No. 24 SUMMER, 1975

C.F.O. Journal

Official publication of the Colorado Field Ornithologists

formerly the Colorado Field Ornithologist

Spotted Owl

Rocky Mountain Arsenal
June, 1975

Photo/

R. L. Fairbanks

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The C.F.O. Journal, formerly the Colorado Field Ornithologist, is a journal devoted to the field study of birds in Colorado. Articles and notes of scientific or general interest, and reports of unusual observations are solicited. Send manuscripts, with photos and drawings, to Hugh Kingery, Editor, 869 Milwaukee Street, Denver, Colorado 80206.

C.F.O. JOURNAL STAFF:

Editor	Hugh Kingery	Typists	Karen Miller
Assistant Editor	Bob Andrews		Vi Hubka

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EDITORIAL PAGE

The Journal

As you see, we've changed the size format of the Journal. The printer tells us it will reduce our costs by a small but significant factor. The Treasurer tells us we had better reduce our costs - significantly. The Board of Directors affirms.

This issue will probably be the second of three issues dated 1975, but unless we have unusual luck, we won't have the third one in the mail before December 31, if that soon.

When C.F.O.'s membership grows, we can afford more and better journals each year; you can help by recruiting more members....

People

Elected to the Board of Directors, as President-Elect, at the May meeting, was Ed Curry, of Colorado Springs. We saw his wife, Martha, taking minutes at the September meeting . . . .Approved as a member of the C.F.O. Records Committee was Bob Andrews, of Denver.

The Board approv ed a project, in September, which Dr. Walter Graul suggested to us. Graul, Non-game Specialist with the state Division of Wildlife, urged C.F.O. to take charge of collecting state-wide data on distribution of all bird species occurring in the state. A mammoth project, we will ask all of you to contribute information and records - this project is one which will contribute a large amount to Colorado ornithology.

Field Trips

The Directors have set up a 1976 Field Trip Schedule. More information on the individual trips will come later, but note these dates:

March 20	Monte Vista (featuring cranes)	Dave Griffiths, leader
April 10	Gunnison (featuring Sage Grouse)	Sidney Hyde, leader
May 15-16	Boulder (featuring migration)	Bruce Webb, leader
May 29-31	C.F.O. Convention	
June 12-13	Grand Junction	David Galinat, leader
July 17	Greenhorn Mtns., Pueblo	Dave Griffiths, leader

OFFICIAL LIST - BIRDS OF COLORADO

July 1, 1975

Compiled by the Colorado Field Ornithologists' Official Records Committee

Prepared by Jack Reddall, Chairman

The Official State List of the Birds of Colorado contains 424 full species and has been arranged in accordance with the Check-list of North American Birds as prepared by a Committee of the American Ornithologists' Union - Fifth Edition (1957) including the changes embraced by the 32nd Supplement as published in The Auk (90:2, 411-419).

Of the total of 424 species, 386 are currently represented by museum specimens, 23 are included on the basis of recognizable photographs and the remaining 15 have been accepted on the basis of sight reports. On the list below, all species are represented by specimens except those identified as (photo) or (sight). It should be noted, however, that the Official Records Committee is still reviewing the status of three of the species on this list. Based upon additional research, any or all of these could be found to be invalid and subsequently dropped from the list.

Those species (90) occurring casually or accidentally in Colorado are preceded by a double asterisk **. Observations of any of these birds should be reported, along with complete documentation, to the CFO Official Records Committee in care of the Chairman, Mr. Jack Reddall - 4450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110.

- - -

LOONS
- Common Loon
- Arctic Loon
- ** Red-throated Loon

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- Horned Grebe
- Eared Grebe
- Western Grebe
- Pied-billed Grebe

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- ** Least Tern
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- Western Flycatcher
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- Black-billed Magpie
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Yellow Warbler
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Black-throated Gray Warbler
Townsend's Warbler
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** Blackburnian Warbler
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Baird's Sparrow
** Le Conte's Sparrow
** Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Vesper Sparrow
Lark Sparrow
Rufous-crowned Sparrow
Cassin's Sparrow
Black-throated Sparrow
Sage Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco
Gray-headed Junco
Tree Sparrow
Chipping Sparrow
Clay-colored Sparrow
Brewer's Sparrow
Field Sparrow
Harris' Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow
** Golden-crowned Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
Fox Sparrow
Lincoln's Sparrow
Swamp Sparrow
Song Sparrow
McCown's Longspur
Lapland Longspur
** Smith's Longspur (Sight)
Chestnut-collared Longspur
Snow Bunting

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER - SECOND COLORADO NEST

by

Bruce Bosley

Throughout June (first on June 3) I observed a male Chestnut-sided Warbler singing along the McClintock Nature Trail in Bluebell Canyon west of Boulder. On July 7, at 8:00 a.m., Cathy Cowles and I first observed male and female Chestnut-sided Warblers. We suspected, investigated, and found the female on the nest. I took photographs over about a half-hour period with a Canon camera, using a 50-mm lens. The female remained on the nest as I approached; she then removed about six feet and feigned injury. The nest held one young bird which even then appeared to be a cowbird; no other eggs.

July 11, 8:00 p.m. Cathy and I again investigated and found the female feeding the young cowbird, now half again as large as the parent warbler. The young bird perched two inches from the nest on a branch before Cathy descended to make closer observation. (We suspect that the bird fledged that day). As she came closer to the bird, it flopped through the shrubbery a few feet away. No eggs or other young were seen in the nest or near it.

July 12, 7:00 a.m. The young cowbird was found several yards from the nest when I arrived, and led me many more before I could take the pictures I wanted and left. I collected the nest, found two Chestnut-sided Warbler eggs on the ground beneath it - one broken. We have deposited these with the Denver Museum of Natural History.

During the whole period of observation, the female warbler was remarkably easy to approach, probably trying to protect the young cowbird.

The nest was found about fifty yards up the McClintock Nature Trail from the stone bridge on the road, on a WNW-facing slope in a steep ravine. The habitat, mostly brush, consisted of Choke Cherry (Prunus virginiana), Ninebark (Physocarpus monogynus), Skunkbush (Rhus trilobata), Mountain Mahogany (Cercocarpus montanus), Box Elder (Acer negundo), and Mountain-ash (Sorbus copulina). Near the nest a Ponderosa Pine (Pinus ponderosa) and in the ravine, a few Narrowleaf Cottonwoods (Populus angustifolia) grew.

The nest was located 8 inches from the top of a three-foot tall Nonebark, 12 feet from a dry streambed and 6 feet from a 14 inch diameter Ponderosa Pine.

Nest data: Outside, 3 inch diameter, 3 inch depth; inside, 1½ inch diameter, 1 inch depth. Cup-like shape; made of mainly bark (physocarpus) and an inner lining of grass stems and long stiff hairs. The warbler egg was creamy gray with brown blotches.

BOOBOOS I HAVE KNOWN AND LOVED: SOME PITFALLS OF AVIAN FIELD IDENTIFICATION

by Paul DeBenedictis

Most of you realize that the old Griscom dictum that there is no such thing as an unmistakable bird remains true despite the newer guides for field identification. How many of you have not seen at least one gross misidentification made somewhere, sometime within the last year? I want to summarize some of the general problems that lead to field misidentifications of birds.

What causes the misidentification? The answer to this is reasonable complex, but I will suggest three major classes of reasons.

There are a number of psychological reasons. Fortunately, in my experience one such reason that we can usually ignore is outright dishonesty. Birders seem to take birding sufficiently seriously that they rarely just plain lie about what they see. The problem instead is that the observer has convinced himself that he saw something that really wasn't there.

The more insidious problem is associated with prestige. Any birder soon learns that finding "rare birds," or nests, or "latest departure dates" or making "high counts" is likely to bring comments and approval from one's associates. Few of us shy away from approval, and anyone who finds such praise important is likely to interpret a difficult observation in a way that maximizes the chance that such praise will be offered. Anyone who does this really believes his report, in the sense that he is convinced that he has made whatever observations are required to cinch the identification.

Expectations play a great role in identifications. Two years ago Fritz Scheider and I blundered out of a marsh onto an open flat, and I, upon glimpsing a large dark bird on the mud, announced, "There's a crow." Thereupon, the Glossy Ibis got up and flew around us as if to make sure I would never call it that again. In upstate New York, I expect a largish black bird feeding on the ground will be a crow. Obviously, when the bird is not so cooperative, expectations could easily lead to the wrong identification.

A last psychological problem is essentially a data-storage problem. Most large birding groups have at least one member who just never seems to keep straight the criteria used to separate species, even after repeated exposure to a species and those with which it might be confused. All of us are confused by some birds, but some of us find all birds confusing.

This introduces the second major class of reasons for making misidentifications, which I will call informational reasons. The most common problem arises when the observer misconceives the features essential to a correct identification. When I began birding in California, I assumed, from the figures in my field guide, that the light brown birds I saw skulking about in brushy areas were House Wrens and that the darker brown ones were Wrentits. After I finally saw an honest-to-goodness House Wren it became clear that I had been separating light and dark

Wrentits into the two species. Only when I had seen both species did the misconception vanish.

A much more subtle case is that in which no one really knows what are the criteria for a correct identification. Although Thayer's Gull is perhaps foremost in this category, hawks as a group must rank rather high, and I expect that most of us will learn a lot from the following article. Indeed, we should perhaps expect that there really are a few species that can't be identified in the field.

The last major class of reasons for misidentifications may be called data-processing errors. They are problems associated with the limits of the human central nervous system and associated sensory receptors.

Much like computers, a human's data-processing ability can be saturated by a sudden influx of information. The bird that goes zipping by may keep you so busy just tracking it that you never get to see what it looks like.

Birds become quite professional at placing themselves in spots where they are difficult to see. After all, their lives frequently depend on that ability. It becomes awfully difficult to see any detail on the bird that keeps behind the branch, under the leaves, in the dark, because your eyes can't see through things.

Data-processing ability may vary considerably from person to person. The range of visual acuity among observers is considerable. Have you ever stopped to ask how such differences must affect what one can see even when the bird is close?

I might mention one other quirk of my own vision. For a long time I was near-sighted in one eye and far-sighted in the other, and also without glasses - quite content to use one eye for close up and the other for far away. As a result my depth perception is rotten. I have an awful time deciding how large birds are. Depth perception involves other cues, such as image overlaps and relative position, and every one of you has been exposed to optical illusions that take advantage of just these cues. The ability accurately to determine the range and size of an object is also limited by our sensory equipment.

Fortunately I am not color blind. But color vision is influenced by the ability to discriminate between light of different wave-lengths and intensities. We associate three variables - hue, saturation and brightness - with color sensation. Hue is related to, but not the same as, the dominant wave length of the light we see. Saturation is related to the purity, or range of wave lengths we see; and brightness is related to the intensity, or luminance of the light we see. I say "related," because what you perceive is not these physical variables, as we measure them, but the relative values of these variables as processed by your central nervous system. We are incapable of absolute perception. For this reason colors can change dramatically on a bird as both the incident and the background lighting vary, an observation we should have made many times ourselves.

Finally, I should remind you that all three major classes of reasons for misidentifications are themselves interrelated. Psychological reasons are made possible because of imperfections in the

information we possess about birds, and by the limits of our ability to perceive the world about us. Likewise, what we do perceive is sometimes determined more by our mental state than our abilities.

What can we do about this? Unfortunately, the answer is essentially nothing. Even specimens and photographs may be repeatedly misidentified, so there seems little hope that sight records will ever be above error. I don't see any realistic ways to prevent psychological errors, or greatly to expand human sensory abilities. However, the information we possess can be reviewed, corrected, and enlarged by study and discussion, like the following article.

(Editor's Note - The preceding and following articles come from the Proceedings of the North American Hawk Migration Conference of 1974, conducted by the Haek Migration Association of North America. We thought the introductory article and the identification information would interest those who, like the Editor, have troubles with hawk identification.

The following article we have divided into two parts; the section published in this issue covers vultures and accipiters; next issue we will publish the balance of the panel discussion, on buteos, eagles, and falcons.

The Hawk Migration Association was organized at the conference to advance the knowledge of hawk migration across the continent; to provide - through standard reporting forms and procedures - a bank of data on hawk migration for the use of ornithologists, but professional and amateur; and to establish rational baselines and future monitoring of bird-of-prey populations, both for its own sake and as an indicator of the health of the enviroment.

Membership is $5 a year, and should be sent to Dorothy W. Crumb, Membership Secretary, 3983 Gates Road North, Jamesville, New York 13078).

STICKY PROBLEMS OF HAWK IDENTIFICATION: A PANEL DISCUSSION

Dean Amadon of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, co-author with Leslie Brown of a recent major work on birds of prey - Eagles, Hawks, and Falcons of the World, chaired a panel discussion of the more difficult problems faced by hawkwatchers trying to identify the passing birds. The panelists were:

David Evans, a hawk-bander at Hawk Ridge in Duluth, Minnesota;

Richard Fyfe of the Canadian Wildlife Service in Alberta, one of Canada's leading experts on raptors;

Franklin Haas of Riverside, Pennsylvania, a photographer of hawks and one of Hawk Mountain's volunteer count-takers;

Donald S. Heintzelman, former curator of ornithology at the New Jersey State Museum, author of Autumn Hawk Flights and other books on hawk-watching and hawkwatches in the eastern United States, organizer of the Bake Oven Knob lookout in Pennsylvania, and a resident of Allentown; and

Dr. Fritz Scheider of Syracuse, New York, a regular observer at Derby Hill on Lake Ontario.

The first rule in the identification of hawks, the panelists agreed, is Don't Be Afraid to Admit You Can't Identify the Bird.

A number of the hawkwatchers present would recall a recent remark by the Sierra Club's Robert Hughes. Hughes noted during a weekly count summary at Hawk Mountain that the sanctuary's totals of "unidentifieds" were going up, and he added that the better we get at the business of counting migrating hawks, the more of those "unidents" or "unids" we will mark on the record sheets. The temptation is strong to identify a distant falcon as a peregrine; or a large, dark, buteo shape as a Golden Eagle; or a distant accipiter as a Goshawk or Cooper's Hawk. This is sometimes referred to as the "rare bird syndrome." Like the desire to give a name to every bird one sees, the rare bird syndrome springs from the competitive spirit, and it often produces thoroughly unscientific results - in reports to ornithological journals, on Christmas counts, and at hawk lookouts.

This account will begin with a discussion of the basics and then will take up each of the birds of prey discussed. Those discussions will include summaries of standard field-guide descriptions followed by the comments of panelists. The material was checked and to some extent edited before publication by the panelists and by Dean Amadon, Paul DeBenedictis, Alex Nagy, and Chandler S. Robbins. A few major additions they offered are included here in brackets.

It should be noted that since only a very few of the people who attended the conference came from west of Duluth or south of Virginia, the emphasis in the sticky-problems session was on migratory species seen regularly or occasionally in eastern and middle North America, above the deep South. Some North American species - the kites, the Black Hawk, and the Gray Hawk, as examples - were not mentioned at all, and others got scant attention.

The Basics

Vultures have long, very broad, rounded wings, and featherless heads.

Accipiters' wings are broad, rounded, and short, compared to other hawks, and their tails are relatively long. Characteristically, they fly in a manner identifiable miles off - the well-known "flap, flap, flap, sail, flap, flap, flap, sail."

Harriers have long wings, faintly triangular in shape but nonetheless rounded at the tips; the wings are carried up-tilted into a shallow V in soaring flight. The tail is long, and at its base, on the rump, the Harrier always wears a badge - a conspicuous white patch.

Buteos have long, broad, round-tipped wings and rather short tails. They often migrate using a combination of soaring up on a thermal and gliding down to the next thermal.

Eagles are bigger, heftier versions of the buteo shape.

Ospreys are pale beneath; soaring (usually) and gliding (always) they hold their wings in a crooked position. Their light underwings are strikingly marked with black, with a heavy black patch at each wrist.

Falcons have pointed wings and longish tails. On migration they generally pump their wings much more than they glide.

But having said all that, you haven't, in fact, said very much. As Fritz Scheider said, "One of the things that has happened in the various field guides is that people have concentrated so much on the basic group shape and then on pattern thereafter. But they have neglected the fact that each species really has a unique shape itself."

It is perhaps relatively easy, with a little experience, to tell different species apart when they look the way the field guides say they ought to look, and you see them in perfect light, with good binoculars, at close range. But it is just as easy, when circumstances are less than ideal - particularly with distant birds - to confuse a circling redshoulder with a Harrier, for example, or with a soaring accipiter; a marsh hawk with a large falcon; a soarirg Osprey against the sun with a soaring redtail; a head-on Turkey Vulture with a Golden Eagle; a broadwing gliding past, alone, at eye-level, with a Cooper's Hawk or a sharpshin. Every experienced hawkwatcher has seen such misidentifications even by people who supposedly "know better." It is the less than ideal presentations by the birds of prey, in less than ideal light, in widely varying conditions of wind and weather, that makes identifications sometimes very sticky problems indeed.

There are tricks to apply in solving these problems. One is the probability test: in this place, at this time of year, at this time of day, what is that bird likely to be?

(Editor's Note: I recall a January D.F.O. field trip led by our experienced falconer on which I anticipated learning much about difficult hawk identifications. To my dismay he identified everything distant, and anything lacking definitive marks, Rough-legged Hawks. His theory was that most winter hawks are Rough-legs).

Another is the behavior of various species at the particular lookout. Several of the panelists made this point.

FYFE: Most of the birds that we have in Alberta in migration are not the beautiful soaring birds that you people down here describe and for that I envy you. Rather we have birds that are just starting the migration, flitting from one piece of cover to the next, crossing open spaces of maybe only a mile in extent.

SCHEIDER: A long time ago, Gordon Meade mentioned to me on North Lookout at Hawk Mountain that he didn't know why they do it, but red-shoulders pass to the right and redtails to the left. And you count for the next two hours, and, by George, the gentleman's right. There's something about the way these birds handle themselves at that particular point that they do tend - not every bird, of course - to do that.

Not only the reaction of the birds at the particular lookout must be taken into account: so must the reaction of the hawkwatchers. Don Heintzelman stated the problem well: "When you go from one lookout to another," he said, "for some reason - maybe just for the first few birds or so - you really sort of get faked out. I don't know what it is - if it's some psychological think, or what - but I've noticed that I've had difficulty occasionally, too, on moving to a completely different lookout. You just have to get oriented to that geographic spot for some reason. It doesn't quite make sense, but it does seem to occur."

There are a number of other tricks to bring to bear on the problems of identification. We'll get to those now. But it is important to remember that all the tricks in the world cannot overcome every identification problem. If you're not sure, say so. Mark down an unidentified hawk.

The Vultures

TURKEY VULTURE

Field-guide summary: Six-foot wing-span. All dark. In soaring flight, wings tilted up in shallow V: bi-colored effect on underside of wings, with primaries and secondaries considerably paler than wing-linings along leading edge. Tail quite long, much longer than tucked-back legs in flight. Small head bare of feathers, with skin red in adults, dark gray in immatures.

HAAS: The Turkey Vulture - when he flies with a dihedral - rocks. It's the only bird that rocks when it soars, and so you can tell one at a very great distance. If he has a dihedral, and all of a sudden he starts rocking back and forth, that's a Turkey Vulture.

(DEBENEDICTIS: Note: Zone-tailed Hawk is very similar in behavior.)

(UNIDENTIFIED), from the floor: What about the marsh hawk? It rocks.

HAAS: A marsh hawk has a very irregular flight. It does a lot of flapping, a lot of this and that. It doesn't just soar and rock. It is always doing something else. It flies with a dihedral, yes; but it doesn't do what a Turkey Vulture does.

SCHEIDER: I think if you have these birds riding updrafts you've got a good situation - that the Turkey Vulture is the rocking bird. If they're fighting crosswinds - particularly long-winged, light birds like roughlegs or Harriers - they will rock, too. I think it may be a question of what type of wind they're using. There's no question: you can stand up there on Derby Hill and get a Harrier in front of you, and a roughleg, and a Turkey Vulture, and all three of them are rocking away, but they're all fighting crosswinds. You're dealing at Hawk Mountain, I believe, basically with updrafts, and that's a different situation; I think this is part of knowing the local geography...

A point that's helpful on the immature Turkey Vulture, which has a sort of dark gray head: you get passionate reports of its being a Black Vulture, but it obviously isn't on the basis of the style of flight. And even as an immature bird, the Turkey Vulture has the contrasting color of the wing linings and flight feathers, which is much less noticeable in the Black Vulture.

BLACK VULTURE
Field-guide summary: From below, dark, with white patches in outermost six primaries of wings. Five-foot wingspan. Wings held flat when bird soars, which it does much less than Turkey Vulture; flaps frequently, and wingbeat described as labored. Tail very short, tucked-up legs and feet trailing about as far back as the tip of the tail, or a bit beyond. Featherless head black in both adults and immatures.

THOMAS FINUCANE, from the floor: When you see Black Vultures flying in groups, they're flying side by side. That's altogether different from the Turkey Vultures, and from all the other soaring birds.

The Accipiters

(Because of the frequent confusion in distinguishing between accipiters, the comments of the panelists and others on all the accipiters appear in one block, below).

GOSHAWK
Field-guide summary: Heavy, powerful hawk, bigger than a crow, with long, rounded (sometimes almost square-ended) tail. Adult has blue-gray back, tail broadly barred with black. Immature is brown, much lighter below than above, with brown tail broadly barred with black. Key field marks in adult: size (sometimes), finely grayish barred underparts, very dark cap combined with obvious, bold white line over

eye; often prominent white under-tail coverts (fluffy crissum). Immature: size (sometimes), noticeable white line over eye that extends to the back of the crown, prominent white under-tail coverts (sometimes).

COOPER'S HAWK
Field-guide summary: About crow-sized, but varies. Long, very noticeably rounded tail, even when tail is closed. In adult plumage, has blue-gray cap and back, very thin white stripe over eye, tail broadly barred in black, white underparts heavily barred with cinnamon. Immature is brown, much lighter below than above, with brown tail broadly barred with black. Key field marks: size (sometimes) and rounded tail.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK
Field-guide summary: Smaller than crow; varies. Long tail, square-tipped or notched. In adult plumage, black blue-gray, with tail broadly barred with black, white underparts barred with cinnamon. Immature is brown, much lighter below than above, with brown tail broadly barred in black. Key field marks: size (sometimes), square-tipped or notched tail.

FYFE: Something that is pretty straightforward is the difference in the type of flight - the heavier appearance and relatively slower flight of the Cooper's compared to the sharpie, and somewhat the same between the Goshawk and the Cooper's. But where we have greatest difficulty is in distinguishing large female sharpies from small male Cooper's, and the same with the large female Cooper's and the small male gos. This is particularly true in the immature plumages.

HEINTZELMAN: In many instances we rely just as much on behavior patterns as we do on shape and color. So that, for example - as Heinz Meng pointed out in his Ph.D. thesis - there are very definite differences in the flight styles of the three accipiters. The Goshawk has a somewhat slower wingbeat than the Cooper's, and the sharpshin has the most rapid wingbeat of all.

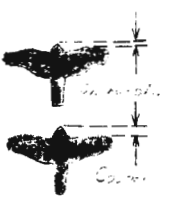
SCHEIDER: There is a notation in a recent birding journal about how to separate immature Cooper's from immature Goshawks, using the white fluff feathers of the crissum - whether they're prominent (which makes the bird a Goshawk) or not. And my comment is, this depends entirely on what the birds are doing and how they handle themselves in the local geography. There's no question about this at Derby Hill. You can see hundreds of accipiters on a good flight day, but the question of whether one has got a fluffed crissum or not is simply academic; there just aren't any crissa worth looking at...

To my way of thinking, of the three accipiters, the Goshawk is perhaps the most distinct. It has the distince heft. This is a big, heavy, powerful bird. And one of the things that I find useful, although not absolute, is that if you measure the depth of the wing from the leading edge to the trailing edge at the body, and compare that to the length of the tail - from the trailing edge of the wing at the body to the tip - the tail length on a Goshawk is slightly less than one-and-a-half times the wing depth. In Cooper's it seems to be at least one-and-a-half and a little longer. Now, these are spring birds, and what I don't know is, do fall birds approximate these tail lengths? Is this a function of winter wear?

(Evidently no one else in the room had noted this difference with such precision. So Scheider's question was not answered specifically. But the speakers in general seemed to feel that the tail-length differences were evident and important in fall accipiters, too. And Dean Amadon commented later that he did not think there was much winter wear).

HAAS: This is one thing I've just noticed recently, because 1973 was the first year I've been able to get any decent slides of Cooper's Hawks. But in comparing them to the Goshawk and sharpshin slides, the Cooper's Hawk definitely stands out with the much longer tail - in proportion - to the other two birds.

Another thing about the Cooper's Hawk is that it has a larger head than a sharpshin. The head sticks out much farther in advance of the wings. Many people say that even when the bird is perched, the head looks larger, compared to a sharpshin.



SCHEIDER: Another comment about Cooper's Hawks as they move by Derby: all the accipiters are trying to stay on the land and not be blown out over the lake. And they are pushed to the shore by the south wind, so they're moving across the wind. Now a gos doesn't seem to have any problem; he just bombs through, he just steadily plows. The Cooper's seems to require a lot of ruddering, and they'll fly with what I call "the cuckoo tail" - the tail will shift back and forth. Often the sharpies are very light coming over, and you'll see a lot of kiting about. Of course, if they're low, then they'll keep right on moving. (At Derby Hill in spring, the stronger the south wind, the closer to the ground the accipiters will fly).

The Cooper's, I think, is the sticky one. At a distance, coming head-on, they can look very definitely like a gos. Overhead is when they're nice, because you can see the tail shape and the tail proportion.

MAURICE BROUN, from the floor: There is one important diagnostic feature of the Cooper's. In very many instances, if you see the Cooper's at a good angle, in the right light, you won't fail to see the white lower

flanks, and you've got your bird.

And there's one more thing, as regards the flight of the Cooper's. Its flight is more sustained, it's bolder, than the flight of the sharpshin.

I must confess that at a distance, if the conditions are not perfect, I can't always discriminate between a Cooper's and a Goshawk. A Goshawk you really should be able to tell, but you take a big female Cooper's, and if you don't see the white lower flanks, well, you may have trouble.

HEINTZELMAN: I definitely agree about the difficulty in telling apart small immature male Goshawks and large female Cooper's, sometimes. An example happened at Bake Oven Knob, where I photographed a bird in several positions under not particularly favorable light conditions. The bird was relatively close, but it was a very cloudy day. I was absolutely convinced that this bird was an immature Goshawk - until I developed and printed the negatives, really examined them critically, and noticed some of the patterns and plumage of the bird. It was obviously a Cooper's Hawk.

FYFE: The weight, the body, the characteristic of the heavy flight seems to be the best characteristic that I know of for identifying the Goshawk. The bird seems to have a heavy wingbeat, which is very distinctive when you see a lot of them. Surprisingly, where we have trouble in Alberta is simply that many of the reports I get are confusing the Goshawk and the Gyrfalcon. A Goshawk in a situation where the wings are swept back, could be a Gyrfalcon with its wings fairly open, in a sense. They both have the long tail and the heavy body and the heavy movement. So, bearing in mind the way these birds migrate in Alberta, I usually try to find out the habitat where the birds were observed, particularly when people report gyrs to me. If they tell me that the bird went barreling into a clump of trees, I'm pretty sure of what if was; whereas gyrs tend to stay in the open, will perch in the open, Goshawks will tend to go to trees.

In my experience, the Cooper's and the sharpie in our part of the world tend to stay in the bushes, in the clumps, more than the Goshawk. They tend to be a little more secretive.

People have the mistaken idea so often that the Goshawks always have a glide-flap, glide-flap pattern of flight. If you've ever seen a Goshawk hunting, when it means business, it doesn't necessarily flap at all, or conversely it may use strong, steady flapping flight that is almost identical to the Gyrfalcon's.

WILL RUSSELL, from the floor: One of the things that wasn't mentioned, and it is clearest, I think, in the southwestern representatives of the Cooper's Hawk, is that the Cooper's cap is noticeably darker than the rest of the head, and this certainly doesn't exist in sharpshins, in my experience. It really is a fairly good mark in adult birds.

(SCHEIDER commented later that cap darkness may in eastern Cooper's depend on the sex of the individual bird).

HEINTZELMAN: I just want to comment a little bit more about the tails of sharpshins. There can be three variations in the tip of the tail: essentially square, slightly rounded, or slightly notched.

And for a bird to be a Cooper's Hawk, it must have an extremely rounded tail - unless part of the tail is broken off, or otherwise damaged. Normally, it must be extremely rounded.

(EVANS: Male Goshawks - easily confused with female Cooper's - often have tails that are considerably rounded. Also, female sharpshins' tails are never notched, sometimes square, and more often rounded. I don't consider the rounded tail to be a good field mark, especially in distinguishing female Cooper's from male Goshawks).

MICHAEL HARWOOD, from the floor: Both broadwings and redshoulders are frequently misidentified at lookouts as accipiters.

HAAS: Right. One of the big mistakes is that people look in the field guides and see the accipiters with nice, closed, long tails, and they'll see the buteos with tails fanned out. So when the buteos go into their glide position and shut their tails they get called accipiters.

(Editor's Note - Buteos, Eagles, and Falcons follow in the next issue).

GENERAL NOTES

SCOTT'S ORIOLE - FIRST COLORADO RECORD

The Scott's Oriole, has this spring been reported near Denver as follows: (1) sub-adult male found at Red Rocks Park May 1, 1975 by Joyce and John Cooper and seen at the same locality at least through May 3 by many other observers; (2) male observed near Waterton May 3, 1975 on Denver Field Ornithologists' field trip led by Hugh Kingery (Lark Bunting, v.10, no.9, 1975); and (3) male observed May 5, 1975 three miles north of Golden by Marie and George Shier (oral communication). These localities are strung out at approximately equal intervals along 23 miles of the eastern foothills of the Rocky Mountains; probably two and possible three different individual birds were represented - remarkable facts of the species have never previously been reported from Colorado's Eastern Slope. Details of the Red Rocks Park occurrence will be summarized in the following paragraphs.

While driving through the Park about 9:00 a.m. M.D.T., May 1, my wife and I noticed warblers feeding in a cottonwood tree by the roadside at an elevation of 6200 feet. Examination with binoculars revealed Yellow-rumped, Virginia's, and Orange-crowned Warblers, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet and also a yellow-and black bird that was distinctly larger and less active than the others and was feeding leisurely on catkins near the top of the tree about fifty feet from the ground. We studied this bird for fully half an hour through 10x50 binoculars and 25x60 telescope at distances as little as seventy feet. Conditions for observation were almost ideal as the tree had not yet leafed out fully and there was a bright sun at our backs. The bird remained in the treetop throughout and was still there when we left.

The following resume of details observed shows, I think, many features of a fully adult male Scott's Oriole and some features of the immature male. The bird was about the size of a Bullock's Oriole and had dark eyes and a dark, uniformly tapered bill a little more than half as long as the head. The entire head, throat, chest, and upper back were black with a brownish hue. The back showed obscure greenish streaks presumed to be a remnant of the immature plumage. The crown and nape also showed some yellowish green when viewed from the rear and when the feathers were ruffled. The folded wings were brownish black except for two narrow white wing bars. The black color is like the adult male but the wing bars are like the immature, the upper bar in the adult being a broad wedge and largely yellow (a feature which is visible even when the wings are folded). The upper surface of the tail was also brownish black as in the adult but no Redstart-like patches of yellow could be seen in it. As these highly distinctive patches are imperceptible when the tail is folded and the bird was not cooperative enough to fan it out for us, we could not tell whether they were absent, or present but concealed.

(The latter was evidently the case as Robert Andrews told me that the next morning he saw the bird in flight and saw the tail patches). The rest of the bird's plumage - that is its rump, upper tail coverts, under surface of tail, and legs were greenish yellow. Based on all the data at hand, I think that the bird was a sub-adult male Scott's Oriole.

Although neither Joyce nor I claim to be experts on the Scott's Oriole, we both have seen the bird many times in southern Arizona and a few times in southwestern Texas. As far as I know, all other birders who saw the Red Rocks bird, including such experienced observers as Robert Andrews and Van Remsen, agree with the Scott's Oriole identification.

-John R. Cooper-

SCOTT'S ORIOLE - SECOND COLORADO RECORD

A yellow and black oriole flew into a tree immediately in front of the D.F.O. field trip moving downstream from the Waterton bridge (Waterton/Kassler, Jefferson County). By the color it had to be a Scott's Oriole. We thereupon spent a leisurely half hour studying the bird, noting all field marks to differentiate it from all other orioles.

A robin-sized bird, oriole shape, with the typical long, pointed oriole bill, the bird had a black head, or hood actually. The hood came down to cover the upper chest, and met in a ragged line with the bright lemon yellow of the lower chest, breast, belly, undertail coverts, and basal half of the tail. It had the black hood, back, and wings, with one white wing bar. At the base of the wings, the black wings, black back, and black hood formed a wedge of yellow. The tail was black on top, with narrow yellow edges on the upper, basal half. The bottom of the tail, yellow on its basal half, black on the outer half. The yellow on the under tail lapped over the side and top of the tail to form the narrow yellow bands on the basal half of the upper side. The yellow on top of the tail was not nearly as conspicuous as Robbins shows in Birds of North America; it was closer to Peterson's drawings in Birds of Mexico, or perhaps even less noticeable.

The oriole stayed in the same tree for the half hour our necks could watch it, feeding on the catkins at the top of the tree, pirouetting around them and showing all its field marks - except that it managed to keep the top of the tail concealed from view most of the time. I think that it was not as much concealed as it was not as visible as we expected from the field guides.

-H.E.K.-

PRAIRIE WARBLER - FIRST STATE RECORD

After a morning spent peering at dozens of Yellow-rumped and Virginia's Warblers, May 10, 1975, a yellow-breasted warbler delighted my eyes. With black streaks on the side, no white wing patches or white face markings, Paul Julian and I tabbed it a Prairie Warbler.

We observed the bird in the small cottonwoods downstream from the bridge at Waterton (Kassler) in Jefferson County for about ten minutes and noted: olive back and cap; two black lines on the face and a black cheek patch below them; yellow face, throat, breast, belly and under-tail coverts; white underside of tail, faint wing bars, not at all conspicuous. It was close to the nearby Virginia's in size, smaller than the Yellow-rumpeds. We looked for reddish streaks on the back, but finally decided we could not see them.

The bird fed vigorously in a 20-foot cottonwood tree, pumping its tail, almost contracting it. After we had noted all the marks, another warbler chased it and the bird darted from the tree and disappeared. About fifteen minutes later, Paul found it again about 300 yards downstream. We noted the field marks again, and some other observers saw it (Reed Kelley, Boots Ferguson, Allen Stokes). Again another warbler chased it from the tree and it again disappeared. John and Joanna Booser found it a third time in the same vicinity, but no one could locate it again.

-H.E.K.-

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER - FIRST COLORADO SPECIMEN

On Saturday, May 31, 1975, we found a dead male Blackburnian Warbler in our back yard in Green Mountain, Lakewood, Colorado. The ground was still wet from the snowstorm of May 27-29. The bird was lying next to the house on the west side, where it may have sought shelter from the snow storm. It had bright orange on the throat, yellow eye markings, black stripes on its side, and white wing bars. Mr. W.C. Royall confirmed our identification, and we turned the bird over to the Denver Museum of Natural History for its collection.

Since learning that a specimen had never been taken of this bird in Colorado, we are delighted to have been of some help in locating and preserving him.

-John and Dolores Kenning-

GREAT EGRET NESTING

(Editor's Note - As far as we know, this reports the first known nesting of the Great Egret in Colorado).

Since 1972, I have been observing and photographing Great Blue Herons in a heronry on Boulder Creek, east of Boulder. My first observations of the Great Egrets were during the 1972 nesting season. Three adults were present, and three young birds fledged that year. In following

years when I've been able to count the, there have been three adults and three young. The egrets arrive at the heronry shortly after the Great Blue Herons, and borrow nesting material from nearby heron nests to build and repair their own nests.

-C. Allan Morgan-

COMPARISON OF NEST REPAIRS OF WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH AND WESTERN BLUEBIRD

On June 4, 1975, there were four young White-breasted Nuthatches in a bluebird box, almost ready to leave the box. Also on this date, there were two Western Bluebird boxes with young birds. They were about two days old.

Then came the rain and ½" snow fell on June 9 and 10. There were still a few patches of it yet on June 11. Now the White-breasted Nuthatches were gone, but the young bluebirds were dead in the boxes, and the nests were all wet from the rain and snow.

I collected the nest of the White-breasted Nuthatch for a friend that collects them and I found that it was a sort of "double" nest. Evidently after the bottom part got wet from the rain and snow, they built up another 1 inch layer of fur and "stuff" so the young would be dry until they left the nest.

The Western Bluebirds did no such repair work and so the young died from being cold and wet, I presume.

-Mildred O. Snyder-

DO COMMON GRACKLES NEED A NEST NEAR WATER?

In May 1975, at Parker, Colorado, Common Grackles built nests in cottonwood trees in town by a garden plot in which the owner had placed a 10"x15"x2" white enameled cake pan on a rack about a foot off the ground with water in it for birds. Water oozed out of a garden hose most of the day down the furrows of vegetables. Of course, many birds utilized the water, both for drinking and bathing. But the owner said it kept her busy cleaning it out when the grackles had young in the nests because they brought the fecal sacs to the pan and dropped them in it!

Bent says they prefer to nest over water. Could it be that they have this need for water where they can drop the fecal sacs that caused them to use the bird bath for this purpose? Cherry Creek is about a half mile west of Parker, which probably was too far.

-Mildred O. Snyder-

NOTICES

GREATER SANDHILL CRANES

In conjunction with our nongame program, I will be color-banding two important species of birds in Colorado. A numbered, three-inch tall green band will be placed above the tarsal joint (knee) on several juvenile Greater Sandhill Cranes in Routt County. Numbered, two-inch tall bands (some bright blue, some black) will be placed on about forty juvenile White Pelicans at Riverside Reservoir.

By marking the above birds, I hope to document population movements within the state so that we can expand our management efforts. This can be done if everyone will keep an eye out for marked birds. If you see such a bird, please try to determine the band color and number when possible. Please send this information plus location and date to me.

-Walter D. Graul-
Nongame Bird Specialist
Colorado Division of Wildlife
6060 Broadway
Denver, Colorado 80216

TURKEY VULTURES

In association with a life history study of the Turkey Vulture, an attempt is being made to locate concentrations of summer resident vultures in Colorado. Of particular interest are the locations of possible breeding areas. Although it is common, little is known of the species' life history.

Turkey Vultures do not construct or utilize any nest structure. They lay their eggs on the bare substrate in protected isolated sites such as caves, hollow stumps, or deserted buildings. Vultures are at the nest roost socially in numbers as high as three hundred, arriving at the roost before sunset and leaving late in the morning. They usually forage individually.

Data concerning the Turkey Vultures' distribution and status in Colorado has not been assembled in the past. As a result, the success of this study relies on the cooperation of individuals throughout the state who have had the opportunity to observe these birds.

Send information to Gerald Craig, Colorado Division of Wildlife, 6060 Broadway, Denver, Colorado 80216, on the following: General sightings - counties and local areas, numbers, and time of year, information on nesting sites, locations of social roosts, and estimated numbers.

-Deborah Davis-

CORRIGENDA

Jack Reddall points out the following corrections to the article, "A Summary of Warblers in Colorado - Fall 1974" by Steve Larson (C.F.O. Journal, No. 23, pp. 4-7).

--Golden-winged Warbler. The Fall 1974 observation (p.6) is probably the third fall record. Previous fall records are single birds Sept. 5, 1964 on Lookout Mountain reported by George and Marie Shier and Robert Spencer (Colo. Bird Notes, 12:51) and one at Evergreen Sept. 15, 1964 (Aud. Field Notes 19:64). Possibly these two records are the same bird, due to inaccurate reporting.

--Painted Redstart. Correct the dates to Nov. 16-22 (rather than October).

--Chestnut-sided Warbler. An even later report is one six miles west of Loveland on October 2, 1974, making it the latest fall report on record. (Ann Means and Camille Cummings). (Dipper 2:no. 9).

RECORDS COMMITTEE

Mr. Robert Andrews of Denver has been appointed by the C.F.O. Board of Directors to the C.F.O. Official Records Committee. The Committee, and the Board, extend their thanks to Dr. Ronald A. Ryder for his support and activities as a committee member.

C.F.O. OFFICIAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

Excerpts from minutes of meeting held March 21, 1975.

The Committee adopted the changes specified in the 32nd Supplement to the Fifth A.O.U. Checklist (1975), as published in The Auk (90:411-419). As a result, the Official Colorado state list will be revised accordingly.

The Committee dropped the following species from the list of rare and unusual birds for which it desires documentation:

Arctic Loon, Red-necked Grebe, Little Blue Heron, Least Bittern, Common Tern, Rivoli's Hummingbird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Vermilion Flycatcher, Purple Martin (Eastern Slope records still wanted), Carolina Wren, Bay-breasted Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Baird's Sparrow.

The Committee added the following, newly accepted to the state list, to the rare and unusual list:

Little Gull, Caspian Tern, White-eyed Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler.

The Chairman reported that the compilation of historical records for all species on the rare and unusual list is roughly 90% complete. Hopefully, this task will be completed by next year's meeting.

A new state list will be prepared by the Chairman(see elsewhere in this issue of the C.F.O. Journal). The committee still is checking out the validity of three species currently on the state list: Glossy Ibis, Olivaceous Flycatcher, and Long-billed Thrasher. The state list will also incorporate recognizable sub-species to be agreed upon by the Committee.

-Jack Reddall, Chairman-