the only bird endemic to Honduras, last reported in 1950

until it was rediscovered in 1988 by Steve Howell close to a Dole banana plantation. Dole was genuinely interested in saving the species, and asked Dr. Martin what it should do. At his suggestion, Dole began a long-term study to determine distribution, identify critical habitat, develop a long-term management plan, and start buying that land to give to a conservation group.

Banana plantations traditionally were planted right up to the banks of rivers, and sprayed by airplanes up to 80 times a year for fungus control. The spray was toxic to aquatic invertebrates and fishes, and farming up to the banks of rivers promoted flooding. Steve was able to convince his clients to provide a setback for planting of fifty feet from banks, a requirement of some countries which regulators had not enforced. His client, Dole, began planting native vegetation for one hundred feet back from rivers and major canals, in order to prevent aerial drift of the toxic sprays to the river. All other major producers have now adopted this practice. Dole is now in its seventh year of conducting bird censuses and mist-netting to determine the effects of the setback. Big numbers of birds are now found in the setbacks, but are these areas "sinks" or "sources" for bird productivity? Steve's work is addressing this question.

Steve had loved academia and working with graduate students, but found that consulting was more exciting and gave him a greater sense of accomplishment. He was on the faculty at Colorado State University for only three years before he left for full-time consulting. After he had been at CSU for only one week, a Denver engineering company came to visit the chair of the Zoology Department, who brought them to see Steve who then had a light teaching load. Steve tried to teach and do consulting at the same time, but the consulting grew so fast that he left with another faculty member to do consulting full time; thereafter, hiring many CSU graduates.

He quickly moved into management, managing 100 and later 1,000 environmental professionals. This heavy administrative load precluded him from maintaining his prior level of research intensity and publishing. His clients included many major corporations, such as oil, paper, mining, and public utility companies, for whom he directed environmental assessments and at times testified in court as an expert witness. Even as a senior executive, however, he stayed heavily involved in fieldwork involving birds, for example conducting research concerning the effects of various pesticides. His research on potential effects of dioxins on avian reproductive dysfunction was considered landmark by agency personnel, academicians, and the private sector. He also remained an unpaid "affiliate faculty" member of CSU, being on examining committees of graduate students for 22 years.

He left senior management of a large “high end” (Ph.D. and M.S. scientists) consulting firm in 1990 when it was sold to a German firm, as he declined to move to New Jersey to be president of one of its companies. This released him from a schedule of constant travel and project work. He formed his own consulting firm, which permitted him to do only what he wanted and to change his focus to international work with a strong emphasis on avian research and management plans to reduce impacts of multinational companies on sensitive bird populations and species. He recently retired from consulting, although remaining chairman of the board of an environmental engineering business, in order to pursue full time his passion for habitat development growing out of the efforts he has made on his own farm, and to publishing articles on his past bird research.

### **World Birding and Phoebe Snetsinger**

One of the side benefits of Steve’s consulting work was that it gave him repeated opportunities to bird around the world, especially in tropical avian communities. This interest had been inspired by spending three months mist-netting birds in Panama when he was a student at the University of Wisconsin. He has birded in over forty countries! His world bird list is now over 5,000 species! When he was traveling abroad as a consultant, he would try to add two or three days for birding, and sometimes Kathy would travel with him. In recent years, they have been taking even more extensive foreign bird trips.

After he left the large consulting firm in 1990, Kathy and he went on a five week birding trip to Australia. There they found a rare bird, the Eastern Bristlebird, and later that day were able to show it to a Field Guides tour group. Phoebe Snetsinger, the renowned world birder (a life list of over 8,000 species!) was part of that group, and they met and visited with her. Later they were both on a six week birding trip to Tibet, where Steve developed a bad infection in a foot, and Phoebe helped care for him.

Steve and Kathy were in the van accident in Madagascar in which Phoebe was killed. Phoebe had planned to take another trip in June 2000 to central Amazonia to search for more rarities. Four of her friends, including Steve and Kathy, decided that they would do the trip as a memorial to her. They went to Brazil, where they found three different populations of the Pale-faced Antbird, a fascinating species obligate on ant swarms. It had not been observed since the legendary Ted Parker had reported it in a remote area 15 years before. It was one of Phoebe’s most desired birds, so its discovery was a fitting high point to this special trip in her memory.

### Falcon Ridge Farm

Steve and Kathy continue to promote private development of wildlife habitat and the use of conservation easements. They believe that this is how they can now make their strongest contribution to society and to birds.

They had purchased 80 acres of farmland just west of Wellington twenty-seven years ago, which was then being used to produce irrigated corn and alfalfa. There were no trees or shrubs. Immediately they began to plant bird habitat. They converted the alfalfa to grass and clover, and in 1989 found the first Bobolink nest on their property, the first nesting record in thirty-five years for Larimer County.

Their farm, dubbed "Falcon Ridge Farm," now contains 37 acres after they sold several parcels. Here they have created an island of outstanding bird habitat. This includes four acres of created wetland, where Wood Ducks and shorebirds congregate in the fall to eat smartweed and abundant aquatic invertebrates and where last year they found their first Sora nest. They also have ten acres of restored prairie. Grass hay is still produced, and the farm pays for its operating expenses. They produce 35-38 tons of hay a year, with two cuttings. Steve was featured on the cover, and Kathy and he were the subjects of an article "Home on the Range" in the Feb/Mar 2000 issue of *Conservation Voices*, published by the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

Around their house and along much of the farm's periphery are large, thick groves of trees and bushes. Cottonwood trees and shelterbelts of evergreen trees, which they planted, are already tall. Fruit-bearing bushes abound. The birds do most of the work. Steve gave them a few fruits via the initial plantings, and the birds did the rest of the planting. Bushes flourish where Steve gives water and does not mow foot paths. He flood irrigates the groves three times a year. Brush piles from trimming provide important areas for thousands of wintering birds to escape from accipiters.

They have recorded a total of 218 bird species on their property. Most years they list 140-150 species. They have maintained long-term records for various species, e.g. 15 years for wintering color-banded American Tree Sparrows. Large numbers of birders have come to see rarities, such as Golden-Crowned Sparrow and Sedge Wren.

Steve believes that seasonal bird reports in bird publications should contain more information on common birds, not just on rarities. A report of a migratory congregation of 3,000 Chipping Sparrows on the prairie may be more significant than that of one vagrant Black-throated Blue Warbler.

They carefully observed and reported on the pairing, nesting, and successful reproduction of a female Mountain Chickadee and a male Black-capped Chickadee. They published their report, "Hybridization between a Mountain Chickadee and Black-capped Chickadee in Colorado," in the *C.F.O. Journal* (1996, pp.60-66).

Steve observes that the whole Front Range is being chewed up by development, and the only hope for wildlife is private owners doing something. Many of their neighbors have tracts of 10, 15, 35 acres or more, suitable to be improved for wildlife. Steve and Kathy act as a model in their area to show what can be done. They have placed a conservation easement on their own farm to ensure its continued management for avian habitats, and are helping the Legacy Land Trust acquire other conservation easements.

Steve reviewed our draft and sent us this vivid description of the benefits of creating habitat:

"As I was on the deck this morning doing the editing, I was entertained by neat, neat autumn migrants—a Northern Waterthrush came within 10 feet of me; an Ash-throated Flycatcher hawked insects 30 feet away; dozens of Spizella sparrows and Lark Sparrows were in the close panel of the prairie; 14 Wood Ducks flew up from the wetland area, passing close by; several Wilson's and Yellow Warblers fed in the ponderosas and cherries next to me; and at least 2 dozen hummers buzzed around. Now that's a great way to spend deck time!"



## THE DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS: WATCHING BIRDS SINCE 1935

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### Introduction

Birdwatching has been the primary endeavor of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), originally the Colorado Bird Club (CBC), since its inception in March 1935 (Finch 2002). To facilitate the formation of the Colorado Field Ornithologists that would cover all of Colorado, the Board met and voted March 18, 1964 to change the “Colorado Bird Club” name to “Denver Field Ornithologists” (Colorado Bird Notes 1964). This premier Colorado birding organization has been in continuous existence for 68 years, and has always been associated with the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (previously the Denver Museum of Natural History). The Museum’s support and DFO involvement in their bird exhibit and Colorado bird collections has been mutually beneficial. Many DFO members over the years have volunteered at the Museum (Echelmeyer et al. 2003). From 1961, and perhaps as early as 1957 and as late as 1964, the Colorado Bird Club was affiliated with the National Audubon Society, but never as an Audubon Chapter. In 1965, the Denver Field Ornithologists was offered Chapter status, but DFO members voted to follow its original birdwatching mission and not the broader mission of the National Audubon Society.

The mission of DFO as defined in the present bylaws is identical to that in the original bylaws published in 1943 (Colorado Bird Club 1943) as stated in the DFO Mission Statement: “The Denver Field Ornithologists’ objective is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats and to support local and national organizations to protect birds and their habitats.” This mission is carried out primarily through regularly scheduled field trips to identify and count bird species in birding areas mainly in eastern Colorado and to publish these records in the *Lark Bunting*, DFO’s monthly publication.

Regular DFO monthly meetings are held in the VIP room at the Museum the first Wednesday of the month, September through May, except for December. The meetings consist of informal birding fellowship and book sales beginning at 7:00 PM and followed by the formal program at 7:30 PM. Member and guest speakers present timely talks on wide-ranging topics, mainly about Colorado



birding, that make the programs popular and well-attended. Meetings are open to the public.

DFO has four officers - President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary - each elected for a one-year term. The Vice President has the special duty of arranging monthly programs. The Past President may serve as an ex-officio officer. The officers are assisted by six Board Directors, two elected each year to serve for three years. Executive meetings of the Board are generally held in April and November. The Board appoints the *Lark Bunting* Editor, Field Trip Schedulers, Historian, Rare Bird Alert Coordinators, and Book Store Operator.

The Colorado Bird Club/Denver Field Ornithologists played an important role in the birth and formation of the Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO). Due to prolonged, persistent agitation by members of five front range bird clubs for an annual state convention, Harold Holt, President of the CBC, appointed Lois Webster to chair a committee to organize the first state convention in 1963, which was hosted by CBC in Denver (Cummings 1980). Action to organize the Colorado Field Ornithologists was taken at the second convention in Fort Collins in 1964, and finally, formal organization was accomplished at the third convention in Colorado Springs in 1965. But the Articles of Incorporation of the Colorado Field Ornithologists drawn up by Thompson Marsh, first President, were not filed until April 20, 1966. The first issue of the *Colorado Field Ornithologist* was in 1967 (Finch 2002). Many DFO and other Colorado bird club members became the leaders of CFO, including Robert Hamre, the first Editor of the *Colorado Field Ornithologist* (Cummings 1980), and Jack Reddall, founder of the Official Records Committee (now Colorado Bird Records Committee) in 1972 (Echelmeyer et al. 2003).

### Field Trips

In the early years of the Club, half-day field trips were held from April to November on Saturday, starting at noon because most people worked Saturday morning (44-hour week), but trips were taken all day on Sunday. Since 1965, the field trips have been held each Saturday and Sunday throughout the year, except for the latter half of December when Christmas Bird Counts take place; some three-day trips are scheduled on long weekends. In most years, about 100 regular field trips are scheduled. In the typical year 2001, 57 volunteer leaders led 95 field trips on 104 days of birding, observing 280 species, birding 1,048 hours, driving 7,800 miles, and walking some 350 miles (Schofield 2002). This normal birding year was carried out in 64 different birding spots in Colorado and three in Wyoming. In addition, DFO conducts the annual Denver Christmas Bird Count as well as the spring and fall counts to Barr Lake State Park, Barr Lake periphery, Castlewood Canyon State Park,

Chatfield State Park, Cherry Creek State Park, Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR, and Waterton Canyon. The field trips are mainly east of the Continental Divide from mountain tundra to foothills and to the high plains habitats ranging north to south from Wyoming to New Mexico in Colorado and occasional ones on mesas and valleys on the western slope, and in Nebraska, Kansas, and Wyoming. The number of birds for each identified species in each of the trip areas are recorded and reported in the *Lark Bunting*. Over the years, this has developed into a very large important published Colorado bird database, and recently the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory has computerized it. All DFO field trips are open to the public free of charge; they are a great opportunity to learn about birds and birdwatching, and to meet friendly, helpful birders.

### Christmas Bird Counts

Denver Field Ornithologists, and its predecessor the Colorado Bird Club, have participated in the National Audubon Society's annual Christmas Bird Count at least since 1951 (Colorado Bird Club 1951–1952). An earlier Jefferson County count was carried out in 1937 (National Association of Audubon Societies 1938). The annual Denver Christmas Bird Count (DCBC) has been conducted in the present count circle since 1954 (Schottler 2003). The center of the Denver count circle is located just east of I-470 and about a half-mile north of Ken Caryl Road in Jefferson County, and it encompasses a variety of habitats from plains to foothills, including Chatfield State Park, Marston and McLellan reservoirs, several miles of the South Platte River, Red Rocks, North Turkey Creek, and Mt. Falcon Park. The results of the DCBC are published in the *Lark Bunting*. The 2003 DCBC will be its 50th year in the same count circle.

The Denver Urban Christmas Bird Count (DUCBC) began in 1988-89 and is sponsored by the Audubon Society of Greater Denver, and DFO is a major participant. The center of the DUCBC circle is near 12th and Dayton Streets in Aurora north and east of the DCBC. The count area includes a ten-mile section of the South Platte River, Cherry Creek State Park, the southern half of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR, and Lowry Airbase. The results are also published in the *Lark Bunting*.

The Idaho Springs Christmas Bird Count was started in 1951 by the Colorado Bird Club (Colorado Bird Notes 1953) and continued by DFO. The center of the count circle was the junction of U.S. 6 and 40; it included Idaho Springs at its east edge and Echo Lake, Silver Plume, Berthoud Pass, James Peak, and Central City around the circumference. It became increasingly difficult for DFO to count the circle, and in 1969, the Evergreen Naturalists took it over and changed the name to Evergreen/Idaho Springs Bird Count. The center of its circle was moved easterly to include Evergreen, but not to intersect the Denver

circle. The results of this count are not published in the *Lark Bunting*.

### **The Lark Bunting**

In the early days of the Colorado Bird Club, yearly summaries of the Club's activities were published giving the lists of officers, members, field trips, and periodicals in their library located at the Denver Museum of Natural History. In October 1953, the yearbook was replaced by *Colorado Bird Notes, Bulletin of the Colorado Bird Club*, volume 1, number 1. In October 1965, DFO began publishing the *Monthly Report of Field Observations of the Denver Field Ornithologists*, volume 1, number 1, replacing *Colorado Bird Notes*, which DFO continued to publish intermittently until mid-1967. The new report gave for the first time the results of the previous month's field trips that included lists of bird species and the numbers of individual birds observed, names of leader(s) and observers, distances driven and walked, and weather. This form follows one promoted by Jack Reddall (Reddall 1991, Echelmeyer et al. 2003). The first use of the name *Lark Bunting* was for volume 7, number 3, December 1971: *The Lark Bunting, Monthly Report of Field Observations of the Denver Field Ornithologists*.

The *Lark Bunting* regularly contains an announcement of the program for the next month's meeting, the schedule of trips for the next month, a brief summary including names of observers for the previous month's trips, and a table showing the species names and number of birds recorded. These data form a valuable, very large published database. The table also shows the results of the weekly trips of the "Tuesday Birders," a new popular informal group made up mainly of retired folks. In recent years, a table showing additional reported sightings has been included. Copies of the *Lark Bunting* are available in the library of the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. The present editor is Veronica Holt; e-mail: [veronica.holt@att.net](mailto:veronica.holt@att.net).

### **Colorado Rare Bird Alert**

The statewide Colorado Rare Bird Alert sponsored by DFO, and since 2002 co-sponsored by Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, was established in 1983 to replace the existing telephone tree. The RBA is one of the best in the country because it is updated regularly, often daily, especially during migration seasons and for particularly rare species as soon as possible. The phone number and access to the alert to report sightings is 303-659-8750; the RBA Coordinator will update if warranted. Membership in DFO supports the RBA.

### **Ptarmigan Award**

The Ptarmigan Award is presented to DFO members selected for their outstanding service to the Denver Field Ornithologists and to the study of

birds in Colorado. The award was initiated in 1988 to recognize Ruth Wheeler, the only living 1935 Charter member of the Club, and Thompson Marsh, prominent Denver birder and leader of DFO field trips. The award consists of a framed certificate and a framed photo taken by Duane Nelson of a pair of White-tailed Ptarmigan in a winter scene on Guanella Pass. Subsequent recipients of the award are Jack Reddall, Harold Holt, Hugh and Urling Kingery, Robert Andrews, Robert Righter, Patty Echelmeyer, Robert Spencer, Duane Nelson, Catherine Hurlbutt, Lynn Willcockson, Warren Finch, Glenn Hageman, and Karleen Schofield.

### Education Endowment Fund

In September 1994, the Education Endowment Fund was established in the will of artist and DFO member Mary Hope Robinson, who left \$15,200 to the Denver Field Ornithologists for that purpose. Since then, memorial and member contributions have been added to the Fund. Accumulated yearly interest since 1994 totals more than \$7,000, which has been dispersed for grants to various organizations and individuals for educational bird projects (Hageman 2002). The fund contributed to the publication of the *Birds of Barr Lake and Surrounding Areas 1888 through 1999* (Andrews et al. 2002). Grant proposals must be made to the DFO Treasurer by January 31 of each year and the awards are announced in May. Personal contributions to the fund may be made by check to DFO designated for the fund and sent to the Treasurer, Glenn Hageman.

### Membership

Membership in DFO supports birdwatching as an active sport and the various activities of DFO, such as monthly meetings, field trips, DCBC, RBA, and the Educational Endowment Fund. Members receive the monthly *Lark Bunting*. At the end of 2002, there were 393 members. Regular family membership dues are \$20 and student membership (age 18 and younger) is \$5. A Membership Application Form is in the *Lark Bunting* and on the DFO website: <http://www.dfobirders.org>. Fill out the form and include a check made out to DFO and send to the Treasurer, Glenn Hageman, 448 South Leyden Street, Denver, CO 80224-1249. He may also be contacted by phone (303) 322-6589 and e-mail [hageman1650@earthlink.net](mailto:hageman1650@earthlink.net).

In April 2002, the DFO Board voted to form a twinning relationship with the Angus and Dundee Bird Club in Montrose Basin on the east coast of Scotland, website: <http://angusbirding.homestead.com/ADBC.html>. This will provide both DFO and ADBC opportunities to exchange educational birding experiences (Holt 2002)—and when you go to Scotland, the opportunity to go on one of their field trips.

### Invitation

Birders of Colorado, especially in northeastern Colorado, are invited to join, support, and take part in the Denver Field Ornithologists' activities. DFO has become an important part of Colorado birding to enjoy, learn more about bird beauty and songs, explore new places to bird, share our birding interests, meet old and new birding friends, and most importantly to benefit the birds.

### Acknowledgments

The detailed reviews of an early draft, as well as later correspondence by Patty Echelmeyer, Hugh Kingery, and Dick Schottler were especially helpful in making the report more readable, complete, and accurate, as were specific comments by Glenn Hageman, Toni Rautus, and Robert Righter.

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The DFO patch, designed in 1975 to recognize the 40th Anniversary of the Denver Field Ornithologists, was based on the sketch of a Lark Bunting perched on a yucca plant drawn by Lavana Holt, wife of Harold Holt, and used on the masthead of *The Lark Bunting*. Scanned image by Sharon Ells.

## A POSSIBLE CASE OF VERTEBRATE CONSUMPTION BY LEWIS'S WOODPECKER

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On 14 June 2001, I found a Lewis's Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*) nest cavity along the White River in northwestern Colorado near the town of Buford. The cavity was in a Narrowleaf Cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*) snag adjacent to a live tree of the same species. One of the main vertical boles of the live tree had been sawn off, leaving a flat surface approximately six meters above ground. I observed an adult Lewis's Woodpecker, perched on top of this bole, hammering at something on the flat surface. The bird occasionally picked up and repositioned the object, and then resumed hammering on it. I was unable to see the object while the bird was hammering on it, but I could see it clearly each time the bird picked it up. The object was 2-3 inches long and 0.5-1 inches wide. It was a uniformly dark reddish color. The object hung limply and heavily from the bird's bill each time the bird lifted it. I am unfamiliar with any insect, vegetation, or fruit available in the area that could resemble this object. Although I was unable to discern any features of a head or limbs, the size, color, apparent density, and consistency strongly suggested to me that the object was a mass of vertebrate flesh, possibly a nestling.

The bird worked to separate the object into smaller pieces, which it took one at a time to the nest cavity and, based on the begging calls I heard, fed to the nestlings. I saw it make three such trips before it flew away; it may have made other trips prior to my arrival. I searched the ground beneath the perch but could find no remnants of the object that could aid in its identification. My observations were made at a distance of 15-20 m with a pair of 8x40 binoculars. I took one color photograph with a 35 mm camera equipped with a 300 mm lens, but the resulting image was too small for conclusive identification of the food item.

The diet of the Lewis's Woodpecker has been reported to include insects, nuts, and fruit (Tobalske 1997). Consumption of vertebrates is not mentioned in any of the published studies on this species that addressed diet (Beal 1911, Bent 1939, Bock 1970), although Sherwood (1927) reported an incident of possible egg consumption. Consumption of vertebrates by this species is not

unexpected, as the diets of the congeneric Red-headed Woodpecker (*M. erythrocephalus*; Smith et al. 2000) and Red-bellied Woodpecker (*M. carolinus*; Shackelford et al. 2000) include vertebrate prey such as nestlings. Bird eggs and lizards have also been recorded in the diets of the congeneric Acorn Woodpecker (*M. formicivorus*; Koenig et al. 1995) and Golden-fronted Woodpecker (*M. aurifrons*; Husak and Maxwell 1998).

Compared to the small food items typically associated with this species, the provisioning of young with relatively large food items, such as a nestling, may be a more efficient foraging strategy for adults when attempting to meet the energetic demands of a growing brood. More detailed studies of diet will be needed to verify this observation and, if appropriate, quantify the importance of vertebrates in the diet of Lewis's Woodpecker.

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### A BIT OF JOURNAL HISTORY

*10 Years Ago in the Journal...*

Joe Rigli wrote about his observation of an albino Lark Bunting near his home in Fort Morgan.

*15 Years Ago in the Journal...*

Bill Prather recounted his finding the first confirmed nesting Least Flycatchers in Colorado near Lyons.

*20 Years Ago in the Journal...*

David Palmer described the discovery and monitoring of a Northern Saw-whet Owl nest at Chatfield State Recreation Area.

*30 Years Ago in the Journal...*

Jerry Wooding reported on his census results of breeding birds of the Roaring Fork watershed.

## STANDOFF AT A CHATFIELD MARSH: HOUSE WRENS AND A GARTER SNAKE

Urling C. Kingery and Hugh E. Kingery  
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Franktown CO 80116

This note reports on a memorable drama observed by a group from Audubon Society of Greater Denver in Chatfield State Park on a very hot (90 degrees) July 6, 2003.

### Site

This incident occurred about 1.5 miles downstream from the new Nature Center operated by Audubon Society of Greater Denver, along a path between a marsh dominated by Common Cat-tail (*Typha latifolia*) on one side and a wet woodland of Boxelder (*Acer negundo*) trees on the other. The Boxelders grow up to about 20 feet tall, and numerous wet-soil forbs and willows (*Salix* sp.) form an understory.

### Observation

Two House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon*) fussed frantically as they circled around a hole near the top of a 12-foot stub. In the hole we saw a light form, which turned out to be the head of a Western Terrestrial Garter Snake (*Thamnopsis elegans*). Whenever the snake poked its head out, a wren flew at it and struck it with its bill. In a couple of minutes the snake managed to escape from the hole and quickly dropped down the stub and out of sight. A bulge in its body showed it had just eaten something. We saw snakes escape from the hole twice, apparently two different ones. One snake crawled back up the tree, into the hole, and emerged with a nestling in its mouth. This nestling, apparently dead, had no feathers, was blackish, and didn't move. As it emerged from the hole, the snake started to swallow the nestling, but the nestling got snagged on the stub, two inches below the hole. The snake, tail hanging straight down and suspended by the nestling, disgorged it.

The snake then went down-tree to a Frost Grape (*Vitis riparia*) vine which twisted around the stub and began ingesting a grape leaf. After five minutes, the snake swallowed the whole leaf, but then it couldn't break the stem off the vine. It slowly expelled the leaf, swung around to a different angle, and swallowed a small piece of the same leaf (2" on a side) that it could tear off. Then it climbed back up the stub and swallowed the remains of the nestling stuck outside the hole. Then it went into the hole and came out with a live

nestling (no feathers, bright pink, legs kicking) that it swallowed.

The snake went back into hole; it came partially out twice, and we discovered it had become tangled up in black fishing line, apparently attached to nestling # 2, the dangling nestling. Each time the snake went in and out of hole, it got more tangled in the fishing line. Eventually it disappeared into the hole and stayed there for the next ten minutes without reappearing. On a subsequent visit, Aug. 3, we saw loops of fishing line poking out of the hole.

During the hour of this drama, the parent wrens frantically flew around the stub, fluttered their wings like fledglings, pecked at the snake's head in the hole, and scolded helplessly. The wrens lost their nesting attempt, and the snake probably never escaped from the hole and the fishing line.

#### **Acknowledgments**

Jill Holden reviewed this account and made helpful corrections (particularly about the snake's behavior after it finished its salad).

## **CFO Project Fund**

Help support avian research in Colorado. Support the CFO Project Fund with your tax-deductible donation. Make checks payable to Colorado Field Ornithologists, clearly marked "Project Fund". Send to: BB Hahn, 8230 Mule Deer Drive, Pueblo, CO 81004.

Remember that CFO is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation and members can designate the CFO Project Fund in estate planning or wills.

## COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' CONVENTION 2003 PAPERS SESSION ABSTRACTS

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### BNA ACCOUNTS - WRITING AND USING THEM

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AOU's Birds of North American (BNA) series of monographs, "Life Histories for the 21st Century," covers 800 North American bird species with thoroughness and detail. Following a rigid outline, BNA accounts cover every aspect of a species' life history.

People regard us authors (I wrote the American Dipper and Pygmy Nuthatch accounts) as authorities on our species - which Ron Ryder is on White-faced Ibis and American Coot, Jim Sedgwick on *Empidonax* flycatchers, Bob Cohen on Tree Swallow, Jessica Young on Gunnison Sage-Grouse, and Steve Martin on Bobolink, but which I am not. As a mere reporter, I amassed a two-inch notebook of references for each species.

#### **American Dipper** – highlights

A Montana State grad student sampled two streams for two winters. She counted 65,600 insect larvae and identified 1,500 insects in the stomachs of 26 dippers! Dippers molt like a duck: in August adults lose all their flight feathers at once. They escape danger by leaping into the water or hiding in thick cover. Dipper-sized passerines typically have less than 3,000 contour feathers; dippers have a mean of 4,200. Most passerines have bare skin between feather tracts; dippers, covered with down, can plunge into streams on very cold days.

#### **Pygmy Nuthatch** – highlights

Pygmy and Brown-headed nuthatches, which some advocate lumping, differ in morphology, ecology, plumage, nestling development, parasites, vocalizations, breeding and non-breeding biology, and roosting habits. A third of breeding Pygmy Nuthatches have nest helpers, invariably a male relative of a parent. Pygmy Nuthatches roost in cavities. Their unique roosting technique combines hypothermia and communal roosting with protected roost sites (cavities). Juveniles roost with parents; several flocks may roost together. Stacks of 4-10 or more birds form in the cavity, in formations of squares, oblongs, triangles, diamonds, wedges, and tiers.

**COLORADO'S DOVES**

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Since 1820, nine species of doves and pigeons (*Columbidae*) have been recorded in present-day Colorado and Wyoming. The Long Expedition in 1820 found Band-tailed Pigeons near Colorado Springs. Passenger Pigeons (now extinct) were never found in Colorado, but one was shot 40 miles west of Fort Laramie, Wyoming, in 1859. Rock Doves were probably brought into both states in the 1860s, escaped and established feral populations. White-winged Doves were first recorded in Jefferson County, Colorado, in 1869 (one shot near timberline!) but not recorded in Wyoming until 1954. The species may now be nesting near Pueblo, CO. Common Ground-Doves were first recorded in Colorado in 1937, in Wyoming in 1972; Inca Doves in Colorado by 1961, but not yet in Wyoming. The most spectacular "invasion" has been by Eurasian Collared-Doves, first seen in southeastern Colorado in 1993 and in southeastern Wyoming in 1998. The species now occurs in at least 35 counties, mainly on the plains. It may be hybridizing with another Old World species, the Ringed Turtle-Dove, which escapes captivity but doesn't seem to be established as a breeder yet.

**THE GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE**

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Gunnison Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus minimus*) is a newly described species found in eight populations in southwestern Colorado and Utah. The largest (~2,500 birds) of the remaining populations occurs in the Gunnison Basin Eco-region. Currently, the Gunnison Sage-Grouse is globally red-listed as endangered by the IUCN (The World Conservation Union) and is a candidate species for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act. The presentation will focus on the role of the Gunnison Sage-Grouse's mating system in causing speciation and creating conservation challenges. I will also discuss a year-long effort in the Gunnison Basin to evaluate the first two phases of the local eco-regions conservation plan and discuss what the outcome suggests about the effectiveness of such efforts for Gunnison Sage-Grouse conservation.

**BOBOLINKS: INTERESTING FACETS OF LIFE HISTORY, AND  
DISTRIBUTION AND STATUS IN COLORADO**

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The Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) belongs to a monotypic genus of the Icteridae. Its breeding range seems to have been historically limited to northern states and southern portions of Canadian provinces from Saskatchewan and the Dakotas eastward; development of irrigation systems permitted westward expansion into Colorado and other western states. For nesting, Bobolinks prefer grassy fields showing interspersed large forbs, the forbaceous component being important to females for nest shading and as concentrators of food items preferred for nestlings and fledglings. The species is an extraordinary migrant; its non-breeding habitat is on the pampas of Argentina, and it undergoes an annual migration of 12,500 miles round-trip. It is highly polygynous, a very unusual mating system for passerine birds.

In Colorado, primary populations are found on the Boulder Open Space tracts; along the Yampa River and White River Valleys; and just west of Gunnison. Smaller populations exist in a few other areas that support habitat and management practices that preclude early mowing of fields. It is present in good numbers along rivers in northeastern Colorado, but additional monitoring is needed to quantify the extent and specific locales of these populations.

Across its North American breeding range, the Bobolink is experiencing population declines, significant in some regions. Primary contributing factors are early cutting of hay fields and conversion of optimal habitat to other uses. In certain populations in Colorado, high levels of predation represent a serious threat. As haying practices continue to change and as land conversion accelerates in Colorado, it can be expected that viable populations will become confined to properly-managed public lands or to private lands whose owners are sensitive to the special breeding schedule and other essential requirements of the species. In its wintering range, the species is persecuted as a "pest," and occupies an area where pesticides have been applied without consideration of chemical label requirements. Such practices are likely to affect population viability on the species' non-breeding grounds, in turn exacerbating the stresses Bobolinks face during their breeding period in Colorado.

## DIET PREFERENCES OF SWAINSON'S HAWKS (*BUTEO SWAINSONI*) IN A REHABILITATIVE SETTING

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**Abstract**—Swainson's Hawks (*Buteo swainsoni*) are becoming more frequent patients in raptor rehabilitation centers due to human/wildlife conflicts. There is a need for determining which types of food available to rehabilitators can best reflect natural prey items while also meeting the nutritional needs of injured Swainson's Hawks. This study focused on feeding mice, rabbit, and venison to five Swainson's Hawks and then determining which food type the birds preferred over the course of the study. Data analysis indicated that the hawks preferred mice to rabbit and rabbit over venison. Mice are a nutritious food source and natural prey item; therefore it is not surprising that the birds chose mice over the other two food types. Some studies have shown rabbits to be a substantial part of the natural diet, so it is also not surprising that the birds ate more rabbit than venison.

### Introduction

Raptor rehabilitation facilities throughout the United States continue to see an increased caseload due to human encroachment on raptor habitats (Bird & Ho 1976). Injured raptors held temporarily in captivity need to be fed highly nutritious foods that contain essential nutrients in the correct amounts and proportions so that healing can occur faster allowing for a release back into the wild more quickly. Many raptor rehabilitation facilities are unable to obtain natural prey items; hence domestic animals are often fed to the raptors. Even when natural prey items can be obtained, many rehabilitators advise against this feeding practice since wild prey often carry disease, which to a raptor with a depressed immune system, can be detrimental (Caudell & Riddleberger 1999). The types of food offered to injured raptors often depend upon the availability of food types as well as the species of raptor being fed. Most raptor facilities provide their birds with a variety of foods including mice, day old chickens, commercial bird of prey diet, roadkill, rabbits, and quail (Caudell & Riddleberger 1999).

Swainson's Hawks are a common, migratory raptor species and are frequent

patients at raptor rehabilitation facilities throughout their range. Prey taken in the wild include ground squirrels, small reptiles, mice and other small mammals, and grasshoppers and other large-bodied invertebrates (Sherrod 1978, Woodbridge 1991, Rodriguez-Estrella 2000). I studied the food preferences (mice, rabbit or venison) of Swainson's Hawks in a rehabilitative setting. Furthermore, I qualitatively compared these food preferences to the nutritious content of each food type offered.

### **Study Setup and Protocol**

I studied five Swainson's Hawks (2 adults, 3 juveniles) ranging in weight from 796 g to 1036 g at the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program (hereafter "program") in Fort Collins, Colorado. The hawks had been housed at the program since being admitted between 20 April, 2001 and 30 August, 2001. The hawks were housed in a 12 ft. x 40 ft. x 16 ft. wooden slatted flight cage for the duration of the study. A solid plastic predator guard surrounded the base of the cage so that unwanted predators could not enter the cage and eat food offered to the birds. The birds were given over six months to habituate to the enclosure before the study began.

For eighteen days, spanning 25 March, 2002 through 12 April, 2002, I offered the hawks 15-18 oz. of food (a mixture of domestic mice, domestic rabbit, and venison) per day. I obtained the mice and venison from the program's food supply and rabbits from a personal acquaintance. All food types had been frozen at approximately 20° F for at least one month before feeding. I followed the program's feeding protocol when preparing food, including thawing and then warming food before feeding. Rabbit and venison were placed in a sealed plastic bag, which was then placed in lukewarm water for approximately five minutes; the bag was necessary to prevent nutrients from leaching out into the water. Mice were placed directly in lukewarm water. This served not only to thaw the food but also to provide the hawks with additional hydration (Morgan 2001). While it is accepted that most raptors in the wild obtain needed water from their prey (Morzenti 1998), providing additional water by saturating the mouse fur helped to combat the stress of temporary captive living.

Mice were offered whole. Venison was offered in pieces comparable to the size of the mice. Rabbits were butchered and only the red organs and back and leg muscles were offered. Food was weighed to the nearest 1/100 of an ounce on a Universal AccuWeigh Dial Scale™ and then placed in five piles to minimize food aggression among the hawks. The hawks were given approximately 24 hours to eat. Each morning between 8:00 AM and 11:00 AM uneaten food was removed, separated into food type and weighed, then fresh food offered.



### Data Analysis and Results

I determined food consumption per day by subtracting the amount of food removed from the amount of food offered the previous morning. Water evaporation from uneaten food was not calculated, as there were no means to estimate or determine the amount of water loss; however, I assumed that the percentage of water loss was constant across all food types. I determined percent of each food type consumed during the study by dividing the total amount of each food offered by the total amount of each food consumed. The hawks consumed more grams of venison each day than grams of mice or rabbit, however there was, on average, more venison offered per day than mice or rabbit (Table 1).

I also compared the percent of total food consumed for each food type. I offered 75 ounces of mice during the course of the study and 69.25 oz. of mice were consumed, therefore the hawks ate approximately 92% of the mice offered to them. 97.25 oz. of rabbit were offered and 82 oz. were consumed over the course of the study, hence the hawks ate approximately 84% of the rabbit offered to them. The hawks were also offered 108.25 oz. of venison, yet they only consumed 83.25 oz. of venison, which is approximately 77% of the venison offered.

Table 1. Average amount of each food type offered and consumed each day.

	Offered (oz.)			Consumed (oz.)		
	Mouse	Rabbit	Venison	Mouse	Rabbit	Venison
Mean	4.17	5.40	6.01	3.85	4.56	4.63
Median	4.00	5.50	6.13	4.00	4.75	4.50
Std. Dev.	0.80	1.67	1.59	0.97	1.70	1.78

### Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study suggest that Swainson's Hawks preferred mice to both rabbit and venison, and rabbit over venison; however, on a daily basis, they ate more of whichever food was offered in the greatest amount. Of the three food types offered to the hawks, they preferred mice - the only food that was offered whole. Whole domestic mice are more similar to the Swainson's Hawks natural diet than are either rabbit pieces or venison pieces. A

compilation of Swainson's Hawks natural prey items by Sherrod (1978) stated that Swainson's Hawks ate mostly rodents, insects, and reptiles. A major component of this species' diet was large-bodied invertebrates, which comprised between 30.4% and 93.6% of the total diet. This is especially true of birds in South American ranges (Araujo & Tiranti 1996). Studies on Swainson's Hawks in Mexico and California have reported that ground squirrels are a significant part of the of the hawks' diet (Woodbridge 1991, Rodriguez-Estrella 2000). Rodriguez-Estrella (2000) reported that lagomorphs comprised approximately 7% of Swainson's Hawks' diets in Mexico, whereas rodents only comprised approximately 1% and larger mammals not at all. This may explain why the Swainson's Hawks in this study chose rabbit over venison. Perhaps if the rabbit had been offered whole, the birds may have preferred it to the mice.

In captivity, rehabilitators must attempt to feed nutritious food to injured birds and, as reported by Caudell and Riddleberger (1999), the food offered to injured birds is only as nutritious as the diet eaten by the prey. Therefore, rehabilitators are advised to raise their own prey so this can be controlled. Caudell and Riddleberger (1999) also suggest wetting down any dead prey with fine fur, as dry fur may pass through the muscular stomach causing irritated intestines.

When obtaining foods from the wild (e.g. road kill or harvest) for consumption, one must be aware of the potential risks of feeding these types of food. Raptor rehabilitators, especially in Colorado, are constantly faced with this issue. Big game hunting is a very popular sport in Colorado; hence, hunters often donate venison to organizations including rehabilitation facilities.

Raptor rehabilitators are cautioned, however, against feeding excessive amounts of venison to injured birds due to venison's high nitrogen content, which causes dehydration when consumed in excess. Rabbits raised by rehabilitation facilities and fed a nutritious diet are recommended as a food source because of the large amounts of meat, bone and internal organs they provide. If carcasses are fed whole, rehabilitators are cautioned to crush all bones, as large and sharp bone fragments can injure the bird's gastrointestinal tract (Caudell and Riddleberger 1999).

Supplying Swainson's Hawks with the proper diet can be difficult, especially in an area where invertebrates are a main food source, but with a mixture of different food types, rehabilitators can expect the birds to receive enough nutritious food for a speedy recovery.

### Acknowledgments

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## CHANGES TO THE AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION *CHECK-LIST OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS*

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### Introduction

The American Ornithologists' Union's *Committee on Classification and Nomenclature* published its most recent supplement to the *Check-List of North American Birds* in the July issue of *The Auk* (Banks et al. 2003). This supplement is the third since publication of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Check-List* (AOU 1998) and is the second in as many years (see Faulkner 2002 for more information about the AOU committee and last year's changes). The updated *Check-List* can be found at <http://www.AOU.org/aou/birdlist.html>. Here, I provide an overview of the changes made for species in the United States.

The most dramatic decision made by the Committee was the placement of the orders Anseriformes (Swans, Geese, and Ducks) and Galliformes (Chachalacas, Grouse, and other gallinaceous birds) at the beginning of the taxonomic order, just after Tinamiformes (Tinamous). Multiple studies suggest that these orders are more primitive than originally thought. Future check-lists, field guides, etc., should have swans as the first group of birds rather than loons. In addition, the placement of several species in the taxonomic order is likely to change in the near future. Species in Colorado that may be moved are: Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*), all of the tanagers and longspurs, and Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*).

### Species Changes

#### **American Three-toed Woodpecker** (*Picoides dorsalis*)

This species has been split from the Old World form, which remains Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*). Note the scientific name change to *P. dorsalis* for the New World species.

### Scientific Name Changes

**Whiskered Tern** - *Chlidonias hybridus* changed to *Chlidonias hybrida*

#### **New World Pigeons**

Based on DNA, morphological, serological, and behavioral studies, the New

World pigeons are now considered belonging to a separate genus *Patagioenas*. Particular to Colorado, the scientific name for Band-tailed Pigeon is now *Patagioenas fasciata*.

### **New World Owls**

The subgenus *Megascops*, which included New World screech-owls (*Otus* spp.) has been elevated to full genus status. This change is made for the three U.S. screech-owls: Western Screech-Owl (*Megascops kennicottii*), Eastern Screech-Owl (*Megascops asio*), and Whiskered Screech-Owl (*Megascops trichopsis*).

**Snowy Owl** - *Nyctea scandiaca* changed to *Bubo scandiacus*

**Black-capped Vireo** - *Vireo atricapillus* changed to *Vireo atricapilla*

**Black-capped Chickadee** - *Poecile atricapilla* changed to *Poecile atricapillus*

**Ovenbird** - *Seiurus aurocapillus* changed to *Seiurus aurocapilla*

### **Common Name Changes**

**Belcher's Gull** (*Larus belcheri*)

Formerly known as Band-tailed Gull.

**Rock Pigeon** (*Columba livia*)

The name for this species has been changed in order to conform to the name change by the British Ornithologists' Union. Formerly known as Rock Dove.

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## BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK: A WANDERER REJOINS THE OFFICIAL COLORADO LIST

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### Introduction

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) has a checkered history in Colorado, having previously been accepted to the official list of species occurring in Colorado (Chase 1982), but then subsequently removed (Nelson 1991), due to concerns of origin. In recent decades, birders have seen a great expansion of the breeding range of the species in the U.S. with a concomitant increase in the number of extralimital records in the U.S. and Canada. Those of us that still own older field guides can track this range expansion through the field guides via the larger and larger swaths of the breeding-range color in the southern states. This expansion culminates in Sibley (2003), with a swath of purple (defined as “year-round” occurrence) extending all the way north to the Red River (the border between Texas and Oklahoma) and with a swath of grayish-green (defined as “rare”) extending up the central and eastern Great Plains to southern Minnesota!

Unfortunately, Colorado has not participated in this recent spate of extralimital records. However, the Colorado Bird Records Committee (hereafter, CBRC or Committee) decided to re-evaluate all four of the Colorado reports in light of the changing status of Black-bellied Whistling-Duck in the interior of the continent and I report here on that endeavor. As this report deals with very different issues, compared to those of the usual Committee reports published in this journal, I follow a very different format from that typically published. I also dispense with most of the business and explanations found in typical Committee reports. Should anyone need more specifics about the operation of the CBRC, see Leukering and Wood (2002), the recently updated and published by-laws (Anonymous 2002), and/or the Colorado Field Ornithologists’ website ([www.cfo-link.org](http://www.cfo-link.org)).

### Methods

In 2002, the CBRC re-circulated all four reports on file that had been submitted to the Committee to document occurrences of Black-bellied Whistling-Duck in the state. Per CBRC Bylaws, all accepted records received final 7-0 or 6-1 votes

to accept. Each report that was not accepted received fewer than four votes to accept in the final vote for that report. The CBRC members voting on these reports were: Tony Leukering, Ric Olson, Brandon Percival, Karleen Schofield, Larry Semo, John Vanderpoel, and Chris Wood.

### Results and Discussion

Of the four reports reviewed, the Committee reached final decisions on all in the first round and accepted only one. The organization and style of reporting on the individual records and non-accepted reports included below follow that of Leukering and Wood (2002). The items of information are, in their order of appearance for individual occurrences: CBRC accession number, plumage, location, and date. In the parenthetical expression following the date is the re-circulation voting record. The format of the voting record is the number of accept votes on the left side of the hyphen and the number of not accept votes on the right side of the hyphen.

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., Semo and Wood 2003). I here report only the date span for individual records that were provided in the submitted reports; many of the birds were present prior to and/or subsequent to the dates reported to the CBRC. The Committee has not dealt with the question of full date spans as compared to submitted date spans.

**8-78-74** - Not accepted - One individual was reported at Silt, *Garfield*, on or about 27 May 1978 (0-7). The only aspect of this brief and sketchy report supporting the observer's identification was the described long neck and overall dark coloration, despite the species' preponderance of obvious and diagnostic field marks, such as the orange-red bill and the large, white wing stripe. This report was previously not accepted (Chase 1981) and in this go-round, the CBRC did not accept the report for the same reason as in the report's first circulation: a poor description.

**8-80-84** - Not accepted due to concerns about origin - A well-described adult visited the Chatfield State Recreation Area, *Douglas/Jefferson*, 21 September 1980 (2-5). The Committee accepted the identification of the bird as accurate, but a number of members felt that the location's proximity to urban Denver was cause for concern about the origin of the bird. This report was previously accepted as the first state record (Chase 1982), but a later Committee removed the species from the state list (Nelson 1991) due to concerns about the origin of this bird. That written, in many places in the "normal" range of Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, one can find large numbers of relatively tame

individuals in urban areas, such as city parks, even nesting in chimneys (L. Semo pers. comm.). Thus, any individual showing up in such a situation in Colorado should not be rejected out of hand.

- 8-81-59** - Not accepted - One adult was in the Colorado River bottomland just west of Silt, *Garfield*, 28 April 1981 (0-7). This report suffered a multitude of problems. But first, the history. In this report's first circulation through the CBRC, it was apparently accepted (Chase 1983). However, a statement in Chase (1983, pg. 78; "2<sup>nd</sup> record for Colorado; likely escapee") suggested that the CBRC considered the bird an escapee. I am not sure that I understand this, as the record was listed in the section of accepted records. In the CBRC report that removed this species from the state list, Nelson (1991) did not consider this report, so that Committee must have considered the report not accepted.

Back to the present. At least one CBRC member considered the description of field marks a bit vague and did not accept it on that basis. Many members were willing to accept the identification as submitted, but were concerned that, in combination with 8-78-74 above, the report suggested that a Black-bellied Whistling-Duck had been present in the Silt area for some three years. Such longevity at a single site would suggest other than natural origin, as extralimital individuals usually are present for only very short periods of time. Unfortunately, the 1978 report's description was less-than-stellar and this fact created a conundrum for many Committee members: If the 1978 bird was, indeed, a Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, then the 1981 report is almost assuredly unacceptable. However, since the description of the 1978 bird was lacking in details, there is no firm evidence that the identification was correct so, perhaps the 1981 report should be considered on its own merit. But the species is so distinctive, that the 1978 identification was probably correct so the 1981 report would be unacceptable. In the end, the Committee voted unanimously to not accept the report, with reservations.

- 8-91-14** - Accepted - One adult was at an unnamed reservoir in *Weld*, 11 July 1991 (7-0). Two Georgia birders found and photographed the bird, determined that it was unbanded, and noted its "normal, skittish" behavior. The previous Committee decision on this report was to accept the identification, but to not accept the report on questions of origin (Nelson 1993). That Committee report included this prescient statement, "The status of this bird could change if a pattern of vagrancy is established regionally for this species." The current makeup of the Committee considered the possibility of captive origin,



but felt that the species' recent history in the Great Plains (Table 1) suggested that the *Weld* bird was more likely of natural origin.

Thus, the CBRC welcomes Black-bellied Whistling-Duck back to the official list of Colorado birds, now 472 species long.

Table 1. History of vagrancy of Black-bellied Whistling-Duck in the western Great Plains.

State <sup>1</sup>	History
North Dakota	No reports
South Dakota	No reports
Nebraska	Three reports; the two documented reports date from 29 October 1989 and 2-28 August 1999
Kansas	Three records: 20 September 1956, 6-8 July 1980, 21 May 1982
Oklahoma	Multiple records: First on 18 July 1983; the species is "considered rare in SE Oklahoma (McCurtain County) and central Oklahoma (Major and Kingfisher Counties). There have been several records each year for these two areas starting around 1999."
Texas (panhandle only)	One hunter kill on 7 December 1980
Montana	No reports
Wyoming	No reports
New Mexico (east of 105° W)	Four records: 27 May 1988, 4 September 1988, 16 April 1990, 14 July 1996 (nine additional records/reports from southwestern part of state)

<sup>1</sup> Sources: North Dakota - D. Svingen pers. comm.; South Dakota - J. Palmer, pers. comm.; Nebraska - Sharpe et al. (2001); Kansas - Thompson and Ely (1989); Oklahoma - J. Arterburn, pers. comm. ; Texas panhandle - Seyffert (2001); Montana - J. Marks, pers. comm.; Wyoming - D. Faulkner, pers. comm.; eastern New Mexico - J. Oldenettel, pers. comm.

#### Reporting observers

Robert Andrews, Giff Beaton, H. F. Beattie, Michael Fitzpatrick, and Mrs. Willis Parkinson.

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## A REPLY TO THE COLORADO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE JAEGER ARTICLE

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In *Colorado Birds* (April 2003, pp. 73-91), the Colorado Bird Records Committee (CBRC) submits its recent review of jaeger reports. It maintains that more Pomarine than Parasitic Jaegers have been documented in Colorado the past 10 years. The article alleges that these reports shatter a widespread mistaken dogma most prominent early in the 1960s-70s. In most parts of North America, states the article, "the widely accepted convention was that an inland jaeger was a Parasitic unless proven otherwise" (p. 73). It cites Lee, *American Birds* (1989, pp. 18-20), in support of its views.

The CBRC article poorly represents Lee's essay. It nowhere mentions the above assumption about inland jaegers. Lee does suggest review of old skua and jaeger records, since he suspects observers of these birds were often influenced by biased preconceptions. But the only biases he specifically describes concern reports and misidentified specimens from the western North Atlantic and southeast U.S. coastal states. He says nothing about inland jaeger migration, conventional beliefs, or literature regarding non-coastal states.

The following historical survey of this literature tries to select material distinguishing inland jaeger migration from that on the Great Lakes, where Parasitics are the majority (90%) of identified birds (Sherony & Brock 1997, p. 375). The CBRC article also makes this distinction, probably valid because habitat conditions are somewhat different in the Great Lakes region than in most other inland areas. The survey below also assumes the CBRC article means the 1960s as "early" in the two-decade period of the 1960s-70s.

Much of the well-known literature of this decade rarely repeats dogmatic mantras regarding inland jaeger migration. Prefacing the period is the large volume annotating the American Ornithologists' Union *Check-List of North American Birds* (1957, 5th edition). Pomarine Jaeger is described as "accidental or casual" in five American states that neither border oceans nor the Great Lakes. Parasitic Jaeger is "casual in the Great Lakes area" and recorded in eight inland American states. Long-tailed Jaeger is designated "accidental" inland

(pp. 212-215). The popular Peterson, Field Guide to Western Birds (1961, 2nd edition, pp. 93-94), gives Parasitic "occasional" status in the Great Basin and Plains; Pomarine and Long-tailed Jaegers are given "accidental" status in the inland U.S. with the latter "casual" in Alberta. The above two sources give inland Parasitic status an edge over the other jaegers, but one not repeated in another popular guide: Robbins et. al., Golden Guide to Birds of North America (1966, p.130), indicates nothing in its text or maps on inland jaeger migration. More detail is provided by E. Reilly, Jr., The Audubon Illustrated Handbook of American Birds (1968, pp.187-189). Pomarines are described as mainly pelagic but recorded "in migration, in the interior of N. America," as is Long-tailed which is "Not so common" as the other jaegers. Nothing is mentioned of Parasitic inland migration. It is said to be "Probably the most numerous" jaeger, but the hypothesis is not specifically applied to inland migratory status.

Literature dealing with Colorado renders no clear verdict on jaeger distribution. The classic Bailey & Niedrach, Birds of Colorado (1965 vol. 1, pp. 372-375), lists a few more Parasitic than Pomarine records in the state. But it also lists more inland states west of Missouri both for Long-tailed occurrence and for Pomarine occurrence, than it does for Parasitic. Comments are inconclusive with Pomarine migrating "casually in the interior" of the U.S. and "more or less regularly through many of the western states." Parasitic is described as a rare transient in Colorado, and Long-tailed Jaeger a "straggler." Nothing is said in Bailey & Niedrach on comparative numbers of inland jaeger species, which is also true of Davis, Birds in Western Colorado (1969, p. 18). Pomarine is listed as "accidental" with one report, and none are cited for the other jaegers. What were the expectations 30+ years ago for seeing Colorado jaegers? For both Pomarine and Parasitic the chances were rated, "HOW LUCKY CAN YOU GET," according to graphs in the popular Lane & Holt, A Birder's Guide to Denver and Eastern Colorado (1973, pp. 99, 106). Long-tailed Jaeger is not discussed in this edition.

The above survey could be too brief. But most of the field guides and sources mentioned were widely consulted by past generations. This literature represents a broader spectrum of opinion less imprisoned by dominant conventions than alleged by the CBRC article. Perhaps the collapsed edifice of antiquated philistine dogma is largely a myth created by our modern birding Samsons.

Some CBRC members were apparently troubled by the "strong change" in jaeger species report ratios, and hence the recent 2002 review of available documentation. This review shows that prior to about 1990, Parasitic reports

exceeded those for the other two jaegers; Pomarine reports were the majority after this date (Colorado Birds 37:73-74). But other factors than obsolete misconceptions and field mark ignorance could explain the anomaly. Up to 20% of Parasitic adults and 31% of their chicks are known to be killed by Great Skuas where breeding areas of the two species overlap; the range of Great Skuas has expanded into Parasitic nesting areas. During the late 1980s, Parasitic Jaegers were also impacted by a collapse in sand-eel numbers, a major food source. These phenomena were limited to the North Atlantic and probably did no permanent damage to global Parasitic Jaeger populations; they are showing some recent signs of recovery (Olsen & Larsson, Skuas and Jaegers. 1997. pp. 14-16). But when jaeger report frequencies change, related habitat modifications could be a cause. The CBRC article does not consider the possibility that jaeger ecology and distribution can be subject to change.

This possibility is suggested by patterns in Colorado's adjacent states. Since 1990, Pomarine Jaegers have increased in the region (Appendix A, Regional Totals). There are also interstate variations. Nebraska is the only state besides Colorado which consistently displays these increases. Pomarines exhibit just slight increments in other states and perhaps a decline in Kansas. Parasitic Jaegers declined regionally since 1990, but sport small gains in Arizona and Nebraska. Fluctuations are also possible in Colorado jaeger patterns. It is probably wiser to expect such changes, rather than to mistrust them. The CBRC article is much too suspicious of old Parasitic reports for being "at odds with" the modern trend of more Pomarines (p. 74). This trend could be only temporary and not of long duration. It may neither reflect Colorado's past jaeger history nor provide a template for its future.

The CBRC's 2002 review appears too eager to judge old Parasitic Jaeger records by recent trends of the 1990s. Overruled were many decisions by prior CBRCs, which had approved 17 Parasitic Jaeger reports. The 2002 review confirmed only five. Long-tailed and Pomarine reports fared much better. All eleven previously accepted records were endorsed by the review (CBRC Report, Colorado Birds, 37:84-85, Table 1). It also accepted reports approved by Andrews & Righter, COLORADO BIRDS (1992, pp. 143-144), except for one: a report submitted as Parasitic was changed to Long-tailed Jaeger by the review, despite divided opinion of outside experts who also examined the evidence. The CBRC article states that the Records "Committee felt that the date [20 September 1973] ruled out juveniles of any other species" (p. 78).

This statement is misleading. The review accepted a juvenile Parasitic Jaeger, reported 6 September 1985 (record #22-87-26, Colorado Birds 37:81). In fact, juvenile Parasitics should not be "ruled out" at any time during September.

There are records of them in nearby states from Arizona to Nebraska. A juvenile (specimen) at Gila Bend on 1 September 1984 (*American Birds* 39:86) and another near Flagstaff, 7-10 September 1994 (*Field Notes* 49:79), are accepted Arizona records (Arizona Records Committee website, accessed August 2003, Appendix A, where references are also cited for the following reports). A juvenile Parasitic was recently reported near Willcox, Arizona, 11-21 September 2002. New Mexico's first confirmed record was a juvenile near Tucumcari, 19 September 1998. The Utah Records Committee accepted a juvenile Parasitic Jaeger observed in Juab County, 8 September 1985. Nebraska tallied three juveniles near the Colorado border at Lake McConaughy, one on 4-5 October 1997 (*Field Notes* 52:83-84), and two on 15 September 2001. All are accepted Nebraska records (J. Jorgensen, former Nebraska Records Committee Chair, personal e-mail).

The above regional considerations could improve future reviews of Colorado jaeger reports. Also in need of review are guidelines for submitting these reports. The CBRC article requires the jaeger "observer to correctly assess structural features and critical plumage details, e.g., number of white primary shafts, to correctly identify such birds" (p. 77). This advice is only of limited worth. How practical is it to expect accurate feather shaft counts on flying jaegers? Flapping wings easily distort the best of views, not to mention frequent problems created by light and distance. Soaring jaegers often conceal primaries by varying wing positions. Primaries are largely concealed on birds swimming or at rest, unless an observer is lucky or close enough to glimpse a full wingspread as sometimes shown during aggressive behavior. Under the vast majority of viewing conditions, it would take near bionic capabilities to count primary shafts. Good cameras and lenses are helpful, but opportunities for seeing jaegers in Colorado are limited; getting a decent picture of their primary shafts even more so. Try counting them in the nice photos provided by the CBRC article. One reliable source concludes: "despite the prominence that has sometimes been given to this characteristic, the number of white primary shafts is rarely much help in field identification," Kaufman, *Advanced Birding* (1990, p. 91).

The CBRC should encourage higher, not impractical standards. Preaching a too rigid field mark fundamentalism can have its negative side: even lower numbers of approved reports mostly confined to a handful of specimens, photos, and observations by elite CBRC jaeger squadrons. Quality observation reports are better than quantity. But why sacrifice either to overly strict parameters of dubious value?

Also debatable is the CBRC article's dismissal of "pot-bellied" and "barrel-

ched” jaegers as hackneyed and misused terms (p. 77). Perhaps these terms do reflect the taint of an unskilled birding proletariat in need of discipline by quill analyzing scholastics. But I doubt the jaegers object to this anatomical diction, and the terms are used by Harrison, *Seabirds* (1985, 2nd edition revised, p. 324); Kaufman, *Advanced Birding* (1990, p. 101); and Wiley & Lee, “Pomarine Jaeger,” *The Birds of North America* #483 (2000, p. 2). The most valued source by the CBRC article is its highly recommended Olsen & Larsson, *Skuas and Jaegers*. It’s a good choice. The almost inexhaustible mine of details in this monograph contains such gems as “large and fat” Parasitic Jaegers (p. 7); the “hanging belly” of Pomarine Jaegers (p. 109); and “barrel-shaped” Great Skuas (pp. 54, 61, 64). By calling similar terms “trite” in its published records reviews, the CBRC could discourage birders from submitting documentation. If CBRC members want more reports from observers other than themselves, their review articles might employ less derogatory terms.

There is no doubt about the occasional need to review old reports in light of new evidence. Andrews & Righter *COLORADO BIRDS* and the CBRC article both lament the quality of many reports, which fail to solve the difficult problems of jaeger identification. But report qualities are no excuse for misguided efforts to improve them and for serious flaws in the CBRC article: it misrepresents pertinent literature, imposes excessive burdens of proof on jaeger observers, and alienates them by quibbling over terms utilized in their reports. Less parochial endeavors would better serve the CBRC. Its views on Colorado jaegers could profit from a wider perspective of inland jaeger migration in other states.

Obviously not all Committee members are responsible for the CBRC article. But some of them can take credit for its most positive feature: a better exposure of the Committee’s decisions and how the CBRC works. The jaeger article and other recent CBRC reports have brought new transparency to its proceedings. CBRC members should also be commended for their time donated to records review, an often long and thankless task. Some of Colorado’s top birders are on the CBRC. It justifiably expects better reports from jaeger observers. They in turn should expect better review articles from the CBRC.

#### **Acknowledgments**

Leon Bright, David Johnson, David Leatherman, and Mark Yaeger reviewed this essay and made many useful editorial suggestions. Thanks to the following contributors for their respective state records and reports: Max Thompson (KS), Joel Jorgensen and Mark Brogie (NE), Jerry Oldenettel and Sartor O. Williams III (NM), James Arterburn (OK), and Andrea Cerovski (WY). Galen Pittman (University of Kansas Ecological Reserves) is basically

sympathetic with the CBRC article and critical of my reply. His remarks caused reconsideration of various conclusions. Thomas Shane contributed much to this essay. His wide bibliographical knowledge supplied many sources of information for Kansas and elsewhere. Cindy Lippincott filled gaps in my collection of seasonal reports now published by the American Birding Association in *North American Birds*.

Any errors in the data and judgments submitted in this essay are my own and not those of the above reviewers and contributors.

### Appendix A

Jaeger records and reports in states adjacent to Colorado through November 2002. Unless otherwise stated in the data below, "records" refer to reports approved by state records committees; "reports" and "pending review" refer to reports awaiting review by these committees. Abbreviations: *AB*=*American Birds*; *NAB*=*North American Birds*; *NWR*=*National Wildlife Refuge*; *RC*=*Records Committee*.

ARIZONA: Pomarine Jaeger - 6 records, 2 since 1990: most recent, November 1999, north of Flagstaff, *NAB* 54:84. Pending review, report of 4 birds, 26 April 2002, apparently at one location south of Tucson, *NAB* 56:338.

Parasitic Jaeger - 4 records, 2 since 1990: most recent, September 1997, Lake Havasu. Pending review, one report (photo, many observers), 11-21 September 2002, Willcox, *NAB* 57:99.

Long-tailed Jaeger - 9 records, 3 since 1990: most recent, September 1996, Mormon Lake southeast of Flagstaff.

Pending review, one report (photo) August 2002, Nelson Reservoir near Eagar, *NAB* 57:99.

Information from Arizona RC website.

KANSAS: Pomarine Jaeger - 5 records, 1 since 1990: December 1991, Geary County.

Parasitic Jaeger - 13 records, 1 since 1990: November 1996, Butler County. Pending review, 1 report, October 2002, Meade County, *NAB* 57:80.

Long-tailed Jaeger - 6 records, 1 since 1990: September 2000, Washington County.

Information from Kansas RC website.



NEBRASKA: Pomarine Jaeger - 13 records, many in Sharpe, Silcock, & Jorgensen. 2001. *Birds of Nebraska*, 190. Eleven records since 1990: most recent, October 2001, Cedar County, *NAB* 56:68. Parasitic Jaeger - 5 records, 3 since 1990: most recent, 15 September 2001, two at Lake McConaughy, *NAB* 56:68. Long-tailed Jaeger - 4 records, 3 since 1990: most recent, September 2001, one at Lake McConaughy, *NAB* 56:68. Much of the above data provided by personal e-mails from Joel Jorgensen and Mark Brogie, Nebraska RC Chair.

## NEW

MEXICO: Pomarine Jaeger - 11 reports include 2 records dated prior to 1990 and 2 reports since 1990: most recent, September 1994, Sierra County. Parasitic Jaeger - 12 reports, one accepted as first state record: 19 September 1998, Conchas Lake near Tucumcari, *NAB* 53:87. Long-tailed Jaeger - 9 reports include 5 records, of which 4 are dated since 1990: most recent, August 2000, Maxwell NWR, *NAB* 55:86. Most jaeger reports await pending review. Much of the above data provided by personal e-mails from Jerry Oldenettel and Sartor O. Williams III, New Mexico RC Chair.

OKLAHOMA: Pomarine Jaeger - 4 records: 3 since 1990, all in December 1996, Oklahoma and Tulsa Counties. Parasitic Jaeger - 14 reports in Baumgartner, F. & A. *Oklahoma Bird Life* (1992, p. 411), include 11 records dated prior to 1990: most recent, October 1983, Tulsa, *AB* 38:219. Much of the above data provided by personal e-mail from James Arterburn, Oklahoma RC Chair.

UTAH: Pomarine Jaeger - 1 record, November 1991, Utah County. Parasitic Jaeger - 9 records: most recent, 8 September 1985, Juab County. Pending review, 1 report, June 2002, Rich County, *NAB* 56:463. Long-tailed Jaeger - 8 records, 4 since 1990: most recent, September 1993, Carbon County. (Above records accepted by the Utah RC are dated after 1984; prior records and specimens included above were accepted by literature and bird organizations deemed reliable by the Utah RC). Information from Utah RC website.

WYOMING: Pomarine Jaeger - 2 records, 1 since 1990: June 1994, Sweetwater County.  
Parasitic Jaeger - reported in 6 latilongs. Dorn, J. & R. 1999, 2nd edition, Wyoming Birds (p. 41). Most Parasitic reports are unreviewed. One accepted record: June 1985, Johnson County. Much of the above data provided by personal e-mail from Andrea Cerovski, Wyoming RC Chair.

**Regional totals:** sum of all accepted records in states adjacent to Colorado  
Pomarine Jaeger: 14 before 1990; 19 thereafter.  
Parasitic Jaeger: 37 before 1990; 7 thereafter.  
Long-tailed Jaeger: 17 before 1990; 15 thereafter.

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## A REPLY TO DAVID SILVERMAN

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In his response to the Colorado Bird Records Committee's (CBRC) report on its review of older jaeger records in Colorado (Leukering 2003), David Silverman challenges quite a few statements and criticizes many aspects of that report. Here, I wish to respond to those challenges with the respect due to one of Colorado's finest birders and supporters of the CBRC (as measured by the large number of documentations that he has submitted to the CBRC over the years).

I am grateful that David Silverman appreciates the work that the individual CBRC members donate to the service of Colorado ornithology - service on the CBRC is a long and often misunderstood and thankless task. However, I strongly disagree with his primary thesis that Leukering (2003) did a disservice to the Colorado birding community, when he states that my report "misrepresents pertinent literature, imposes excessive burdens of proof on jaeger observers, and alienates them [presumably the jaeger observers] by quibbling over terms utilized in their reports."

Silverman makes a strong case to support his thesis that my statements concerning "the widely accepted convention... that an inland jaeger was a Parasitic unless proven otherwise" were overstated, if not erroneous. He also states that I misrepresented Lee (1989) to support my contention. For that belief, I am partly at fault, as, somewhere in the development of my report, I excised a key phrase in the citation of Lee's work, which should have read, "for an example, see Lee (1989)." I did not intend to use Lee (1989) to support the statement about North America, but simply to provide an example of previous work that suggested (but did not state explicitly) that there was a widespread assumption about jaeger occurrence.

To elucidate, Lee (1989) re-examined five purported Parasitic Jaeger specimens originating in the southeastern United States and found that four were actually Long-tailed Jaegers. As this paper was critical to my personal understanding about jaeger distribution and occurrence and as it is germane to the current discussion, I here quote from Lee's summary:

“It is reasonable, and expected, that bird identification will be strongly biased by preconceived assumptions of what species are expected in a given area or season. ... Considering the high rate of misidentification among the several historical specimens discussed here, it would be a valuable exercise for persons connected with local bird records to critically re-examine the specimens of skuas and immature jaegers on which regional faunal lists have been prepared. Sight identifications are at best difficult for skuas and immature jaegers and it is obvious that the original specimen oriented data base has biased sight records.”

Silverman did a commendable job of collating information from a variety of sources, including the older literature, on the occurrence of the three jaeger species in Colorado and elsewhere in the interior of North America. This feature of his critique should prove quite useful. I do wonder, however, how many of the older reports and records from the various states would stand up to modern scrutiny. More importantly, Silverman seems to have interpreted my statements concerning dogma as relating to the published literature, which they were not. Nowhere in Leukering (2003) did I state that the available literature was dogmatic. I was simply expressing the results of my experience with birders: prior to the 1990s, most seemed to believe that Parasitic was the “expected” species in the interior.

I agree with Silverman’s contention that population trajectories of species should be considered when discussing apparent changes in occurrence or reporting rates; he did his homework and I did not consider that possibility. However, I disagree with the citations that he uses to support that contention. Silverman cites two potential sources for negative population trend in Parasitic Jaeger in recent decades (factors that might alter occurrence rates for that species), both in the North Atlantic. While there are absolutely no data to allow us to infer specific migration routes of source populations of Parasitic Jaeger, I would suggest that the interior West is not visited by northern-European-breeding Parasitic Jaegers.

In reference to the report of Parasitic Jaeger that the recent CBRC review accepted as a Long-tailed (22-73-115), I was unable to determine if Silverman objected to the decision, but he certainly seems to object to the rationale for the decision. He specifically takes the CBRC to task for the statement that the “Committee felt that the date... ruled out juveniles of any other species.” Silverman is absolutely correct and I do not recall why I wrote that. I certainly

intended that statement regarding another report, but should not have included it in this case. I agree that juvenile Parasitic Jaegers can turn up at the latitude of Colorado in September - I have seen many such individuals.

The CBRC did request review of 22-73-115 from outside experts and the opinions expressed were divided. In that regard, I wrote, "By their own admissions, a few of the experts were confused by a bird showing plumage features of a juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger, but the bill structure and pattern of a Parasitic." Though I did request opinions from outside experts, it is still the job of the CBRC to provide its own opinion and that opinion was that the bird photographed was a Long-tailed Jaeger. In fact, the bird is nearly identical to the juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger that was photographed at Union Reservoir in 1993 (and accepted as such by the entire Colorado birding community) and I stated, "... the CBRC noted that one picture of a juvenile Long-tailed Olsen and Larsson (1997) showed a bird with a bill virtually identical to that on the bird in question." In fact, that picture was one of Dave Leatherman's superb photographs of the 1993 Union Reservoir bird.

Silverman's article castigates the CBRC for expecting observers to count white primary shafts, but he greatly overstates the importance that I placed on that feature in the CBRC report. I was simply providing an example of a specific plumage feature. Perhaps, I should have provided a different example (e.g., undertail coverts barring), as I agree, whole-heartedly, that counting the number of white shafts is difficult, if not impossible, on most jaegers that occur in Colorado (and anywhere else). But, just because counting those shafts is difficult, does not eliminate the usefulness of the feature in separating Parasitic and Long-tailed jaegers.

The author also takes me to task for my "dismissal of 'pot-bellied' and 'barrel-chested' as hackneyed...." I stand by this statement, as I believe one person's understanding of "barrel-chested" may not be the same as another's; in fact, I do not understand the term and I would bet that I am not alone in that confusion. Jaeger shape can be quite ephemeral and subject to misinterpretation, particularly by interior birders that do not see many jaegers, and the different sexes can actually have very different shapes (male Pomarines may be more similar to Parasitics in shape than to female Pomarines). In documentation, it is much better to describe the shape in specific words that all of us can understand.

The primary reason that the re-review of jaeger reports resulted in so many non-accepted Parasitic Jaegers (only five of 22 accepted as Parasitic Jaeger) is that the observers did not adequately describe the bird(s) seen. As explicitly

stated many times in Leukering (2003), most of these reports simply stated that the bird was dark with white wing flashes and variably-projecting central rectrices. I would challenge anyone to determine which species of jaeger was being described by most of these reports, which, of course, are on file and available for review by interested individuals. The reports of the other two species were generally much better and often included photographs and/or more detailed plumage descriptions (seven of 11 accepted Pomarines, three of three accepted Long-tails). I, and others, infer from this that observers felt that Parasitics required less proof as that was the expected species. Parasitic may very well have been more common prior to the 1990s, but the CBRC's point is that there is little definitive evidence to support that contention. Had observers actually written detailed descriptions of the birds, then we would have a much stronger basis of understanding of jaeger occurrence in Colorado in the past.

I wish to stress this point: identification of juvenile jaegers is very difficult! The larger the number of specific plumage features that one can delineate in a report of such a bird (and except for the darkest birds, there are quite a few key separating features), the more likely that the CBRC will be able to understand which species is being described. The real take-home message is that one should never be afraid to let a jaeger go as unidentified, the CBRC is very happy to have any documentation of a jaeger, even one that does not identify the bird specifically.

I appreciate David Silverman's critique of Leukering (2003), as it shows that at least one person has read the report carefully and considered the results of that review in relation to his own substantial experience and knowledge. The importance of the reports produced by the CBRC is not limited to the listing of accepted and non-accepted reports. I also see great opportunity for education in these reports and hope that Colorado's birders learn from them; I know that I certainly know much more about Colorado bird distribution and occurrence from my stint on the CBRC.

#### **Acknowledgments**

I wish to thank Nancy Gobris and Larry Semo for reviewing an earlier draft of this article. I also wish to thank all current and past members of the CBRC for their service to Colorado ornithology. Finally, and most importantly, I wish to express my gratitude to all those birders submitting documentation to the CBRC in the past, present, and future, as it is only through their efforts that sight reports can be considered as a critical part of the historical record of bird occurrence in Colorado.

**NEWS FROM THE FIELD: THE SPRING 2003 REPORT  
(MARCH - MAY)**

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This seasonal report includes more information, particularly pertaining to early/late dates and high/low numbers for many of our common species, than past reports. In Pantle et al. (this issue), Dr. Stephen Martin is paraphrased as saying, "A report of a migratory congregation of 3,000 Chipping Sparrows on the prairie may be more significant than that of one vagrant Black-throated Blue Warbler." We wholeheartedly agree. The editors express their desire for more reports, not just of rare birds, but of anything you think might be of note (see the species accounts below for what we mean). Your sightings, however unimportant you think they are in this world of rarity chasing, may be of great significance. By reading this section, we believe that you already have a keen interest in knowing about Colorado's birds. We welcome your input and reports so that we may continue to provide this unique, and extremely important, resource for future Colorado birders.

Many of the sightings reported below were taken from the Cobirds listserv; however, it is much better if we receive this information directly from you. It is sometimes difficult to accurately assess who the initial observer was, who actually saw the bird(s), precise location, and so on. All of this information is extremely important for the accuracy of the long-term record this section provides. You can send your information to the editors at the following email address: [field\\_news@cfo-link.org](mailto:field_news@cfo-link.org). Thank you.



Now then, to the Spring 2003 News from the Field.

The highlight this season was that there were very few highlights. Several contributors noted how lackluster this spring was compared to previous years. As you peruse the species accounts, particularly the warblers which are always a big hit in spring, note how often we refer to the low number of individuals found this spring. Why was this? We do not know. Discussion this fall on Cobirds, in relation to the unusually high number of rarities being found, included some of the latest information we know about bird migration. That is, current research is investigating the influence large weather patterns (e.g., El Niño) and isobars have on migrant pathways. Jeff Price reported that the next issue of *Birding*, published by the American Birding Association, will contain articles on weather and birds.

And speaking of weather, the Denver area received one of the largest snowstorms in history during the spring season, dumping about three feet of snow in metro Denver and over eight feet in the foothills directly west of Denver; all in the matter of a couple of days. This storm didn't produce the snow in other parts of the state as it did around Denver, so it was, on a statewide scale, only of local significance. However, it may have had a considerable effect on the local nesting Bald Eagles. The Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory monitors the Bald Eagles in the extended Barr Lake region. These nests may have succumbed to the above average snowfall that came with this storm, as only a few days after the storm, observers noted behavior consistent with nest failure and, ultimately, confirmed failure. We do not know for sure if there is a direct correlation, but it is highly suggestive.

**Note 1:** The reports contained herein are largely unchecked, and the authors do not vouch for their authenticity. Underlined species are those for which the Colorado Bird Records Committee requests documentation. The Colorado Field Ornithologists' website (<http://www.cfo-link.org>) has a link to the rare bird Sight Record reporting form that can be submitted electronically; the same form is also printed on the inside cover of this journal's mailer.

**Note 2:** All locations are annotated as to county the **first** time each appears; county names are NOT included with subsequent records, except for locations that are situated within multiple counties where a described sighting for that location may require information on which county the observation occurred.

**Abbreviations:** A&R=Andrews and Righter (1992); BLSP=Barr Lake SP, Adams; CBRC=Colorado Bird Records Committee; CG=Campground; CVCG=Crow Valley Campground, *Weld*; **et al.**=and others (restricted to use

for the finding group of a bird that was not seen subsequently); **FLWE**=Fort Lyon Wildlife Easement, *Bent*; **LCC**=Lamar Community College, *Prowers*; **m.ob.**=many observers (used for birds that were refound, either the same day or on subsequent days, by others); **NG**=National Grassland; **NWR**=National Wildlife Refuge; **Res.**=Reservoir; **SP**=State Park; **SWA**=State Wildlife Area.

### SPECIES ACCOUNTS

**Red-throated Loon:** An adult, basic-plumaged bird was observed by Leatherman at Upper Queens Res., *Kiowa*, on 7 April.

**Common Loon:** A total of 18 Common Loons were reported in the state during the season from seven counties (*Jefferson*, *Kiowa*, *La Plata*, *Larimer*, *Montezuma*, *Pueblo*, and *Yuma*). Two birds were present during the winter at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, and were seen through late March. Migrants began trickling into the state beginning in early April with the highest one-day count being 4 at Pueblo Res. on 9 April (BKP, m.ob.). The last report was on 14 May when a bird was found at Bonny Res. SP, *Yuma* (KMD, JDu).

**Horned Grebe:** Overall numbers and distribution of Horned Grebes appeared lower than usual this past spring with reports from only five counties (*Adams*, *Jefferson*, *La Plata*, *Montezuma*, and *Otero*). The first report for the season was the three observed by Semo at Standley Lake, *Jefferson*, on 10 March. Migrant numbers increased rapidly during the course of the next month. The maximum count reported for the period was 64 at Standley Lake on 1 April (LS). Horned Grebes were last reported on 13 April from *Montezuma* (JBy).

**Eared Grebe:** The first report was of a bird seen in *Larimer* on 23 March (JL).

**Red-necked Grebe:** Quite unusual for the season and location was the bird observed by at Highline Reservoir, *Mesa*, on 13 March (DFi).

**Western Grebe:** Unusual was the bird seen in *Mineral* on 27 April (NP). Possibly the first record for this high-elevation, virtually waterless county.

**Clark's Grebe:** The first report was of two birds seen at Lake Holbrook, *Otero*, on 15 March (BKP, KH). Considered rare to uncommon for the West Slope, individual Clark's Grebes were found during the season on 13 April at Sweitzer Lake SP, *Delta* (JBy, PD), and at Spring Park Res., *Eagle*, on 2 May (JMe).

**American White Pelican:** Early were the three birds observed at BLSP, *Adams*, on 3 March (SSE).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** The first report for the season came from Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, *Jefferson*, on 6 March (EZ).

**Anhinga:** Quite exciting was the report of a female observed flying over BLSP on 3 May (RS). Documentation has been provided to the CBRC and, if accepted, would represent only the 2nd record for the state.

**American Bittern:** Relatively good numbers of this species were observed this past spring, with observations reported from seven locales in five different counties. The first bird was reported on 27 April from *Saguache* (NP). All other sightings were in May from *Bent* (CLa), *Boulder* (TF), *Larimer* (AP, RH), *Pueblo* (RM), and *Weld* (RT, GG).

**Least Bittern:** Though rare in the state, three Least Bitterns were found in Colorado this past spring. The first was at a small pond on Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso*, on 10 May (BKP, JBn). Another was reported from Lower Latham Reservoir, *Weld*, on 14 May (AS). Finally, one or two birds were found at the Fort Lyons SWA marshes, *Bent*, beginning on 17 May (CLa) and continuing through at least 27 May (BKP, m.ob.).

**Great Egret:** Good numbers of Great Egrets were observed in Colorado during the Spring period with a total of 32 birds reported during the period from 11 counties. The first report was from Cherry Creek, *Arapahoe*, on 6 April (BGd). Great Egrets are considered casual for western Colorado so the single birds observed on 29 April, *Delta* (DFi) and the San Luis Valley (county?) on 11 May (JRa) were quite noteworthy. Other counties for which this species was observed this past spring include *Adams* (DFa), *Baca* (JBy, JKr, DSc), *Boulder* (DW), *Douglas* (BSc), *Fremont* (SM), *Huerfano* (BRi), *Larimer* (NK, GM), and *Pueblo* (BSp), with a maximum count of eight at the Barbour Ponds heronry, *Weld*, on 20 April (TJ).

**Snowy Egret:** The first report for the season was at Valco Ponds, *Pueblo*, on 7 April (CLE). This species is considered uncommon in southwestern Colorado so the report of one from Pastorius Res., *La Plata*, on 29 April is interesting (JBy, SA).

**Green Heron:** Beginning on 6 May, Green Herons were observed in May in the following counties: *Douglas*, *El Paso*, *Larimer*, *Moffat*, *Pueblo*, and *Weld*.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** One was seen at Zink's Pond, *La Plata*, on 29 April, which represents an uncommon record for southwestern Colorado.

**Glossy Ibis:** Continuing the recent trend of the inexplicable increase in Glossy Ibis vagrancy, no fewer than six reports were received from Colorado this past spring. The first was a surprising find for the West Slope when one was found and documented east of Hayden, *Routt*, on 28 April (MI). The second was a bird reported from Chatfield Res., *Douglas*, on 10 May (JKr, AS) and another was seen on the same date at Lower Latham (NK). On 11 May, one was seen at Chico Basin Ranch, *Pueblo* (TL, BKP). One bird (which may have been the same bird observed at Lower Latham) was observed over a relatively long period at Beebe Draw, *Weld*, just south of the previous location, between 12 and 23 May (BGe, BBr, LeB). One was seen at Valco Ponds, *Fremont*, on 17 May (BKP, MPe). Lastly, another single bird was observed on 19 May in *Boulder* (TF, CLW, BSc, RT). The CBRC is greatly interested in receiving documentation on all Glossy Ibis sightings in the state.

**White-faced Ibis:** The first report came from Valco Ponds in Canon City, *Fremont*, on 7 April (SM). The maximum count during the period was 88 at Buena Vista, *Chaffee*, on 25 April (BSc, JS).

**Turkey Vulture:** The first reports were of two seen at Nucla, *Montrose*, on 25 March (CD) and from Pueblo, *Pueblo*, on 27 March (RM).

**Snow Goose:** The maximum count for the period was 3120 at Jumbo Res., *Sedgwick*, on 20 March (HK). The latest date for the season was for the two observed at Neenoshe Res., *Kiowa*, on 11 May (LS).

**Ross's Goose:** Considered rare to uncommon on the West Slope (A&R), the count of 70 Ross's Geese present at Confluence Park, *Delta*, between 10 and 14 May was quite interesting (AR, DFi). Another nine were observed on the West Slope at Zink's Pond on 23 March (JBy).

**Trumpeter Swan:** One (age not provided) was reported from Valmont Res., *Boulder*, on 2 March (SSe). Two adults were subsequently observed between 8 and 11 March at Lake Valley, *Boulder* (DW, DFi). It is unknown whether one of these two latter birds was the bird also observed at Valmont Res.

**Tundra Swan:** Three birds (two adults, one juvenile) were present at Lathrop SP, *Huerfano*, on 12 March (JKy, PSS, CS). An adult was observed on 13 March near Fruitgrowers Res., *Delta* (DFi). With apparent declines in the number of Tundra Swan observations in Colorado over the past 10 years and increases in Trumpeter Swan observations, the CBRC requests documentation for all swans in the state in order to provide information on if this possible trend is true.

**Swan Species:** A pair of unidentified swans were observed flying west in Fort Collins, *Larimer*, on 9 March (JL). A second set of two fly-over swans were also seen in Fort Collins on 25 March (NK). Since it may be virtually impossible to identify swans to species when in flight in Colorado, the seasonal authors congratulate the two observers in simply labeling their birds as “swans.” Though the information may not be as useful in determining the status of either species in the state, it nonetheless does not skew the status of either species as well.

**Wood Duck:** Merchant reported a male Wood Duck present from 31 March to 13 April along the Eagle River, *Eagle*, for an unusual area record. Also of interest is that it appeared the Wood Duck was mated with a Mallard.

**Eurasian Wigeon:** The Eurasian Wigeon that wintered at Pueblo City Park, *Pueblo*, stayed into the spring until at least 19 April (BSP).

**Blue-winged Teal:** The first report for the season came from Lake Cheraw, *Otero*, on 23 March (RM).

**Cinnamon Teal:** The first report for the spring season was of two males at Monte Vista NWR, *Rio Grande*, on 7 March (JL).

**Blue-winged Teal X Cinnamon Teal:** A hybrid between the two species was reported from Walden Ponds, *Boulder*, on 17 March (BE).

**Canvasback:** The maximum count for the period was the 600 observed by Hugh Kingery at Jumbo Res. on 20 March.

**Redhead:** The maximum count was 1800 seen at Jumbo Res. on 20 March (HK).

**Ring-necked Duck:** The high count for the period was 400 seen at Jumbo Res. on 20 March (HK). The last report for the season was a female observed on 18 May at Bonny Res. SP (DEy, DAL).

**Greater Scaup:** For the second year in a row, numbers of Greater Scaup reported this spring appeared to be slightly below average. The first birds reported were from a Denver Field Ornithologists' field trip on 1 March at Pueblo. Subsequent scattered eastern Colorado observations came from *Baca* (AS), *Boulder* (BSc, CLW), *Denver* (TJ), *El Paso* (TF), *Jefferson* (RS), *Larimer* (RH, CS), and *Otero* (BKP, KH). More interesting were three birds observed at Confluence Park, 9 March (AR), and the single birds observed at Totten Res.,

*Montezuma*, on 18 March (JBy) and the Hayden area, *Routt* (AS). The highest count from one location was the 16 seen at Marston Res., *Denver*, on 17 March. The last report for the season was of a single bird at Lake Arbor, *Jefferson*, on 28 April (RS).

**Lesser Scaup:** The maximum count for the period was 1200 at Jumbo Res. on 20 March (HK). The last report for the spring season was a bird seen at Thurston Res., *Prowers*, on 11 May (LS).

**Surf Scoter:** Scoters are never abundant in Colorado, but are much more “common,” relatively, in fall than spring. As such, the observation of an adult female at a ranch pond in the Paradox Valley, *Montrose*, between 24 and 28 April was unique for the season and location (NP, CD, JBy, SA). Another Surf Scoter was seen at a Kenosha Pass pond in *Park* on 24 May (KB, BRe).

**White-winged Scoter:** Also quite rare in spring, White-winged Scoters were reported from three different areas of the Front Range during the spring season. The bird that wintered at the Lafayette holding pond, *Boulder*, remained into spring until at least 30 March (JH, NP, LS). Another bird was present at Chatfield Res, *Douglas*, between 1 and 9 March (BSc, m.ob.). A third (or possibly the same bird previously present at Lafayette) was seen at Baseline Res., *Boulder*, between 7 and 24 April (BSc, TF).

**Long-tailed Duck:** The only report in the state was of an alternate-plumaged bird (sex not reported) present at Big Johnson Res., *El Paso*, between 17 and 19 April (JWe, AS).

**Bufflehead:** The last report was of a female in *Fremont* on 10 May (SM).

**Common Goldeneye:** The last report for the plains were single birds seen at Pueblo Res. and Chico Basin Ranch, *Pueblo*, on 10 May (BKP). The latest date reported for the West Slope was a male seen at Confluence Park on 24 April (NP).

**Barrow's Goldeneye:** The furthest southwest location reported during the spring season was of an adult male seen at Dolores Ponds, *Montezuma*, on 10 March (JBy). The furthest east location was the report of an adult male at Cherry Creek Res. on 26 March. Two additional eastern plains birds were reported including a juvenal-plumaged male seen at the Lafayette holding pond between 18 March and 6 April (BSc, CLW, JH) and another bird similar in plumage seen at Walden Ponds, *Boulder*, on 16 April (BE). As usual, most sightings of this species came from the northern mountains, namely in *Grand*

(AS) and *Eagle* (DFi). The highest count for one location was 25+ reported at Spring Park Res. on 10 April (DFi). This location also provided the latest date for the season with a pair being noted on 1 May (DFi).

**Hooded Merganser:** The last report was of two birds seen at Valco Ponds, *Fremont*, on 19 May (BKP, MPe).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Andrews and Righter (1992) state that this species is rare to uncommon in western Colorado. Thus, the report of a male present between 25 March and 3 April at Pastorius Res. is noteworthy (JBy).

**Ruddy Duck:** The first report for the season was of a bird seen at the Lafayette holding pond on 23 March (LS).

**Osprey:** The first report for the season was of two birds seen by Percival at Pueblo Reservoir on 18 March.

**Swallow-tailed Kite:** Quite exciting was the report from Chris Wood of this species flying over E-470 in western *Adams* on 16 May, which, if documented and accepted by the CBRC, would represent the sixth record for the state.

**Mississippi Kite:** The first reports were of two birds seen in Pueblo on 3 May (VAT), which is slightly early for that location and from Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca*, on the same date (JRa). Very unusual was the 300+ kites observed flying north over Lamar, *Prowers*, on 16 May (BBr, LeB). As mentioned by the observers, the birds appeared to be migrating. Known Mississippi Kite populations north of Lamar include scattered, small populations in northeast Colorado. Thus the magnitude of this migrating group begs the question of where were they going? They are not known to breed in states north of Colorado. Very unusual was the observation of one at Palisade, *Mesa*, on 18 May (SB), which should represent the first West Slope record.

**Bald Eagle:** Impressive numbers of staging Bald Eagles were reported from Union Res., *Weld*, in early March. The highest number reported was 107 birds observed by Wheeler on 5 March. On an unfortunate note, based on RMBO observations, it appears the massive spring snowstorm along the Front Range in March may have caused local eagle nests to fail, including the BLSP, Lochbuie, *Weld*, and Horsecreek Res., *Weld*, pairs. (JRe, NGa).

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** A juvenile bird was reported from Valco Ponds, *Pueblo*, on 16 May (MY).

**Broad-winged Hawk:** The first report for spring was two birds observed migrating over Dinosaur Ridge, *Jefferson*, on 13 April (JBn). Typical numbers were seen thereafter during the season along Front Range and plains counties, including *Baca*, *Boulder*, *Crowley*, *El Paso*, *Fremont*, *Larimer*, *Phillips*, *Prowers*, and *Weld*. The highest count was 13 seen at Dinosaur Ridge on 22 April (JBn).

**Swainson's Hawk:** The first report was of a bird seen south of Pueblo on 1 April (BBH).

**Rough-legged Hawk:** Komar gave the last report of this species for the season with the three birds he observed in *Phillips* on 21 April.

**Peregrine Falcon:** Fourteen individuals were recorded away from breeding locales from 3 May through 25 May in *Adams*, *Baca*, *Boulder*, *Crowley*, *El Paso*, *Jefferson*, *Larimer*, *Otero*, *Pueblo*, *Weld*, *Yuma*, and the San Luis Valley.

**White-tailed Ptarmigan:** Ptarmigan were observed in typical habitats during the season at Andrews Lake, *San Juan* (JBy), near Montezuma, *Summit* (BM), the Snowmass Ski Area, *Pitkin* (DFi), and Loveland Pass, *Clear Creek* (NK).

**Black Rail:** The first report was from Fort Lyons SWA on 10 May (DN, FL). On 22 May, Percival reported 22 calling from that area.

**Sandhill Crane:** As is typical for spring migration, only a smattering of Sandhill Cranes were reported across the state between 13 March and 18 May from *Boulder*, *Eagle*, *Fremont*, *Larimer*, *Montrose*, *Weld*, and *Yuma*.

**Black-bellied Plover:** The maximum count for this past Spring was seven at Thurston Reservoir, on 11 May (LS).

**American Golden-Plover:** Only two reports were received for the season, one at Fort Collins on 2 May (DSm) and one at Thurston Reservoir on 4 May (AS).

**Snowy Plover:** The first report for the spring came from Lake Cheraw on 9 April (CLW, m.ob.). Wayward was the Snowy Plover seen at Ramah SWA, *El Paso*, on 31 May. The only other spring report received was of a bird seen in the San Luis Valley (county?) on 11 May (JRa).

**Piping Plover:** The on-going monitoring of this species by Duane Nelson revealed 23 Piping Plover in southeastern Colorado during late spring.



**Mountain Plover:** On the early side, was the first report of this species from *El Paso* on 15 March (SC).

**Black-necked Stilt:** The first report was on 10 April at Lake Cheraw (BKP, RLe). Unusual locations for this species included two at Cherry Creek Res. on 18 April (BGd), one at Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso*, on 27 April (NG), and one again at Cherry Creek Res. on 19 May (BBr, LeB).

**American Avocet:** The first observation came from Colorado City, *Pueblo*, when Silverman found 6 birds on 26 March.

**Willet:** First reported from Sweitzer SRA, *Delta*, on 13 April (JBy, PD). Other West Slope observations included one at Silverthorne, *Summit*, on 23 April (NP), at Paradox, *Montrose*, on 24 April (NP), at Pastorius Res. on 24 April (JBy), at Glade Lake, *Dolores*, on 25 April (NP), and at Spring Park Res. between 28 and 30 April (JMe). The maximum count for the period was 30 at Big Johnson Res. on 3 May (BM).

**Upland Sandpiper:** On the western fringe of its range, two birds were reported from the Pawnee NG, *Weld*, on 30 May (RO).

**Whimbrel:** First noted on 27 April, 23 days later than last year, at Neesopah and Sweetwater Reservoirs, *Kiowa* (PGe). The last report of this species this spring was on 19 May at Valco Ponds, *Fremont* (MPe, BKP). A high count of 30 was reported from a small pond in *Larimer* on 6 May (DSm). Other Whimbrels reported during the season were from *Costilla*, *Crowley*, *Douglas*, *El Paso*, *Fremont*, *Otero*, *Prowers*, *Weld*, and *Yuma*.

**Long-billed Curlew:** First reported from *Bent* on 10 April (BKP, RLe). A high count of 11 was seen at Buena Vista, *Chaffee*, on 24 April (Bsc, JS), a reasonably high count for that area. Infrequently reported from *Boulder*, a Long-billed Curlew was observed at Lagerman Res. on 17 May (BSc).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** Exciting was Duane Nelson's find of two Hudsonian Godwits at Verhoeff's Res., *Bent*, on 22 May.

**Marbled Godwit:** Marbled Godwits were reported in above average numbers this past spring, especially from the immediate Front Range, with reports from at least three *Boulder* locations alone (m.ob.).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** Two were discovered this spring at Adobe Creek Res., *Kiowa*, on 25 May (DN, RO, BKP).

**Dunlin:** Though not on the state review list, Dunlins are considered very uncommon in the state. Most observations occur in fall so the report of three birds from two locations this past spring is noteworthy. The first report was of two birds observed during a snowstorm on the very early date of 18 March from Valmont Res. (CLW, BSc). The other observation reported was of a bird seen at Two Buttes Res., *Baca*, on 3 May (AS).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** Early was the report of a bird from Beebe Draw on 12 April (BGe). One was seen at Pastorius Res. on 26 April (JBy, SA) where the species is considered uncommon.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** A bit early was the bird seen at Upper Queens Res. on 8 May (DN).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** The first report for spring was the two seen at Lake Cheraw on 29 March (BKP, SO).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** This species is rare in spring so the report of no less than three birds on the Eastern Plains is quite interesting. The first report was from Beebe Draw on the somewhat early date (for Colorado) of 31 March (BGe). The second was observed on 9 May from Thurston Res. (BKP, MPe, PGa). The remaining report was of a bird seen at Chico Basin Ranch, *Pueblo*, on 10 May (m.ob.).

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** Eight Short-billed Dowitchers were reported from the state this past spring. The first was from Beebe Draw on 1 May (RT). Four birds were reported from Smith Res., *Costilla*, on 13 May (JBn). Other single birds were reported from Lower Latham Res. on 15 May (BGe), and County Roads 9 and 32 in *Larimer*, between 18 and 21 May (NK, RH). Another was reported on 18 May at Thurston Res. (GW). Though no discussion of the age was provided of the birds reported this past spring, this species is still considered quite rare in the state and reports of birds not in juvenal plumage should still be documented to the CBRC for acceptance to the official state records.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** High counts for the period included 121 seen at Thurston Res. on 11 May (LS) and 175 at Bonny Res. SP on 18 May (DEy, DAL).

**Wilson's Phalarope:** At an unusual location was the bird seen along Forest Road 523 in *Mineral* on 27 April (NP).

**Franklin's Gull:** The first birds for the season were reported on 18 March with

four seen at Crown Hill Lake, *Jefferson* (PP), and single birds observed at Thomas Res. and Prince Lake #2, *Boulder* (CLW, BSc).

**Laughing Gull:** An adult was reported from Chatfield Res., *Douglas*, on 8 May (JKr).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** Good numbers of this species were reported, including West Slope birds from *Eagle* on 14 and 30 April (JMe) and *Delta* on 29 April (DFi).

**Mew Gull:** Two Mew Gulls were reported during the early spring season. The first was an adult at Baseline Res. on 8 March (AB). The second bird, also an apparent adult, was reported from Lower Latham on 21 March (BGe). No documentation for either bird has yet been received by the CBRC.

**Herring Gull:** Herring Gulls are considered rare in southwestern Colorado, so the third-basic plumaged bird observed and documented from Pastorius Res. on 27 April was noteworthy (JBy). Though common during the winter months in many places in Colorado, observations of Herring Gulls after May in the state are quit unusual. Two late lingering Herring Gulls were observed this past May in the state. The first was of a first-basic/first-alternate plumaged bird at Lake Cheraw on 10 May (LS) and another mostly in first-basic on 11 May at Neenoshe Res. (LS).

**Thayer's Gull:** Five reports were received this past spring. These included three Basic I birds at Union Res. on 6 March (BSc), one at Valmont Res. on 7 March (Bsc), and another at Lake Cheraw on 29 March (BKP, LE, SO). Two adults were also reported; one was at Valmont Res. on 20 March (TF) and the other was from Horseshoe Res., *Larimer*, on 25 March (NK).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** As has become the norm along the Front Range, Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen at a number of locations during early spring. The first report was of two adults at Prince Lake #2 on 18 March (BSc, CLW). Soon thereafter on the same day, Schmoker and Wood found a third-alternate plumaged bird at Thomas Res. a location that has become a regular hot-spot for this species in the state. On 20 March, Ted Floyd observed an adult at Valmont Res. It is unknown if this bird is also one of the birds reported earlier from Prince Lake #2. Lastly, a first-year Lesser Black-backed was reported from Boyd Lake, *Larimer*, on 25 March (NK).

**Glaucous-winged Gull:** A first-year bird was seen at Cherry Creek Res. between 29 and 30 March (BBR, GW, BGd).

**Glaucous Gull:** Two were reported during the season. The first was a second-year bird seen at Union Res. on 6 March (BP). The second was a first-year bird at Baseline Res. on 7 March (MPI).

**Caspian Tern:** Colorado only gets a smattering of Caspian Terns each spring. Three birds were reported during this past season. The first was at Dixon Res., *Larimer*, between 3 and 4 April (BBo, NK, BD). Another was at Lake Hasty, *Bent*, on 2 May (BKP, RO, RH). The third was at Cottonwood Hollow, Fort Collins on 23 May (MM).

**Least Tern:** Away from the breeding range in southeastern Colorado, a Least Tern was seen at Bonny Res. SP on 6 May (JBy). One or two were also seen at Lathrop SP on 14 May (BRi).

**Eurasian Collared-Doves:** As expected, the Rocky Mountains would only slow the spread of Eurasian Collared-Doves westward, but not stop it as indicated by observations from three West Slope counties. One was at County Road 220 in *La Plata* on 21 March (CO, JBy, SA). Another, or possibly the same(?) bird was seen at County Road 213 in the same county on 20 April (JBy). The other West Slope reports were from Pieplow who observed a bird at Hotchkiss, *Delta*, on 24 April and one at Dove Creek, *Dolores*, on 26 April. Elsewhere in the state, the species was reported from no fewer than 15 additional counties from established populations in the San Luis Valley and the eastern plains, including *Boulder*, *Cheyenne*, *Crowley*, *El Paso*, *Elbert*, *Fremont*, *Kit Carson*, *Larimer*, *Otero*, *Phillips*, *Pueblo*, *Rio Grande*, *Sedgwick*, *Weld*, and *Yuma*. It is reminded that documentation be submitted to the CBRC for new town and county records of collared-doves so that the spread of this species can be tracked across the state for the historical record.

**White-winged Dove:** As with the previous spring, the spring 2003 influx of White-winged Doves in the state was again impressive. At least 13 White-winged Doves were reported, all but one from the eastern plains or Front Range communities. The two West Slope reports were of a bird seen at Nucla, *Delta*, on 24 April (NP), and another photographed and documented from Browns Park NWR, *Moffat*, which was present between 17 and 21 May (SH). Eastern Colorado reports included one at the Longmont sewage ponds, *Boulder*, on 8 March (AS, NP), up to four at Rocky Ford, Otero (SO, m.ob.), one in Colorado Springs, *El Paso*, on 20 April (DEr), one at the Environmental Learning Center, *Larimer*, on 22 April (AP), another at Estes Park, *Larimer*, on 25 April (GM), another Colorado Springs bird between 30 April and 1 May (NO), one at the Fairmount Cemetery, *Prowers*, on 4 May (JKr, NE), and

another (or the same bird as previous?) at LCC between 17 and 24 May (CLa, JTh, BKP, DAL). This species remains on the state review list and documentation should still be submitted to the CBRC. It is anticipated that with enough submissions, the quota for remaining on the list will be exceeded and the species could be removed from that list.

**Inca Dove:** Two reports of Inca Dove were submitted. The first was of a bird present in Lamar between at least 2 March and 25 May (JTh, DAL). The second was a bird seen along the Homestead Trail in southeastern *Boulder* on 16 April (CLW).

**Greater Roadrunner:** One was seen quite north at Colorado Springs on 19 April (DC).

**Short-eared Owl:** Two reports were received from this past spring. One was reported from Delaney Buttes SWA, *Grand*, on 12 April (AS) and the other was from County Road VV, *Baca*, on 19 April (AS).

**Long-eared Owl:** Long-eared Owls are considered very local breeders in the state (A&R). Two reports were received of birds in May, which may indicate nesting. One was in *Alamosa* on 3 May (RLe, JBy) and the other was seen in *Eagle* on 12 May (JMe).

**Eastern Screech-Owl:** Only two reports were received this past spring, both from traditional locations of Wheat Ridge Greenbelt on 16 March (BSp) and at FLWE, *Bent*, on the same date (DFa), where they appear to be irregular that far west along the Arkansas River drainage.

**Flammulated Owl:** The first report was of a calling bird in Dolores Canyon, *Dolores*, on 25 April (NP).

**Spotted Owl:** One was heard calling from the traditional location in the Wet Mountains, *Pueblo*, on 14 March (BKP, KH).

**Lesser Nighthawk:** One was seen and well photographed at the Neenoshe Res. locust grove, *Kiowa*, on 3 May (BKP, RO, RH, m.ob.).

**Common Nighthawk:** Early was the report of Common Nighthawk from Hooper, *Alamosa*, on 5 May (JMa). Lesser Nighthawks are more likely to occur in Colorado in early May than Common Nighthawks so the Alamosa report is quite interesting.

**Common Poorwill:** Poorwills are infrequently reported from the eastern plains away from the foothills and are considered very rare in that area (A&R). Three birds were observed this past spring in that area including one at FLWE on 2 May (BKP, RO, RH), one at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 4 May (LK), and another near Punkin Center, *Lincoln*, on 9 May (LS).

**White-throated Swift:** The first report for the season was from Castlewood Canyon SP, *Douglas*, on 13 March (KM).

**Black-chinned Hummingbird:** Palisade, *Mesa*, holds the honor of the first reported Black-chinned this past spring when one was seen on 11 April (SB). Slightly north of the species' normal breeding range, reports came from the Green Mountain area, *Jefferson*, on 18 May (KC) and an active nest was discovered at Chatfield SP, *Douglas*, on 20 May (RO, JKr).

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** On the western edge of their range, Red-headed Woodpeckers were seen in May at Falcon, *El Paso* (CLe), Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR, *Adams* (PL), and BLSP (DFa). Ely commented that on a visit to Bonny Res. SP on 18 May that the number of Red-headed Woodpeckers there were "more than I've ever seen."

**Acorn Woodpecker:** Leatherman reported two birds from the traditional haunt at Wildcat Canyon, *La Plata*, on 2 March. An undocumented sighting of one at Cottonwood Canyon (county?) on 9 May (T&KM) was also reported, which would be from an unusual location.

**Lewis's Woodpecker:** Reports from the northern Front Range are infrequent. One was reported this past spring from Coal Creek Canyon, *Jefferson*, on 9 May (PH). Another was seen on 24 May on the Green Valley Ranch Golf Course, *Denver* (DFa).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** Red-bellied Woodpeckers continued the influx first noted this past winter as numerous birds were reported from the eastern plains, a couple of which were near the foothills. These included the one wintering bird from along Sand Creek, *Adams*, which stayed to at least 8 March (AS, NP) and one at Fort Collins on 31 March (fide JL). At other more eastern locales, Red-bellieds were seen at Tamarack Ranch SWA, *Logan* (HK, UK), Bonny Res. SP (AS, DE, DAL), and LCC (NK).

**Red-naped Sapsucker:** The only eastern plains report from the spring was one at Fairmount Cemetery in Lamar on 26 March (DAL).

**Hairy Woodpecker:** Eastern plains reports from the spring included one at Fort Collins on 23 March (race not provided) and an “eastern” race individual at Fort Lyons SWA on 10 May (LS).

**Eastern Wood-Pewee:** One was reported singing at Bonny Res. SP on 6 May (JBy).

**Alder Flycatcher:** One was seen and heard at LCC on 24 May (DAL).

**Least Flycatcher:** Many reporters commented on the relative abundance of Least Flycatchers during the spring migration with observations from many plains and Front Range locations.

**Hammond’s Flycatcher:** Hammond’s Flycatchers are rare to uncommon migrants across the eastern plains of Colorado in fall. Their occurrence is thought to be even of lesser magnitudes in spring. Thus, the Hammond’s Flycatcher observed by Hopper at CVCG, *Weld*, on 18 May is noteworthy.

**Gray Flycatcher:** Out-of-range observations this past spring included one at Van’s Grove, *Bent*, on 24 April (DN), one along the Bear Creek Trail, *Jefferson*, on 28 April (MH), one at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson*, on 10 May (AS), and another at Skunk Canyon, *Boulder*, on 13 May (BSc).

**Eastern Phoebe:** Good numbers of Eastern Phoebes were reported this past spring. Locations at which this species were found include: one at John Martin Res., *Bent*, on 16 March (DFa), one below Two Buttes Res. on 29 March (DAL), two at an active nest along Trinchera Creek, *Las Animas*, on 4 April (DAL), another pair at a nest near Kim, *Las Animas*, on the same date (DAL), at least three at Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca/Las Animas*, on 4 April (DAL), one in Colorado Springs on 6 April (DEI), one at Estes Park on 8 April (SRa), one building a nest near Tobe, *Las Animas*, on 12 April, one at Higbee, *Otero*, on 13 April (RO, JKr), a pair (breeding?) along the Purgatoire River near Trinidad, *Las Animas*, on 14 April (BD), one at the Environmental Learning Center in Fort Collins on 29 April (AP), one along Burnt Mill Road, *Pueblo*, on 8 May (BKP), one at Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR, *Adams*, on 11 May (PL), and at Bonny Res. SP on 18 May (DEy, DAL).

**Black Phoebe:** Eleven Black Phoebes were reported during the spring. McElmo Canyon in *Montezuma* hosted a pair that was present at least between 13 and 16 April (JP, M&DH). One was along the Purgatoire River near Trinidad, *Las Animas*, on 14 April (BD). As many as five were seen along the Dolores River, *Montrose*, on 24 April (NP). A pair was at Slick Rock, *San Miguel*, on 25

April (NP). A single bird was seen at Canon City on 27 April (SM). Lastly, one bird was seen along Burnt Mill Road, *Pueblo*, on 31 May (RO).

**Vermilion Flycatcher:** Two Vermilion Flycatchers were reported this past spring, a male that stayed at Hooper, *Alamosa*, between 1 and 11 May (JM, m.ob.), and a female at Carrizo Picnic Area, *Baca*, on 25 May (TR).

**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** Birds north of breeding locations were found on 10 May at Chatfield Res., *Douglas* (AS), one at South Table Mesa, *Jefferson*, on 14 May (MF), and another at Lyons, *Boulder*, on 18 May (BSc, TF).

**Western Kingbird:** The first noted Western Kingbird was one in *Powers* on 20 April (NK).

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** Spring 2003 was relatively good for Scissor-tailed Flycatchers in the state with reports from five locations. The first observation was of a single bird seen on 24 April at Van's Grove, *Bent* (DN). A second lone bird was in *Pueblo* on 25 April (RM). Quite interesting and exciting was that the two birds present in 2002 at a radio tower just south of Lamar returned for a second year when they were found on 3 May and present through the remainder of the period (BKP, m.ob.). Credit is also due to the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher that returned for the fifth year to attempt to breed near the intersection of Woodmen and Black Forest Roads in *El Paso*, where it was found on 6 May (MS). Though the bird was mated in the past, its mate had succumbed a few years ago and the remaining bird has failed to attract another mate. Finally, another single bird was seen this spring on 18 May at Bonny Res. SP (DEy, DAL).

**Loggerhead Shrike:** Faulkner reported the maximum one-day count for the season when he found 20 plus birds by driving around *Adams*.

**Northern Shrike:** The winter of 2002-2003 was not especially productive for finding Northern Shrikes in the state. Early Spring migration though yielded a bit more rewards with the reports from five locations in March. The first was on 1 March with a bird seen at Roxborough SP, *Douglas* (BSc). On 3 March, one was seen in Fort Collins (JL). Another bird was observed between 7 and 8 March at Walden Ponds/Sawhill Ponds, *Boulder* (BSp, AS, NP). Two additional shrikes at Hale Ponds, *Yuma* (AS) and at *Pueblo Res.* on 15 March (GW, GG) for the latest reported date this Spring.

**White-eyed Vireo:** Interesting is the fact that no observations of this species were reported this past spring. This is quite ironic considering that the CBRC



had removed the species from the main statewide review list the previous year because the average number of accepted observations exceeded 3 per year, the minimum criteria for removing the species from the review list.

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** Four reports were received. The first was from Colorado City on 2 May (RM). The second was a bird noted from Lake Henry, *Crowley*, on 3 May (JKr, NEI, DSc, SSt). On 9 May, one was seen along the Goodnight River Trail, *Pueblo* (RM). The last report was of a bird observed at LCC on 12 May (JTh, MJ).

**Bell's Vireo:** Birds were reported from their traditional northeastern Colorado breeding haunts in late May at Bonny Res. SP (DEy, DAL) and Tamarack Ranch SWA (PGe).

**Gray Vireo:** North and east of its normal range, a Gray Vireo was observed at Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso*, on 9 May (JBn, m.ob.) for a rare eastern plains record.

**Cassin's Vireo:** This species is much rarer in spring than fall in Colorado. Four reports were received this spring. One was in Wray, *Yuma*, on 26 April (BPG, MJI). Another was a bird seen on 27 April at LCC (TL). One was at Ramah Res. on 4 May (MPe). The fourth bird was seen along the Poudre River in Fort Collins on 9 May (DAL).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** Though this species is rare anytime in Colorado, they are considered very rare in spring. Three reports were received of this species this past spring, one at LCC on 5 May (JBy), one reported as singing at Bonny Res. SP on 14 May (KMD, JDu), and another at Bonny Res. SP between 18 and 19 May (DEy, DAL).

**Steller's Jay:** Of note for the eastern plains, one was at Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca/Las Animas*, on 25 April (BGi, MI). Less out-of-range reports came from the Front Range edge and included leftover birds from winter at Littleton, *Jefferson* between 1 March and 13 April (TJ), one at Fort Collins on 10 March (JL), two at Fountain Creek Regional Park, *El Paso*, on 16 March (TF), one at Grandview Cemetery in Fort Collins on 12 April (DAL), and one at Rock Canyon, *Pueblo*, on 15 April (BKP, m.ob.).

**Western Scrub-Jay:** Two were noted away from the Front Range foothills; one was in Sugar City, *Crowley*, on 15 March (BKP, KH), one was at Fairmount Cemetery, in Lamar, between 28 March and 6 April (DAL), another was at LCC between 28 March and 6 April (DAL), one was below Two Buttes Res. on 29

March (DAL), one was in Broomfield, *Broomfield*, on 14 March (NP) and one was seen near Greeley, *Weld*, on 16 March (NEn).

**Pinyon Jay:** Eastern plains reports came from Lamar where up to eight birds were seen between 3 and 4 March (JTh, DAL).

**American Crow:** Andrews et al. (2002) reported that in the Barr Lake area there was “no recent confirmation of breeding,” making the two active nests in Brighton this spring of some interest (TL).

**Chihuahuan Raven:** Becoming regular, Chihuahuan Ravens were again reported from the Canon City and Florence areas, *Fremont*, during the spring season (DP, MPe).

**Purple Martin:** Very rare for the Front Range, one was seen near Niwot, *Boulder*, on 4 May (CLW).

**Cave Swallow:** On the heels of last year’s first report ever for the state, two Cave Swallows were reported from this past spring. The first report was of a bird at Cottonwood Canyon, *Las Animas*, on 25 May (CLW). The second, which was photographed, was seen in Avondale, *Pueblo*, on 31 May (VAT). The CBRC has not reviewed any of the Cave Swallow documentation yet and the species acceptance on the state list is still pending.

**Mountain Chickadee:** A winter lingerer on the eastern plains persisted through the winter into early spring near Greeley until at least 16 March (NEn).

**Bushtit:** Unusual for the eastern plains and the Front Range away from the immediate foothills, Bushtits were reported from Centennial, *Arapahoe*, on 1 March (CBl) and at Littleton, from 6 April through the end of the period, where they may have bred (TJ).

**Brown Creeper:** Late in migration on the eastern plains was the bird seen at CVCG on 17 May (DEy, DAL).

**Pygmy Nuthatch:** The only report away from the lower mountains was of four birds being seen in Littleton, between 1 March and 12 April (TJ).

**Carolina Wren:** Two reports were submitted, one of a bird observed at Centennial on 25 April (CBl), and the other in Denver, *Denver*, on 27 April (BRi). Because of the close proximity of the two birds and the gap in reported dates, it is unknown if these reports represent one or two birds. Additional

information is welcomed that would provide any additional dates for these birds.

**Winter Wren:** Only one was reported this spring, a bird seen at Wheat Ridge Greenbelt on 6 March (EZ).

**Bewick's Wren:** Out of place was the bird reported from Pinyon Hills, *Conejos*, on 14 May (RLe, JBN) for a rare San Luis Valley record.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** The species was last seen on the eastern plains on 4 May at Ramah SWA (MPe).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** The first report was of a bird seen at the Longmont sewage ponds, *Boulder*, on 8 March (AS, NP).

**Eastern Bluebird:** Away from more normal far eastern locales, observations included the sightings of three in Boulder County Open Space on 6 March (TF), two at Hatchett Park, *Pueblo*, on 23 March (BBH), three at Lake Beckwith, in Colorado City on the same date (DSi), one at Lake Holbrook on 9 April (VAT), one at CVCG on 13 April (DAL), and a male south of Chatfield SP, *Douglas*, on 10 May (BBr, LeB). The furthest west report was of a bird seen along the Colorado River in *Mesa*, on 24 April (JBa).

**Mountain Bluebird:** The first migrant reported was from Pueblo on 1 March (Denver Field Ornithologists' field trip). Eastern plains reports included two birds at Bonny Res. SP on 15 March (AS) and at CVCG on 17 May, which was also late for that area (DEy DAL).

**Veery:** The first report was of a bird seen below Two Buttes Res. on 6 May (CLW). Additional migrants reported away included birds seen in *Adams, Baca, Boulder, El Paso, Larimer, Prowers, Pueblo, Teller, Washington, Weld,* and *Yuma* (m.ob.).

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** Gray-cheeked Thrushes were reported from five locations this spring. The first was seen below Two Buttes Res, between 5 and 6 May (JBy, NEI). Also on 6 May, one or two were seen at the Lamar High School grove (DAL). The third report was from Flagler SWA, *Kit Carson*, on 7 May (JBy). CVCG hosted at least two birds, if not more, between 9 May and 18 May (JKr, AS, DAL, RH). Another was reported from Boulder Creek, *Boulder*, on 12 May (AS). The CBRC reminds observers that this species remains on the main statewide review list and that all observations of this species should be documented for potential acceptance to the formal state list.

**Wood Thrush:** Always exciting in Colorado, a Wood Thrush was seen below Two Buttes Res., between 3 and 4 May (BKP, RO, RH, m.ob.).

**Varied Thrush:** The bird reported through the winter at Pueblo City Park remained into spring until at least 15 March (GW, GG). A second bird that wintered at Fort Collins was last seen on 1 April (CBe).

**Gray Catbird:** The bird that overwintered at Rocky Ford SWA, *Otero*, was last seen on 15 March (BKP, KH). The first migrant was reported from LCC on 28 March (DAL).

**Brown Thrasher:** Slightly west of its normal range, single birds were reported from Cherry Creek SP on 14 May (BBr, LeB) and two or three were observed at Lyons, *Boulder*, on 18 May (BSc, TF).

**Bendire's Thrasher:** Intriguing is the report of a Bendire's Thrasher from Monte Vista NWR, *Rio Grande*, on 10 May (JRa).

**Sprague's Pipit:** Patten reported and documented his observation of a Sprague's Pipit from G Road, *Baca*, on 27 April.

**Blue-winged Warbler:** Only one Blue-winged Warbler was reported from this past spring, a bird seen at Lory SP *Larimer*, on 8 May (KE).

**Golden-winged Warbler:** Only one bird was reported this spring, that of a male seen along Boulder Creek, *Boulder*, on 11 May (LaB).

**Tennessee Warbler:** Typical numbers of Tennessee Warblers were reported in late spring across the eastern plains from the following counties: *Boulder*, *Kiowa*, *Prowers*, *Pueblo*, *Weld*, and *Yuma*. Unexpected was the report of one near Parshall, *Grand*, on 26 May (TJ).

**Nashville Warbler:** Only six were reported from four counties. It was first noted on 2 May from the Fort Lyons area, *Bent* (RO). Another was seen the next day at the Neenoshe Res. locust grove (RO, RH). On the same day, one was also seen below Two Buttes Res. (AS) and another was observed at Lake Holbrook (JKr, m.ob.). On 6 May, one was found at LCC (CLW). Finally, another Nashville Warbler was seen at Neenoshe Res. locust grove on 9 May (MPe, PGa).

**Virginia's Warbler:** Four eastern plains observations were reported. One was

at Lake Henry, between 2 and 4 May (BKP, RO, RH). Another was seen at the Fairmount Cemetery, *Prowers*, on 4 May (AS). One was found on 11 May at BLSP (DFa). Finally, a bird was reported from Prewitt Res., *Washington*, on 14 May (AS).

**Lucy's Warbler:** The most exciting warbler find was undoubtedly the male Lucy's Warbler found and photographed by Mymm Ackley and Rich Miller at Valco Ponds, *Pueblo*, on 13 April, which would become the fifth record for the state. Fortunately for some, but not for others, the bird only stayed into 15 April which allowed viewing by a few other lucky observers.

**Northern Parula:** Fair numbers (18) of parulas were reported this past spring with the first observation coming from Franktown, *Douglas*, on 22 April (HK, UK). The other 13 observations all came from other Front Range and eastern plains counties, including *Bent*, *Boulder*, *Crowley*, *El Paso*, *Jefferson*, *Larimer*, *Prowers*, *Pueblo*, *Teller*, and *Washington*.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** The first bird of the spring was seen at the Lamar High School grove on 3 May (BKP, RO, RH, m.ob.). A first-year male was at Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso*, between 9 and 10 May (JBn, m.ob.). Two were reported from *Boulder*, one along Boulder Creek on 14 May, another at E.G. Fine Park between 16 and 19 May (TF, m.ob.). A male and female were seen at Brush SWA, *Morgan*, on 14 May (LS, RH) and one stayed at that location until at least 16 May (JKr, RO, GW). A bird was reported from Prewitt Res. on 14 May (AS). One was at Lake Hasty CG (BBr, LeB), and a female was at Chico Basin Ranch, *Pueblo*, on 16 May (L&DE, BKP). The furthest west report for the species came from the San Luis Valley (county?) on 18 May (JRa). Back on the eastern plains, a female was seen on 21 May at Haxtun City Park, *Phillips* (RLi), which may constitute a first county record, and one was seen at CVCG on 24 May (JRo). The last report came from Lake Estes, *Larimer*, on 30 May when a singing male was found (CLW, BKP).

**Magnolia Warbler:** Only three Magnolias were seen this spring. The first was a male at the University of Colorado's recreation center in *Boulder* between 10 and 11 May (PGe, m.ob.). The second, also a male, was at CVCG between 15 and 16 May (JBn, BGe). The other bird was a female seen at Holyoke, *Phillips*, on 21 May (RLi).

**Black-and-White Warbler:** Only eight reports of this species were submitted. The first was seen at the Lamar High School grove between 3 and 4 May (BKP, m.ob.). The last report was seen along the Bobolink Trail, *Boulder*, on 21 May (JTU). The other reports are from *Bent*, *El Paso*, *Larimer*, *Prowers*, and *Weld*.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** Four were seen in spring. The first was at the Lamar High School grove on 3 May (BKP, RH). One was at the Lamar High School grove between 8 and 9 May (DN, JBy, BKP). Another was found at Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso*, on 12 May (JBn). The last report was of a bird seen at Estes Park on 20 May (JWr, GM).

**Black-throated Gray Warbler:** The first report was from Black Canyon National Park, *Montrose*, on 24 April (NP). Good numbers were reported from northern Front Range and eastern plains locations. One was at Dinosaur Ridge, between 27 and 28 April (JBn). Another was on Flagstaff Mountain, *Boulder*, on 3 May (JTU). A bird was seen at Dixon Res. on 4 May (GL). One was at Fort Collins on 6 May (JDu). On the same date, one was at the Fountain Creek Nature Center, *El Paso* (BGo). Another was at Lake Estes on 13 May (SW) and another was at Douly Draw, *Boulder*, between 14 and 19 May (PGe, m.ob.). Away from the Front Range, Malueg observed one in Hooper on 1 May.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** Seven reports for this species were submitted, all from the Front Range foothills and eastern plains. The first reports came on 3 May from Golden, *Jefferson*, (PH) and from below Two Buttes Res. (AS). A female was seen at LCC on 9 May (BKP) and a male was observed at the same location on the 10<sup>th</sup> (LS). Hopper found one at Brush SWA on 14 May. On 16 May, one was at CVCG (DEy, DAL). The last report was from Hale Ponds, *Yuma*, on 21 May (JBn).

**Townsend's Warbler:** This species is much less common in spring than in fall in Colorado. Thus the six reports received is a good number for the season. The first was at Fort Collins on 29 April (CBe). One was below Two Buttes Res. on 4 May (JKr, NEI, DSc). Another was at LCC on 9 May (BKP). One was seen on 10 May at Chico Basin Ranch, *Pueblo* (BKP, MP, BM). On the 11<sup>th</sup>, one was found at Wheat Ridge Greenbelt (IS, TB). The last report came from Fountain Creek Nature Center, where one was seen on 13 May (MPe).

**Grace's Warbler:** The bird reported from Lake Estes on 12 May (GM) represents a very rare record for that far north in the state.

**Prairie Warbler:** This species was reported from three locations this spring. The first was at Van's Grove on 2 May (BKP, RO, RH). Another was seen along Greenhorn Creek, near Colorado City, between 4 and 9 May (DSi, BKP). Beatty reported two or three Prairie Warblers at Bonny Res. SP on 6 May, which is probably the highest one-day count for this species in the state.

**Palm Warbler (Western):** Spring 2003 was exceptional for finding Palm Warblers in Colorado with no fewer than 14 reports. The first was from BLSP on 1 May (SP, DFa). One was at Hooper on 2 May (JMa). On 3 May, one was below Two Buttes Res. (BKP, RO, RH). Two were present between 5 and 6 May at the Environmental Learning Center in Fort Collins (AP). Also on 6 May, one was at the Lamar High School grove (CLW). On the 7<sup>th</sup>, a Palm Warbler was found at Neenoshe Res. (JBy). The big push came a few days later when on 10 May, four different birds were reported from the eastern plains, including singles at Van's Grove (RS, LS), FLWE (DN, FL), McKay Lake in western Adams (NP), and at Chatfield Res., Jefferson (AS). To round it up, three more Palm Warblers were seen the following day, 11 May, with singles along the Poudre River Trail in Fort Collins (RH), at the Environmental Learning Center in Fort Collins (DAL) - which may have been a hold-over from the birds reported from that location five days previous - and at Colorado Springs, El Paso (BBo).

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** Three were seen this spring, which is a pretty good number for Colorado. The first was seen on 10 May when a male was downstream of Lake Hasty CG (RS) and another male was at Chico Basin Ranch, Pueblo (BKP, BM, MP) - which stayed through 14 May. The other sighting, also a male, was from Colorado Springs on 17 May (NO). Hopefully all three reports will be documented to the CBRC.

**Blackpoll Warbler:** Ten were seen this year, all in eastern Colorado. The first was seen on 9 May at Prewitt Res., (JKr). Other sightings were from typical locations along the Front Range and plains.

**American Redstart:** Redstarts were noted in about average numbers starting on 5 May at Lamar (LS) and through the end of the period at breeding locations. Sightings all came from expected locations in Adams (1), Baca (3), Boulder (3), Crowley (1), Jefferson (6), Larimer (2), Prowers (3), Pueblo (6), Washington (3), and Weld (5+).

**Worm-eating Warbler:** Three reports of this species came in for this past spring. Early was the bird present at BLSP, between 22 and 24 April (DFa, BGd, GG). One was at LCC on 2 May (BKP, RO, RH). The last bird was seen at Hugo SWA, El Paso, on 4 May (MPe).

**Swainson's Warbler:** Considering there are only seven entire records for the state, the report of TWO Swainson's Warblers during the same season is quite astounding. The first was seen between 10 and 13 May at Brush SWA (BBy). The second was reported from Fountain Creek Nature Center on 13 May



(MPe). Hopefully documentation for these two important finds will be submitted to the CBRC.

**Ovenbird:** This species was first recorded on 2 May with a bird seen at Lake Hasty CG (BKP, RO, RH). The last observation from non-breeding locales came from Estes Park with a 20 May sighting (JWr, GM). Overall numbers from this past spring seem lower than typical.

**Northern Waterthrush:** Seemingly lower numbers of this species came through Colorado this past spring than in recent others. Reports came from the following counties between 3 and 23 May: *Baca, Boulder, Broomfield, Costilla, Douglas, El Paso, Fremont, Kit Carson, La Plata, Larimer, Mesa, Prowers,* and *Pueblo*.

**Kentucky Warbler:** Two were seen this spring. The first was at Fountain Creek Nature Center, between 15 and 17 May (CL, BM, ABu, MPe). The second was found on 20 May at LCC (DN). We hope that the observers will provide documentation to the CBRC.

**Hooded Warbler:** This species was widespread this spring with reports from seven counties, of nine or ten birds. The first was seen at Pueblo City Park on 26 April (MA). A long-staying male was present at Estes Park between 28 April and 7 May (SRo). A male was seen on 3 May in Littleton (TJ). A female was found at the Lamar High School grove on 6 May (CLW). On 7 May, Percival found another female along the Canon City Riverwalk. A female was also seen at Last Chance, *Washington*, on 9 May (LS, JKr). A female was also observed at that location on 16 May (JKr, RO, GW) and it may have been the previously reported bird. A female was found at Watson Lake, *Larimer*, on 9 May (KK). Also on 9 May, another female was reported from LCC (BKP). On 12 May, a male was seen at the Broomfield Nature Center, *Broomfield* (DEy).

**Summer Tanager:** Good numbers of Summer Tanagers were reported during the season from the eastern plains with 12 or 13 birds being observed. The first was a male at BLSP on 29 April (JBn, GR, DFa, TL). On 3 May, a male was at Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso* (NGo). A male was at Valco Ponds, *Pueblo*, on 5 May (MY). One was seen at Republican SWA, *Yuma*, on 6 May (JBy). On 8 May, a male was seen at the Air Force Academy, *El Paso* (GC). Beason reported a Summer Tanager (sex not reported) from Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso*, on 9 May. It is unknown whether that may have been the same bird seen by Gobris at that location six days prior. A second-year male was seen on 9 May as well at Lake Hasty CG (GW, BKP). On 10 May, a female was found at Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso* (BKP, JBn). Also on the same day, a female was



observed at Hatchett Ranch, *Pueblo* (BBH). On 11 May, two adult males were seen at Fort Lyons SWA (TJ). On 14 May, a male was at Bonny Res. SP (HK). On 16 May, a female was discovered by Silverman at Lathrop SP. A second-year male was seen at LCC on 17 May (CLa). A male was seen near Lyons, *Boulder*, on 18 May (TF, BSc, CLW, RT). One was seen at Hooper on 18 May (JMa). A first-year male was along the Dolores River, *Montezuma*, on 25 May (CG, TW, AR). Lastly, a male was at Fort Collins on 26 May (JG).

**Scarlet Tanager:** Always exciting to see in Colorado, three Scarlet Tanagers (all males) were reported this past spring. The first was on 14 May from Canon City (SM). The second was seen at E.G. Fine Park on 16 May (TF). The third report was of one at Flagler SWA on 22 May (HK).

**Western Tanager:** The high count for the season was 75+ birds observed in *Boulder* on 19 May (TF, CLW, BSc, RT).

**Eastern Towhee:** The wintering bird from John Martin Res. remained into spring until at least 26 April (DFa, PGe).

**Rufous-crowned Sparrow:** On the northwestern fringe of its range in Colorado, Rufous-crowned Sparrows were again seen at Canon City in late March (SM).

**Field Sparrow:** West of usual, one was reported from CVCG on 3 May (BGe). Another was observed at the Environmental Learning Center in Fort Collins on 8 May (AP).

**Black-throated Sparrow:** The most unusual reports were the one bird seen in the San Luis Valley (county?) on 18 May (JRa) and the four birds observed in *Fremont* on 19 May (BKP, MPe).

**Savannah Sparrow:** The first spring report came from Mt. Ouray SWA, *Chaffee*, where a bird was found on 13 March (RM).

**LeConte's Sparrow:** The wintering birds at Fort Lyons SWA marshes lingered until at least 20 May (DN).

**Swamp Sparrow:** The latest reports included one at LCC on 26 April (MJ) and one at BLSP on 5 May (JBn).

**White-throated Sparrow:** The bird present at the Loveland Ski Area, *Clear Creek*, during the past season, survived the winter and was last seen on 22 April (NK). Other reports for this species came from more hospitable climes in

*Adams, Douglas, Jefferson, Larimer, and Prowers.* The last report was of a bird seen at Dixon Res. on 4 May (JDe).

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** Average numbers were reported again this past season, beginning from 26 April through 24 May. County totals: *Bent* (3), *Boulder* (1), *Douglas* (1), *Elbert* (1), *Fremont* (2), *Las Animas* (1), *Larimer* (2), *Prowers* (3), *Pueblo* (1), *Teller* (1), *Washington* (2), and *Weld* (2).

**Northern Cardinal:** Seven cardinals were reported during the spring season. These included a male near Greeley on 16 March (NEN), one in Greeley on 19 March (fide JL), a male at Tamarack Ranch SWA (HK, UK), a male at LCC through a large portion of the period (m.ob.), and three at Bonny Res. SP on 18 May (DEy, DAL).

**Indigo Bunting:** The first report for the season was the bird seen at Salida, *Chaffee*, an unusual location, on 29 April (SY).

**Painted Bunting:** A male and female were seen at Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca/Las Animas*, between 21 and 26 May (MA, m.ob.).

**Bobolink:** The first birds reported were from the traditional breeding site along Cherry Valley Road, *Boulder*, on 11 May (LAG). Colorado City hosted a bird on 19 May (DSi).

**Eastern Meadowlark:** Michael Patten documented a bird seen at the Campo Lesser Prairie-Chicken lek in southeastern *Baca* between 27 and 28 April.

**Great-tailed Grackle:** One was found at Estes Park on 9 May for an unusual mountain record (GM).

**Rusty Blackbird:** Two reports were provided for the season. Four birds were observed along Boulder Creek, *Boulder*, on 1 March (SS) and a lone female was also observed along Boulder Creek on 23 March (ABe).

**Baltimore Oriole:** Besides birds being reported from *Yuma*, where they nest, unusual locations the species was reported from included a male at Lake Hasty CG between 2 and 9 May (BKP, m.ob.), a male at Neenoshe Res. between 7 and 9 May (JBy, BKP), and another male at LCC on 8 May (JBy).

**Scott's Oriole:** What may be the highest one-day count of this species for the state, Levad reported seeing 13 in *Mesa* on 16 May.

**Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch:** The latest report for the season was a bird seen at Estes Park on 9 May (SRa).

**Black-crowned Rosy-Finch:** As with the last species, the last report of this species also came from Estes Park on 9 May (SRa).

**Purple Finch:** One was reported from Lake Hasty CG on 10 May (RS) and we hope documentation will be submitted to the CBRC for such a nice find.

**Lesser Goldfinch:** The most unusual location noted this spring was a female at BLSP on 2 May (DFa).

### Contributing Observers

Mymm Ackley, Susan Allerton, Jocie Baker (JB), Jason Beason (JBn), James Beatty (JBy), Alan Bell (ABe), Chuck Bell (CBe), Ken Behrens, Carol Blackard (CBl), Bob Bonestroo (BBo), Bruce Bosley (BBy), Steve Bouricius (SB), Bob Brown (BBr), Laura Brown (LaB), LeAnn Brown (LeB), Tamie Bulow, Alan Burns (ABu), David Chartier, Kenneth Chavez, Susan Craig, Gretchen Cutts, Justin Dee (JDe), Peter Derven, Coen Dexter, Beth Dillon, Kathy Mihm Dunning (KMD), Jeff Dunning (JDu), Ken Ecton, Lisa Edwards, David Elwonger (DEr), Dave Ely (DEy), Lee and Donna Emmons (L&DE), Norma Erickson (NEn), Norm Erthal (NEl), Bob Evans, Doug Faulkner (DFa), Dick Filby (DFi), Ted Floyd, Mike Foster, Peter Gaede (PGa), Nelda Gamble (NGa), Linda Andes-Georges (LAG), Peter Gent (PGe), Brian Gibbons (BPG), Joan Glabach, Nancy Gobris (NGo), Gregg Goodrich, Bob Goycoolea (BGo), Bryan Guarente (BGe), Beverlee Guild (BGd), Carolyn Gunn, B.B. Hahn (BBH), Suzanne Halvorson, Paula Hansley, Jack Harlan, Mike Henwood, Mona and Dean Hill (M&DH), Ken Hollinga, Rachel Hopper, Marshall J. Iliff (MJI), Michelle Johnson, Tina Jones, Kenn Kaufmann, Joey Kellner (JKr), Jonathon Kelly (JKy), Loch Kilpatrick, Urling Kingery, Nick Komar, Joe LaFleur, Paul Langendorfer, Charlie Lawrence (CLa), David Leatherman (DAL), Cici Lee (CLe), Tony Leukering, Rich Levad (RLe), Roger Linfield (RLi), Greg Luger, Forrest Luke, Marcia Maeda, Josiah Malueg (JMa), Gary Mathews, Bill Maynard, Tom and Kay McConnell (T&KM), Jack Merchant (JMe), Karen Metz, Rich Miller, SeEtta Moss, Duane Nelson, Nina Ogilvie, Ric Olson, Stan Oswald, Catherine Ortega, Arvind Panjabi, David Pantle, Michael Patten, Mark Peterson (MPe), Brandon K. Percival (BKP), Nathan Pieplow, Peter Plage, Myron Plooster (MPI), Steve Pollock, Bill Prather, John Prather, Tom Rahn, Scott Rashid (SRa), John Rawinski (JRa), Jennie Rectenwald (JRe), Bill Reddinger (BRe), Bob Righter (BRi), Andrea Robinsong, Scott Roederer (SRO), Joe Roller (JRo), Gene Rutherford, Ira Sanders, Pearle Sandstrom-Smith (PSS), Randy Siebert, Bill Schmoker (BSc), Jim Schmoker, Dick Schottler (DSc),

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Laughing Gull (right) shown here with a Franklin's Gull for a nice comparison of these similarly-looking species. This one-day-wonder visited Chatfield Reservoir on 8 May 2003. Photo by Joey Kellner.

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