



C.F.O.
Journal

No. 31, Fall 1977

Bald Eagle, LaPlata County

Photo, R. W. Stransky

CONTENTS

C.F.O. Field Trips	Elinor Wills	3
Affiliation with Denver Museum		3
C.F.O. Members Recognized		4
Records Committee Change		4
Winter Season, 1976-1977	Pete Moulton	5
General Notes		
California Gulls -- New Nesting Site	Charles Loeffler	13
Eared Grebes' and Forster's Terns'		
Nesting Attempts at Lake John	Paul Gorenzel	13
Curve-billed Thrasher at Fort Morgan	Joseph C. Rigli	14
Cape May Warbler at Rocky Mountain National Park	K. H. Bass	14

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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.

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Please direct correspondence and reports to the Chairman, C.F.O. Records Committee, c/o Denver Museum of Natural History, City Park, Denver, Colorado 80205.

C.F.O. FIELD TRIPS

C.F.O. President-Elect Elinor Wills announces the following field trips for members.

Saturday Feb. 18	Snowy Owl hunt, Bonny Dam area. (And also other interesting birds). Meet at Hale corner, 2 miles east of Dam at 10:00 a.m. Hale is north of Burlington and south of Idalia, and east of both of them. Dan Pinkham, leader.
Sat/Sun. Mar. 24-25 Mar. 31- Apr. 1 Apr. 6-7	Sage Grouse display, Walden area. John Wagner (Colorado Division of Wildlife) leader. Limit, 5 people each weekend. Make reservations by March 15th with Elinor Wills, 540 Asbury Place, Colorado Springs, 80906, 634-5122. We will fill the first weekend first, then the second one, and the third one if necessary.
	We also will try to set up a Western Slope trip; contact Elinor about that possibility.
Tentative: Apr. 21-22	Lesser Prairie Chicken hunt, Baca County.
early May	Lathrop State Park and Great Sand Dunes. To look for a Pileated Woodpecker reported in the Spring of 1977.

AFFILIATION WITH DENVER MUSEUM

The C.F.O. Board of Directors, at its July meeting, approved a request from the Denver Museum of Natural History that it copy and maintain a duplicate set of the Records Committee files. Betsy Webb, Curator of Zoological Collections, made the proposal in order to provide researchers with a readily available source of information regarding Colorado bird distribution.

As of the end of October, the records had been duplicated, and the Museum now has a complete copy. Researchers now may use either the Museum copy or the Original Volumes, maintained by the Chairman.

Also, in order to provide a permanent address for the Records Committee, all correspondence to the Official Records Committee should be directed to the C.F.O. Records Committee, Denver Museum of Natural History, Denver, Colorado 80205.

C.F.O. MEMBERS RECOGNIZED

Lois Webster

Lois Webster, this fall, received two awards for her outstanding environmental accomplishments. First, the Wildlife Society recognized her long-term conservation efforts at a meeting in Dutch John, Utah, announced to the Society's Central Mountain and Plains Section.

Then the Rocky Mountain Center on Environment (ROMCOE) bestowed on her the Edward Hobbs Hilliard, Jr. Memorial Award, which recognizes outstanding citizen achievement in environmental activities.

Both organizations selected Lois because of her devotion and determination to achieve constructive conservation goals. She has a long list of positive accomplishments which include inspiring the inauguration of the Grasslands Institute; founding Denver Audubon Society (first of the 10 Audubon chapters in the state); generating citizen and legislative support for the non-game section in the Colorado Division of Wildlife; establishment of Barr Lake State Park; and environmental education.

She also continues her field ornithology activities, with a continuing study of the birds of Baca County and by co-authoring a paper in The Condor on the Mountain Plover in Colorado.

Van Remsen

Van Remsen has devoted his PhD. thesis to four species of kingfishers which inhabit one small section of a tributary of the Amazon River in Colombia. He presented a paper related to this topic to the annual meeting of the American Ornithologists Union, and received an award from the A.O.U. for the best student paper.

RECORDS COMMITTEE CHANGE

Robert Andrews has accepted the job of Records Committee Chairman, replacing Jack Reddall, the original spearhead of the committee. All reports of accidental species for which CFO requests documentation should go to Bob, C.F.O. Records Committee, Denver Museum of Natural History, City Park, Denver, Colorado 80205.

During Jack's five-year tenure as Records Committee Chairman, the Committee has amassed a foot-thick body of data on birds rare to Colorado. These consist of written reports, photographs, and a meticulously compiled data sheet for each species included. The records chart the reported records for all the accidental species, those originally on the accidental list, plus a few additional unusual species, about 100 species in all.

We commend Jack for his superior efforts at stimulating an active committee, and for the unparalleled collection and organization of Colorado rare-bird data. It is the single most impressive body of data which C.F.O. as an organization has generated during its 15 years of existence.

WINTER SEASON -- 1976-1977

December 1, 1976 to February 28, 1977

by Pete Moulton

At least one area reporter characterized this winter as ornithologically dull, but this is unjust; in reality the season was quite interesting, as it treated observers to a variety of lingering and invasive birds that substantially augmented the list of residents. In all, approximately 185 species and several additional forms were reported, certainly enough diversity to satisfy all but the most hard-core listers. One new species was added to the state avifauna, when Conry and Webb discovered an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull at Lake Sangraco, Adams County, on 11 December, photographed and subsequently seen by many others, as detailed below. Photographs taken by Webb are on file with the Denver Museum of Natural History, and the Official Records Committee has been provided with a duplicate set.

A poor cone crop in most mountain areas resulted in reduced numbers of cone-dependent species, but mild weather and adequate feed on the plains allowed several of the more hardy species to winter there. Some of the larger Eastern Slope reservoirs remained partly open and waterfowl and gulls wintered in good numbers. Raptor watchers had about an average winter, with perhaps a better than usual number of owl reports.

Most of the information in this column was taken from the CBC reports, of which all but three were available, because these reports contain the observations of nearly all active winter birders. This situation unfortunately weights the winter reports toward the early season, but few later reports were available. This column is not intended to be a complete compendium of the CBC's.

*CFO Records Committee will review

- Common Loon-A late migrant was at Union Reservoir 12/12(PM), and 1 was counted on the Boulder CBC 12/19.
- Horned Grebe-About 49 observations were reported throughout the season, all from the Front Range area, and most from mid-February on.
- Eared Grebe-1 was observed at Lake Sangraco 1/1, alive but frozen into the ice(JC, HH), and 1 was at Lake Minnequah 2/22(JY).
- Western Grebe-About 20 observations were reported, mostly from Valmont Reservoir where up to 4 wintered.
- Pied-billed Grebe-About 31 were noted during the season, all from the Front Range area between Ft. Collins and Pueblo.
- Double-crested Cormorant-2 were counted on the Denver CBC 12/18, and 1 immature wintering at Valmont Reservoir was reported by many observers.
- American Bittern-2 early returnees were at Sawhill Ponds 2/6(FH).
- Canada Goose-The CDW maximum count was 15,400 at Ft. Collins 12/26.
- White-fronted Goose-The nine reports include: 1 on the Longmont CBC 12/18, 1 on the Denver CBC 12/18, 3 at CCRA 12/24(JR), 1 on the Ft. Collins CBC 12/26, 1 at CCRA 1/1(JR), 1 at Bow-Mar 1/6(JC), 1 at Ft. Collins 1/30(EJ), 1 at Boulder 2/6(FH), and another or the same bird at Boulder 2/12(PG).
- Snow Goose (blue form)-4 were at Boulder 12/4(BP).
- Mallard-The seasonal maximum was 35,000 on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1.
- Gadwall-Fair numbers wintered on the Eastern Slope, but Western Slope observers did not report any.
- Blue-winged Teal-2 were reported on the Gunnison CBC 12/26, 1 was reported from Boulder 1/2, 1 drake molting out of basic plumage was at Englewood 1/15(TG), and 4 were

at Boulder 2/26(JH,LH,LyH,RayH). Separations of this species and the next in winter are always suspect, as the basic plumages are identical and males in alternate plumage often display intergraded field characters. Females are never separable under field conditions and males do not achieve their distinctive alternate plumages until mid-January (Blue-winged) or early February (Cinnamon), on the average. Therefore, all teal of these two forms should be reported as Blue-winged/Cinnamon Teal until the distinguishable alternate-plumaged birds are seen.

Cinnamon Teal-1 male in alternate plumage was at Union Reservoir 2/5(PM), and 1 was at Boulder 2/26(JH,LH,LyH,RayH).

Blue-winged/Cinnamon Teal-1 in basic plumage was reported on the Denver CBC 12/18.

This is evidently the same bird seen molting into alternate Blue-winged plumage 1/15 at Englewood, as noted above.

Wood Duck-6 were seen on the Denver CBC 12/18, 2 on the Pueblo Reservoir CBC 12/18, and 1 on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2.

Canvasback-39 were reported, 37 from the Front Range area, and 2 on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.

Barrow's Goldeneye-2 were seen on the Longmont CBC 12/18, 2 on the RMNP CBC 12/18, and 1 at McCall's Lake 1/1(MA). Up to 3 wintered at Lake Estes (WKR).

Oldsquaw-1 at Union Reservoir 12/4-6(BW,m.ob).

White-winged Scoter-1 female or immature was at Union Reservoir 12/4-5(BW,m.ob), and 1 was at Boulder 12/23(RB).

Red-breasted Merganser-All of the 65 reported observations were made at Baseline and Valmont Reservoirs in the Boulder area.

Turkey Vulture-1 was reported on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2, and 1 was at Joes, Yuma County, 2/27(SN).

Northern Goshawk-Approximately 16 were reported, mostly from the Front Range. A plains report was 1 on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1.

Sharp-shinned Hawk-Maximum count of 7 on the Denver CBC 12/28.

Cooper's Hawk-24 were reported, rather evenly distributed statewide.

Red-tailed Hawk-Numbers were lower than usual at Grand Junction, but seemed about average elsewhere; an approximate maximum was 30 on the Longmont CBC 12/18.

Red-tailed(Harlan's) Hawk-Strongly represented this season with about 23 reported in all. Maxima: 5 on the Boulder CBC 12/19, and 4 on the Greeley CBC, also 12/19.

Rough-legged Hawk-Maxima were 28 on the Longmont CBC 12/18, and 30 on the Boulder CBC 12/19.

Ferruginous Hawk-About 60 were seen on the Eastern Slope, with a high count of 13 on the Boulder CBC 12/19; the only Western Slope report was 1 seen on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.

Golden Eagle-Well reported with over 100 noted statewide.

Bald Eagle-Large numbers wintered this year and approximately 250 were reported. CBC maximum was 18 on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1, and the one-day maximum was 23 at Jackson Reservoir 2/23(Park personnel).

Marsh Hawk-Wintered statewide;the high count was 35 on the Longmont CBC 12/18.

Prairie Falcon-About 75 were noted with a high count of 7 on the Ft. Collins CBC 12/26.

Peregrine Falcon-1 was counted on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2, 1 was seen in Baca County 2/19(LW), and three observations were made during the season at Hotchkiss(TC).

Merlin-28 were reported, 25 on the Eastern Slope and 3 on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.

Blue Grouse-2 were near Boulder 12/12, and 1 was counted on the Boulder CBC 12/19.

White-tailed Ptarmigan-12 were counted on the RMNP CBC 12/18.

Sage Grouse-6 were seen on the North Park CBC 12/29, and strutting was observed at Toponas as early as early February (fide RR).

- Bobwhite-The species was observed in the Weldona-Ft. Morgan area during their CBC week, and 10 were observed on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1.
- Scaled Quail-44 were listed on the Pueblo CBC 12/19, and 32 were seen on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2.
- Chukar-10 were counted on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19, and a possibly feral bird was noted on the Boulder CBC the same day.
- Turkey-6 were at Evergreen 12/15(BR), and 40 were observed in Cottonwood Canyon, Baca County, 2/19(LW).
- Whooping Crane-The first returning birds, 5 in all, were on the Monte Vista NWR 2/21 (MTN), and 1 was near Monte Vista 2/22(RLD). 1 immature was seen with its foster parents on the Alamosa NWR 2/28(RLD).
- Sandhill Crane-1, presumably a late migrant, was seen north of Boulder 12/9(WW). The first returning birds were on the Monte Vista NWR the first week of February, and they reached Alamosa NWR 2/22. The population steadily built until 3/24, when an aerial survey at the Monte Vista NWR reported 13,000(MTN).
- Virginia Rail-Small numbers wintered on the Eastern Slope and the maximum count was 5 on the Denver CBC 12/18.
- Sora-An unusual winter report of this species was 1 seen at Pueblo Reservoir 12/20(AB, EB).
- American Coot-Maxima were 148 on the Longmont CBC 12/18, and 141 on the Denver CBC the same day.
- Semipalmated Sandpiper-2 were reported on the Greeley CBC 12/19, quite a late date for the species.
- Parasitic Jaeger-1 immature was seen on the Denver CBC precount 12/11 at Marston Reservoir (TG).
- Glaucous Gull-A spectacular flight resulted in the observation of at least 23 of the species, even discounting all possible duplications. The first reported were single first-winter immatures at Bonny and Union Reservoirs 12/5(MM,PM); a high count was 6 at Valmont Reservoir 1/6(BW), and 6 were also present there 1/7(BW) and 1/15(FH). Another, smaller, white-winged gull was at Valmont 1/6, and this was likely a small female Glaucous (BW). The most southerly report was 1 in undescribed plumage seen on the Pueblo Reservoir CBC 12/18. Reports from these and such other locations as Lake Sangraco and New Windsor Reservoir continued into March. The latest report was 1 in white plumage at Union Reservoir 3/5(RA,BL,PM,m.ob.).
- *Lesser Black-backed Gull-1 adult of this species was reported from Lake Sangraco 12/11 (JeC,BW), and was subsequently seen by many others until about 1/1. Photographs are on file at the Denver Museum of Natural History. This represents the first record of this species from Colorado.
- Thayer's Gull-1 adult was at Lake Sangraco 12/11(JeC,BW), and it was seen there again a few days later(RA). 1 immature in first-winter plumage was at Valmont Reservoir 1/5, and 2 in first-winter plumage were at Lake Sangraco 2/12(all BW).
- Bonaparte's Gull-1 was at Bonny Reservoir 12/5(MM), and 3 were at Union Reservoir 12/7 (RA).
- Mourning Dove-Widespread through the season, with a high count of 210 on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.
- Roadrunner-1 was counted on the Pueblo Reservoir CBC 12/18.
- Screech Owl-16 were reported on the Eastern Slope, with a high count of 4 on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1(still a rather low number for that area), and an undetermined number of undescribed vocal type visited the Grand Junction area. Observers should always make note of the vocal type whenever possible, as the status of Colorado screech owls, particularly on the Western Slope, is unclear.
- Great Horned Owl-Numbers reported were a little low, but the species seems to be as widespread as usual; maximum count was 22 on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1.

- Snowy Owl-1 was at the Ken Caryl Ranch southwest of Denver 12/12-1/29, where it was seen by many observers (but missed on the CBC). Up to 3 were at Bonny Reservoir 12/18-2/12, and all 3 were counted on the CBC 1/1. This is the third consecutive year that the species has been reliably reported from that area(MM).
- (Northern)Pygmy Owl-About 15 were reported this winter, with a high count of 4 on the Denver CBC 12/18(all by one party).
- Long-eared Owl-High counts were 9 on the Denver CBC and 9 on the Longmont CBC, both on 12/18; the only Western Slope report was 1 on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.
- Short-eared Owl-26 were noted, all on the Eastern Slope; the approximate maximum was 8 which were regularly observed near Boulder throughout the season.
- Saw-whet Owl-1 was counted on the Boulder CBC 12/19, and 1 was seen in Lakewood 1/10 (BB,JC,PE).
- Belted Kingfisher-Maximum count was 42 on the Denver CBC 12/18.
- Common Flicker-4 of the yellow-shafted form were counted on the Pueblo CBC 12/19, and up to 6 wintered at Bonny Reservoir(MM). 2 yellow-shafteds were regularly seen with 3 intergrades at a feeder in Grand Junction, and 1 intergrade was at Boulder all February.
- Red-bellied Woodpecker-1 was at Boulder all winter and small numbers wintered at Bonny Reservoir(MM). 2 were seen on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1.
- Red-headed Woodpecker-The only report this season was 1 on the Pueblo CBC 12/19.
- Lewis' Woodpecker-The usual sites were active and about 40 were reported. Maxima: 11 on the Longmont CBC 12/18, and 7 on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker-1 was seen on the Longmont CBC 12/18, a red-naped bird was at Boulder 12/29(PW), and 1 was counted on the Gunnison CBC 12/26. Some authors now feel that three separate species are involved, so careful study of plumage details is indicated.
- Hairy Woodpecker-Although this species was quite scarce on the plains, Christmas counters found 39 at Evergreen 12/19, and 89 the same day at Boulder.
- Ladder-backed Woodpecker-1 was listed on the Pueblo Reservoir CBC 12/18, 2 on the Pueblo CBC 12/19, and 1 in Baca County 2/19(LW).
- Northern Three-toed Woodpecker-5 were noted on the Boulder CBC 12/19, 1 was at Boulder 12/25(FH), 1 on the Ft. Collins CBC 12/26, 2 on the Pikes Peak CBC 1/2, 1 in Summit County 1/22(HK), and 5 total were recorded at Boulder 2/26 and 2/28.
- Say's Phoebe-1 was listed on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.
- Gray Jay-Maxima: 40 on the RMNP CBC 12/18, and 53 on the Evergreen CBC 12/19.
- BlueXSteller's Jay-3 were counted on the Boulder CBC 12/19.
- Scrub Jay-A high count was 183 on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2.
- White-necked Raven-2 were listed on the Pueblo CBC 12/19, and 2 were at Ridgway during the CBC week(JRG), which seems like a strange location for them, but the white necks were closely observed and the identification seems solid.
- Pinyon Jay-6 were seen on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19, 40 were listed on the Ridgway CBC the same day, 30 were counted on the Black Forest CBC 12/28, and 20 were reported on the Durango CBC 1/1. The one-day maximum was 125 at McCoy 1/22(CE,MKE).
- Clark's Nutcracker-Only a few were reported this winter, with a maximum of 30 noted on the Evergreen CBC 12/19.
- Mountain Chickadee-The autumn invasion of Front Range cities continued into the winter; they came to feeders in Colorado Springs in numbers often equal to the numbers of Black-cappeds (CC), and actually outnumbered the Black-cappeds at feeders in Ft. Collins on occasion(RR).
- Plain Titmouse-4 were seen on the Pueblo Reservoir CBC 12/18, 12 were counted on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19, 1 was noted on the Ridgway CBC 12/19, and Merchant reported

- Ruby-crowned Kinglet-About 20 were reported, all before the first of the year except 2. Maxima: 7 on the Denver CBC 12/18 and 7 on the Ft. Collins CBC 12/26. Early return: 1 west of Denver 2/12, and 1 in Boulder the same day.
- Water Pipit-32 were reported, with a high count of 13 on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.
- Bohemian Waxwing-The major ornithological event of the season was a massive invasion of this species beginning early in December and lasting into March. In the Denver area the approximate maximum counts involved flocks of 1000-2000 12/31-1/18 (JR). Flocks numbering up to 500+ were seen throughout the season at Ft. Collins, and Colorado Springs observers reported flocks of up to 1000. One flock of 100 even reached Pueblo 2/27, where it was seen by many observers. On the Western Slope birders at Grand Junction and McCoy considered this to be the strongest influx since 1972, but evidently the birds did not reach Aspen or Durango.
- Cedar Waxwing-Inevitably, a few Cedars were seen in the tremendous flocks of Bohemians, but their numbers were only about 5-10% of the Bohemians'.
- Northern Shrike-A good flight this year resulted in about 100 observations, with a maximum count of 11 on the Denver CBC 12/18.
- Loggerhead Shrike-The eight sightings included: 1 at Boulder 12/17(MJ), 1 on the Pueblo Reservoir CBC 12/18, 1 on the Boulder CBC 12/19 (presumably the same as above), 1 on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19, 2 on the Durango CBC 1/1, 1 on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2, and 1 at CCRA 1/15(DFO).
- Solitary Vireo-A very unusual winter record was made when 1 of this species was observed at a feeder during the Boulder CBC 12/19.
- Yellow-rumped Warbler-Myrtles wintered at Bonny and Boulder, Audubon's at Grand Junction, and 1 in undescribed plumage was at Cherry Hills Village 1/27(RA), perhaps indicating wintering there also. CBC's listed them at Bonny, Boulder, Denver, Grand Junction, Pueblo, and Pueblo Reservoir.
- Common Yellowthroat-1 was heard singing on the Boulder CBC 12/19.
- Yellow-headed Blackbird-2 were seen east of Longmont 12/7(AC), 1 visited a feeder in Longmont from 1/1 on, and 2 males were at the same feeder 2/10(CA,DA).
- Rusty Blackbird-7 were reported on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2, and 7 were at CCRA 1/16(JR).
- Brewer's Blackbird-A maximum count was 147 on the Longmont CBC 12/18.
- Common Grackle-1 was at Littleton 12/11, 11 were seen on the Denver CBC 12/18, 4 were noted on the Longmont CBC 12/18, 1 on the Greeley CBC 12/19, 3 were observed in north-east Denver 1/9 (BL), 1 male visited a feeder in Ft. Collins all winter until 2/19 (RR), and at least 3 wintered at Longmont.
- Brown-headed Cowbird-The only winter report was 1 on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.
- Cardinal-1 male was seen on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1, was still there the next day, and may have wintered, as 1 was seen in the same location in early March(LC,JS). This is the second consecutive Bonny CBC to report the species.
- Evening Grosbeak-Observers at most Front Range locations considered the species scarce this winter, and Campbell reported none at Colorado Springs. No comment was received from Western Slope observers, but the only report from that side of the Continental Divide was 43 seen on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.
- Purple Finch-Up to 4 were in Ft. Collins 12/26-2/1 (all 4 were seen on the CBC 12/26-two parties), 1 was seen on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2, 2 were at Bonny Reservoir 1/21(LC,MM,SN,JS), 1 was still at Bonny 1/29(PM), and 1 was still at Ft. Collins 2/27(RR). 4 were banded at Ft. Collins 1/8-2/27(RR). Ryder considers the species to be more numerous in Colorado than the literature suggests, the lack of reports perhaps stemming from failure to recognize the birds; the abstract of a proposed paper, coauthored with Charles Chase III, details fieldmarks.
- Pine Grosbeak-17 were counted on the Evergreen CBC 12/19, and 3 were listed on the Pikes

- occasional small flocks during the season near Eagle.
- Bushtit-Wandering flocks were reported from both sides of the Continental Divide; maximum was 38 reported on the Denver CBC 12/18.
- Red-breasted Nuthatch-Numbers were low, but the birds were widespread in coniferous forests. None was reported on the plains, however.
- Brown Creeper-In most of the state numbers were about average, but the species staged strong flights into the Colorado Springs and, to a lesser degree, Alamosa areas.
- Dipper-Still absent from the Big Thompson Canyon(WKR) and numbers low in north-central Colorado. Elsewhere, the population was about normal, with high counts on the Denver CBC (27) 12/18, the Evergreen CBC (24) 12/19, and the Gunnison CBC (35) 12/26.
- Winter Wren-The species made a fairly good showing with a total of 10 reports; interesting was the report of 1 on the Gunnison CBC 12/26. The remaining reports were all from the Eastern Slope, 8 from the northern Front Range (Denver, Boulder and Greeley) and 1 from Bonny Reservoir.
- Bewick's Wren-2 were counted on the Pueblo CBC 12/19, and 24 were listed on the Grand Junction CBC the same day.
- Long-billed Marsh Wren-1 was at Boulder 12/10-17, 1 was at Bonny Reservoir 12/11(MM), 3 were counted on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19, 3 were listed on the Weldona-Ft. Morgan CBC 12/20, 1 was at Wheatridge 1/16(PR), and 1 was seen and heard singing at CCRA 2/21(JR).
- Canyon Wren-About 44 were reported, nearly all from the Front Range; maxima 15 on the Denver CBC 12/18 and 10 on the Ft. Collins CBC 12/26.
- Rock Wren-1 was reported on the Ft. Collins CBC 12/26, 1 on the Black Forest CBC 12/28, and 2 in the Colorado Springs area 2/10; reported wintering in the Pueblo region (JCL).
- Mockingbird-The five reports include: 1 on the Ft. Collins CBC 12/26, 2 on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2, 1 in Boulder 1/17-2/21(JH,LH,LYH,RoyH), and 1 in Ft. Collins 1/23 and 1/31(RR).
- Gray Catbird-A very unusual winter report for this species was 1 at Ft. Collins 2/27 (Leer).
- Brown Thrasher-Although this species often winters, only 2 were reported this year; 1 on the Denver CBC 12/18, and 1 on the Longmont CBC the same day.
- Curve-billed Thrasher-1 was seen on the Pueblo CBC 12/19, and 1 wintered at Florence, a new location for the species(JCL).
- Sage Thrasher-1 was counted on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19, and 2 were seen in Baca County the same day(LW).
- Varied Thrush-1 was listed on the Pikes Peak CBC 12/31, and 1 was in Lakewood 1/29-2/27 (JC,m.ob.).
- Eastern Bluebird-2 were at Boulder 12/9, and 1 was still there the next day(MJ); 1 male visited a feeder in the Bonny area 1/30-2/10(MM,DP).
- Western Bluebird-1 was counted on the Ridgway CBC 12/19, a flock of 76 was closely observed north of Boulder 12/23(ArB,RuB), and 8 were seen on the Durango CBC 1/1. Occasional Westerns were seen in flocks of Mountains at Hotchkiss from 1/16 on (TC), and at least one flock of up to 15 birds was noted several times near Pueblo by various observers.
- Mountain Bluebird-Numbers and dates about normal; a high count was 400+ along Burnt Mill Road southwest of Pueblo 1/29(DR,JR).
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher-The only report was 1 seen on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.
- Golden-crowned Kinglet-The large numbers seen during the fall virtually evaporated during December. Of the 83 reported during the winter, only 7 were seen after 1 January. Maximum was 40 seen on the Boulder CBC 12/19.

- Peak CBC 12/31; occasional birds were noted at Estes Park throughout the season.
- Gray-crowned Rosy Finch-The high count was 1025 on the North Park CBC 12/29. Plains reports were 6 on the Nunn CBC 12/22, and 1 male seen on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 12/31-1/1.
- Black Rosy Finch-Few were seen this year, and they disappeared by mid-January; the maximum was 48 seen at Green Mountain 1/4 (ME).
- Brown-capped Rosy Finch-High counts were 936 on the Gunnison CBC 12/26, and 200 on the Pikes Peak CBC 12/31; only 28 others were reported all season.
- Common Redpoll-Only small numbers were reported this year, in contrast to last winter's strong flight; the 51 birds seen include 40 on the Denver CBC 12/18, 2 on the RMNP CBC 12/18, 2 on the Boulder CBC 12/19, 5 on the Evergreen CBC 12/19, and 2 in Ft. Collins 2/10(WK).
- Pine Siskin-Most observers reported large numbers throughout the winter, but the greatest concentration was at Ft. Collins where 541 were banded 1/15-2/27(RR).
- Lesser Goldfinch-3 were seen on the Pueblo Reservoir CBC 12/18, 1 was listed on the Pueblo CBC 12/19, and a rather amazing 16 were counted on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2.
- Red Crossbill-Very few were reported this winter as the cone crop was virtually non-existent in many areas. The largest concentration was at Ft. Collins, where 20 were counted 2/12-18.
- White-winged Crossbill-The lone report was 19 seen on the Pikes Peak CBC 12/31.
- Green-tailed Towhee-1 was counted on the Ridgway CBC 12/19 for the only report.
- Rufous-sided Towhee-Quite scarce in most areas, but the CBC at Colorado Springs 1/2 totaled 71.
- Brown Towhee-17 were seen on the Pueblo Reservoir CBC 12/18, 7 on the Pueblo CBC 12/19, and 6 southwest of Pueblo on 1/29(DR, JR).
- Lark Bunting-1 winter male was seen east of Platteville in February (DE, TE), for a highly unusual winter record.
- Savannah Sparrow-1 was seen on the Gunnison CBC 12/26, and 1 was listed on the Colorado Springs CBC 1/2.
- Tree Sparrow-The maximum was 1528 seen on the Denver CBC 12/18.
- Chipping Sparrow-The only report was 7 seen on the Grand Junction CBC 12/19.
- Field Sparrow-1 was counted on the Ft. Collins CBC 12/26.
- Harris' Sparrow-The winter populations continue to increase: the Eastern Slope maximum was 195 on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1. On the Western Slope 1 wintered at Carbon-dale(DM), 1 was seen on the Gunnison CBC 12/26, and 2 were counted on the Durango CBC 1/1.
- White-throated Sparrow-28 were reported, with a maximum of 4 on the Denver CBC 12/18.
- Fox Sparrow-2 were listed on the Denver CBC 12/18, 1 was seen during the CBC period at Grand Junction, 1 adult eastern race was at Waterton 12/24 and 12/31(JR), 1 was listed on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1, 1 was at Waterton 1/3(JC, perhaps the same as above), and 1 was noted at Colorado Springs 2/26(EC).
- Swamp Sparrow-7 were seen this winter: 1 on the Denver CBC 12/18, 1 on the Longmont CBC 12/18, 1 on the Boulder CBC 12/19, 1 at Wheatridge 1/9, 16(PR), 1 at Boulder 1/9 (DBB), 1 at Union Reservoir 2/12(PM), and 1 at CCRA 2/21(JR).
- Lapland Longspur-10 were noted on the Denver CBC 12/18, 10 on the Nunn CBC 12/22, 1 on the Black Forest CBC 12/28, 155 on the Bonny Reservoir CBC 1/1, and 12 on the PNG 1/29(DFO). The species was also observed during the CBC week at Colorado Springs.
- Chestnut-collared Longspur-2 were seen in Cottonwood Canyon, Baca Co., 2/19(LW).
- Snow Bunting-24 were counted on the Gunnison CBC 12/26, and 1 was seen south of Castlewood Canyon, Douglas Co. 1/24(RA, JC).

Contributors:

Boulder: D. Bruce Bosley(35), Louise Hering(28); Colorado Springs: Mahlon Speers(6); Denver: Charles Kangas(12); Estes Park: Warner K. Reeser(5); Evergreen: Winston W. Brockner(22); Ft. Collins: Ted Bodner(26); Grand Junction: David Galinat; Lomgmont: Dave Altes(16); Pueblo: Jerry C. Ligon.

Initialed Observers:

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Christmas Bird Counts:

Special thanks are hereby rendered to the compilers of the Colorado CBC's, who graciously submitted their reports to this column, and to the many observers whose intensive CBC fieldwork added so greatly to the thoroughness and accuracy of this seasonal report.

CORRIGENDA

30 C.F.O. Journal, page 12: Correct the Lakewood Ovenbird, mistakenly credited to John Cooper, to read as follows:
1, Lakewood, Oct. 2 (PE).

NOTE TO REPORTERS

(Note: I would like to see more plumage descriptions of gulls in the observers' reports. It helps to paint pictures of influx by the unusual species. We know that the great majority of Glaucous Gulls last winter in Colorado were white birds--second to third winter--but at least three of the birds I saw were first winter birds. A clear idea of the age of other Glaucous Gulls last fall would be very interesting to me and the other gull-watchers in the state.) - PM

GENERAL NOTES

CALIFORNIA GULLS - NEW NESTING SITE

After receiving information from Dr. Ron Ryder, Colorado State University, that California Gulls (Larus californicus) might be nesting at Eleven-mile Reservoir in Park County, I made a trip to investigate the area, and was able to confirm that California Gulls did indeed nest on an island at Eleven-mile this spring (1977). As far as I could determine, this is the first record of California Gulls nesting at Eleven-mile Reservoir. There is an established, thriving colony on nearby Antero Reservoir.

There was evidence of about twenty nests, and according to information from State Parks Division employee, Dave Hause, about fifteen young were fledged. On July 18th, the day I visited the area, one egg remained in one nest, and the rest of the young had hatched and were dispersed on the lake, although still flightless.

The lowering of the water level due to drought conditions may have been the reason for initiation of nesting. The water level was higher and more stable in previous years, and all of the gull nests were located on a portion of the island which is normally under water. Ironically, while the lowering of the water level may have stimulated gull nesting, it appears to have greatly reduced Western Grebe nesting at Eleven-mile.

- Charles Loeffler

EARED GREBES' AND FORSTER'S TERNS' NESTING
ATTEMPTS AT LAKE JOHN

This reports on the breeding attempts of the Eared Grebes (Podiceps caspicus) and Forster's Terns (Sterna forsteri) at Lake John Annex in North Park, Jackson County, Colorado. I have been visiting Lake John at approximately one week intervals since April 16. Although my activities there are primarily concerned with coot research, I have made the following observations concerning these two species.

- 16 April - E. Grebes (4) first observed
 - Lake John Annex still mostly frozen
- 23 April - First E. Grebe displays noted
 - Annex only partly frozen
- 30 April - Displays and pairing continue
 - Annex ice free
 - No E. Grebes present on Lake John proper, all have moved to the Annex, presumably in response to the many fishermen and boats present on Lake John
 - First F. Terns observed
- 19 May - E. Grebe most abundant of all species present (400+)
- 1 June - E. Grebe still most numerous species (200+)
 - First search of northernmost Bulrush (Scirpus spp) "island" in the Annex revealed 20 F. Tern nests and many (unfortunately I didn't count them) E. Grebe nests - most with only one or two eggs
- 8 June - Nests still present, but almost everyone with destroyed eggs punctured in the middle-avian predation suspected
 - Only one F. Tern nest still active
- 16 June - No nests active on the island
 - E. Grebe still most numerous species
- 23 June - F. Terns nesting on island again-number of nests unknown
- 30 June - Water level dropped 15.5 cm from last week, which along with natural growth of aquatic vegetation created a zone of water milfoil (Myriophyllum sp.) partly exposed above the water's surface

- 123 E. Grebe nests all with one or two eggs located in the open H₂O in this newly exposed zone
- 7 July - Water level increased 19.5 cm from last week, due to running of irrigation water through the Annex
- Only 11 E. Grebe nests left; suspect they were blown away after the water rose
- 12 July - No nests in the Myriophyllum
- 100+ nests (E. Grebe), some with up to four eggs on the island again
- 4-6 Tern nests there also, one with one chick
- 21 July - Water level dropped 13.5 cm from previous week, leaving E. Grebe nests located near center of island high and dry-those near edge of island still surrounded by water and presumably active
- 2/3 of E. Grebe and all F. Tern nests destroyed-both mammalian and avian predation suspected.
- 26 July - Three Tern and five E. Grebe nests on Myriophyllum again
- No active nests on island - E. Grebe nests appear deserted
- F. Terns still defending territories
- 4 August - Four E. Grebe nests on Myriophyllum, no Tern nests
- All nests on island destroyed-Terns no longer defending
- 9 August - Three E. Grebe nests on Myriophyllum
- Three E. Grebe broods sighted, totalling five young

In summary, the Eared Grebe nesting attempts failed three times, one failure apparently man caused. Total Eared Grebe production at Lake John Annex will be very low. The Forster's Terns have evidently failed completely.

- Paul Gorenzel-

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER AT FORT MORGAN

I observed this thrasher May 4, 1977, at 5:00 p.m., singing atop a very tall white poplar tree in my yard, 5 miles south of Fort Morgan, Colorado. I noticed the long curved bill and orange eye.

It also sang behind the barn on a huge pile of used baling wire and also from a barbed wire fence nearby. The bird stayed for about three days.

- Joseph C. Rigli -

CAPE MAY WARBLER AT ROCKY MOUNTAIN NAT'L PARK

On June 12, 1977, Fran Kobetic and myself were birding in Rocky Mountain Nat'l Park. We had just left the Lawn Lake Trailhead area where we found three species of birds (House Wren, Violet-green Swallow and Williamson's Sapsucker) nesting in one small dead aspen tree. We turned left out of the parking area and then right onto the next intersecting road. We drove past clearings on both sides for about a half mile until we reached spruce forest on both sides of the road. It was about seven o'clock in the morning and birds were very active and singing. We stopped to look and listen. I immediately heard a familiar sound. I exclaimed, "there's a Cape May Warbler up there somewhere!"

After some searching, I found the male Cape May Warbler (Dendroica tigrina) singing from the very top of one of three tall (60 to 70 foot) spruce trees that were separated from the dense spruce forest beyond by lower growing deciduous trees and

shrubs. The bird seemed to prefer the top of the center tree, but would occasionally sing from the top of one of the adjoining trees. Once or twice it flew to the top of a spruce tree about thirty feet away from its main perch to deliver its song.

We observed the bright yellow breast with heavy, dark streaking, the white wing patches and chestnut cheeks with our 7x50 field glasses. After each song it usually changed its location by only a few inches, so we set up our 20 - 50 power, zoom, spotting scope. We checked Peterson's Western Field Guide and learned that the Cape May Warbler was "accidental" in Colorado. Encouraged by this information, we consulted "Collister's Birds of Rocky Mountain National Park." There was no reference to this bird, the Cape May Warbler, for the park. When we realized we had made an unusual observation, we submitted a written report to the Park Naturalist. We also recorded the song on tape and photographed the bird. The photographs were taken with a Canon F-1 SLR camera, using a 400M lens. Although these pictures would never make the cover of American Birds, they make the bird recognizable as to this species.

We stayed in the area for about an hour observing the bird. During this time the Cape May Warbler male continued to sing with intervals between delivery of only about 5 - 10 seconds. Later in the day, about noon, we drove by the same spot and stopped. He was still singing, although the intervals between delivery were spaced further apart. The song consisted of approximately eight high, thin notes. These were given rapidly and on the same pitch.

The next morning we returned and observed him again, singing as energetically as the morning before. He was at the top of the same center spruce tree. This time he was joined by a female. He chased her around briefly and then they joined together for a few seconds, as if copulating. The female then disappeared into the dense foliage. She was very drab compared to the male, with overall brownish coloration, heavy brown streaks on a buffy breast, and traces of yellow around the head. She only remained in view for about twenty seconds and we didn't see her again.

I have previously seen and heard Cape May Warblers in breeding plumage in New York, Virginia, and Florida during spring migrations. Fran, although seeing the species in fall plumage several times, was glad to get a good view of the bird in breeding plumage.

-K H. Bass-

(Editor's Note: We have duplicate slides, not suitable for reproduction and a copy of the tape. We concur with the identification. The observation was confirmed by Sandy Wohlgenuth of Los Angeles. Unfortunately, no Colorado observers could find the bird subsequent to this observation).

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