

# The 51<sup>st</sup> Report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee

Lawrence S. Semo

Chair, Colorado Bird Records Committee

## Introduction

This 51<sup>st</sup> report presents the results of deliberations of the Colorado Bird Records Committee (hereafter CBRC or Committee) on partial results of circulations held during early 2009. This article provides results of the circulation of 82 reports submitted by 26 observers documenting 66 occurrences of 38 species from the period 2006 through 2008, although all but one record treated here pertain to 2008 records. Two records involving seven individuals were not accepted because of insufficient documentation or because descriptions were inconsistent with known identification criteria. Per CBRC by-laws, 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. Those records with four or five “accept” votes have transcended to a second round of deliberations, and results of those records will be published at a later date.

Highlights of this report include the ninth record of Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*), the tenth record of Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), and the eleventh record of Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*).

Committee members voting on these reports were Doug Faulkner, Peter Gent, Rachel Hopper, Joey Kellner, Bill Maynard, Larry Semo, and David Silverman.

## Committee Functions

All reports received by the CBRC (written documentation, photographs, videotapes, and/or sound recordings) are archived at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, 2001 Colorado Boulevard, Denver, CO 80205, where they remain available for public review. The Committee solicits documentation of reports in Colorado for all species published in its review list, including both the main and supplementary lists (Semo et al. 2002), and for reports of species with no prior accepted records in Colorado. Those lists can be found at <http://www.cfo-link.org/birding/lists.php>. Documentary materials should be submitted online at the CBRC website (<http://www.cfo-link.org/CBRC/login.php>).

## Report Format

The organization and style of this report follow those of Leukering and Semo (2003), with some alterations. If present, the numbers in parentheses following a species' name represent the total number of accepted records for Colorado, followed by the number of accepted records in the ten-year period preceding the submission. The latter number is of importance, as it is one of the criteria for a species' continuance on or removal from the statewide Main Review List (Semo et al. 2002).

The records in this report are arranged taxonomically following the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) Checklist of North American Birds (AOU 1998) through the 49<sup>th</sup> Supplement (Banks et al. 2008). Each record presents as much of the following information as we have available: number of birds, age, sex, locality, county, and date or date span. In parentheses, we present the initials of the contributing observer(s), the official record number, and the vote tally in the first round and, if relevant, second round (with the number of "accept" votes on the left side of the dash).

The initials of the finder(s) of the bird(s) are underlined, if known, and are presented first if that person (those people) contributed documentation; additional contributors' initials follow in alphabetical order by name. If the finder(s) is (are) known with certainty, but did not submit documentation, those initials are presented last. Observers submitting a photograph or video capture have a dagger (†) following their initials; initials of those who submitted videotape are indicated by a lower-case, italicized "v" (v); and those who submitted sonograms or recordings are indicated by a lower-case, italicized "s" (s). Thus, the parenthetical expression "(JD v, RA†, TL, JV, CW; 2001-36; 4-3, 6-1)" means: JD found the bird(s) and submitted documentation (including video) and, as the finder, is first in the list of those who submitted details with initials underlined; RA, though alphabetically first of the five submitting observers, was not the finder, so comes second; RA submitted, at least, photographic documentation; the record number assigned to the occurrence was 2001-36; and in the two rounds of voting, the first-round vote was four "accept" votes and three "do not accept" votes, while the second-round vote was 6-1 in favor of accepting the report. The decision on most reports is completed in the first round.

In this report, county names are italicized in keeping with the style established for the News from the Field column in this journal. We have attempted to provide the full date span for individual records, with the seasonal reports in *North American Birds* and this

journal being the primary sources of those dates. The Committee has not dealt with the question of full date spans as compared to submitted date spans when documentations do not provide such. The CBRC encourages observers to document the final date on which a rare species was seen, as that provides historical evidence of the true extent of its stay.

For this report, the CBRC abbreviations are used for campground (CG), Chico Basin Ranch (CBR), County Road (CR), Reservoir (Res.), and State Park (SP).

### **RECORDS ACCEPTED**

**Eurasian Wigeon** – *Anas penelope* (35/15). Representing the first record for *Moffat*, a male was at Offield Res. near Dinosaur on 25 Oct 2008 (AS †, GW; 2008-126; 7-0).

**Yellow-billed Loon** – *Gavia adamsii* (21/8). The second Yellow-billed Loon record accepted for *Park* came from Antero Res., where a juvenile swam on 29 Oct 2008 (BM †, AS, CW; 2008-128; 7-0).

**Reddish Egret** – *Egretta rufescens* (9/5). Only the ninth for the state, but the second for *Kiowa*, a subadult bird that had transitioned mostly to adult plumage was at NeeNoshe Res. on 21 May 2008 (AS †; 2008-72; 7-0).

**Glossy Ibis** – *Plegadis falcinellus* (48/31). The Committee accepted two additional Glossy Ibis records during this past circulation. One was near Las Animas, *Bent*, on 30 Apr 2008 (TL; 2008-37; 7-0) and another was nearby on the same date at the

Las Animas Fish Hatchery (TL, MP; 2008-39; 7-0).

**Gyrfalcon** – *Falco rusticolus* (10/4). A gray-morph juvenile, the first for *Jackson*, was present at Walden Res. between 5 Nov and 24 Dec 2006 (AS, NK; 2006-155; 5-2, 7-0). The 5 Nov date represents the only fall record of the species.

**Laughing Gull** – *Larus atricilla* (35/14). An adult was at Duck Lake in *Larimer* on 3 Jun 2008 (NK; 2008-84; 7-0), providing the third record for that county.



*Yellow-billed Loon, Antero Reservoir, 29 Oct 2008. Photo by Bill Maynard*



Reddish Egret, NeeNoshe Reservoir, Kiowa County, 21 May 2008. Photo by Andrew Spencer

**Glaucous-winged Gull** – *Larus glaucescens* (14/7). The first record of Glaucous-winged Gull in Colorado came from Antero Res. in Park in 1981. The same location hosted its second in 2008, that being a first-cycle bird that was seen on 31 Oct (AS, GW; 2008-129; 7-0). A record of another first-cycle bird was accepted from John Martin Res., where it was photographed on 22 Dec 2008 (AS †; 2008-147; 7-0).

This establishes the first record for Bent.

**Northern Saw-whet Owl** – *Aegolius acadicus*. Although this species is a regular breeder across montane portions of the state, nesting records from the Eastern Plains are sparse. Notable was the recently fledged juvenile photographed at Ball Res., in Elbert, roughly 22 miles northwest of Limon, on 25 May 2008 (LE †; 2008-76; 7-0).

**Lesser Nighthawk** – *Chordeiles acutipennis* (21/8). A female was well photographed during its stay at CBR from 25 to 28 May 2008 (BGi †; BM †; BKP †; GW †; 2008-75; 7-0) and provides the second record for Pueblo. Another female was present at the now seemingly annual location of the Nucla sewage ponds in Montrose, where it was photographed on 8 Jun 2008 (AS †, CD; 2008-86; 7-0).



Northern Saw-whet Owl, Elbert County, 25 May 2008. Photo by Glenn Walbek

**Whip-poor-will** – *Caprimulgus vociferus* (11/3). CBR continues to amaze birders with the number of wayward species that drop into that vagrant trap. The ranch now claims two of the three Whip-poor-will records from the past ten years. One was photographed on the *Pueblo* side of the ranch, providing a first for that county, on 5 Sep 2008 (BGi †; 2008-101; 7-0). The previous record was from the *El Paso* portion of the ranch in 2006 and was ironically also observed by the same documenting observer as for the 2008 record.

**Magnificent Hummingbird** – *Eugenes fulgens* (14/9). Two Magnificent Hummingbird records were accepted from the summer of 2008. A first-cycle female, the second for *El Paso*, was at Manitou Springs between 6 and 8 July (BM †, RH †, BKP †, BS †; 2008-90; 7-0). The bird may have remained at that location until 9 Jul, but no details on that later date were submitted to the CBRC. A first-cycle male was at Maysville, *Chaffee*, on 8 Jul (BGe †; 2008-91; 7-0), representing a first record for that county.

**Calliope Hummingbird** – *Stellula calliope*. Very rare in spring, a female was documented from La Veta, *Huerfano*, on 3 May 2008 (BJ †; 2008-45; 6-1). A male was also noted in the documentation as being present, although the observer did not provide any specific details on that bird.

**Eastern Wood-Pewee** – *Contopus virens* (22/7). Representing the second record for *Pueblo*, a singing bird was present at Lake Beckwith in



*Lesser Nighthawk*, *Chico Basin Ranch*, *Pueblo County*, 25 May 2008. Photo by Brian Gibbons

*Colorado City* on 25 May 2008 (DS; 2008-74; 7-0). Interestingly, Mr. Silverman was the observer of the first record for *Pueblo* in 1992.

**Alder Flycatcher** – *Empidonax alnorum* (26/16). The Committee deliberated on and accepted three additional Alder Flycatcher records during the past circulation. One was seen and heard giving its diagnostic call note (a loud “pip”) at Crow Valley CG in *Weld* on 28 May 2008 (RH †, DAL; 2008-79; 7-0). Another was observed singing and calling at Tamarack Ranch SWA in *Logan* on the same date (SL; 2008-80; 7-0). Lastly, one was banded at CBR, *El Paso*, on 3 Sep 2008 (BGi †; 2008-98; 7-0).

**Black Phoebe** – *Sayornis nigricans*.

Providing a first record for both *Douglas* and *Jefferson*, one sallied across the South Platte River at Kingfisher Bridge in Chatfield SP on 5 May 2008 (GW†, CH; 2008-50; 7-0). The bird was apparently first found near that location on 23 Apr, though no details on that earlier date were submitted to the Committee.



**Great Crested Flycatcher** – *Myiarchus crinitus*. Quite far west of their usual range in Colorado, two were at CBR on 12 Sep 2008, one on the *Pueblo* side (BGI †; 2008-105; 7-0) and one on the *El Paso* portion of the ranch (BGI †; 2008-106; 7-0).

*Magnificent Hummingbird, Manitou Springs, El Paso County, 8 Jul 2008. Photo by Rachel Hopper*

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** – *Tyrannus forficatus* (32/22). Three additional Scissor-tailed Flycatcher records were recently accepted. A male was at a private ranch near Aroya, *Cheyenne*, on 4 May 2008 (RO, JK †; 2008-49; 7-0) and provides the first record for that county. A male was at CBR in *Pueblo* on 11 May 2008 (BM †, BGI †; 2008-57; 7-0). Lastly, one was along State Highway 128 in northern *Jefferson* on 7 Jun 2008 (SP; 2008-85; 7-0).



*Great Crested Flycatcher, Chico Basin Ranch, El Paso County, 12 Sep 2008. Photo by Brian Gibbons*

**Blue-headed Vireo** – *Vireo solitarius* (21/18). A first for *Washington*, a singing bird was photographed at Prewitt SWA on 13 May 2008 (GW †; 2008-58; 7-0). The first

record for *Arapahoe* was also obtained with the bird photographed at Cher-



*Blue-headed Vireo*, Prewitt SWA, Logan County, 13 May 2008. Photo by Glenn Walbek

ry Creek SP on 4 Sep 2008 (GW †; 2008-99; 7-0).

**Philadelphia Vireo** – *Vireo philadelphicus* (36/17). There was a good showing of Philadelphia Vireos in Colorado in 2008 and the CBRC accepted four additional records. One was at CBR, *El Paso*, between 7 and 8 May (BGi †, BM †; 2008-53; 7-0) and another was in the same county at Fountain Creek Regional Park on 17 May (SSH; 2008-67; 6-1). There was only one previous record of the species in *El Paso*. The *Pueblo* side of CBR hosted one between 17 and 22 May (NK †, BM †, GW †; 2008-68; 7-0); there are now six records for *Pueblo*. Finally, the third record for *Weld* was the bird photographed at a small grove at the intersection of *Weld* CRs 100 and 57 on 19 Sep (AS †, JK; 2008-108; 7-0).

**Chihuahuan Raven** – *Corvus cryptoleucus*. Once common across all of the Eastern Plains of Colorado (Bailey and Niedrach 1965), Chihuahuan Ravens now are known regularly only

from the southeastern portion of the state, although there have been occasional, and seemingly increasingly regular, reports of individuals across the northern edge of the Front Range. The Committee has had difficulty in accepting wayward Chihuahuan Raven records because separation from Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) is extremely difficult. However, the CBRC has recently accepted a record of Chihuahuan Raven in Fort

Collins, *Larimer*, from 28 May 2008 (TH; 2008-82; 7-0) based on the observer's combined description of the call, shape of the neck feathers, presence of white basal neck feathers, and extent of nasal bristles, eliminating Common Raven from contention.

**Gray-cheeked Thrush** – *Catharus minimus* (49/19). Three additional records were accepted from 2008, all from CBR. One was banded on the *El Paso* side of the ranch on 14 May (BGi †; 2008-60; 7-0), another was photographed on the *Pueblo* side on the same date (BGi †; 2008-61; 7-0), and a third bird was banded on the *El Paso* side on 17 May (BGi †; 2008-66; 7-0).

**Wood Thrush** – *Hylocichla mustelina* (29/17). One was nicely photographed at Lake Hasty SP, *Bent*, on 3 May 2008 (AS †, TL; 2008-149; 7-0) and represents the third record for the county.

**Varied Thrush** – *Ixoreus naevius* (37/25). A male was at Crow Valley CG between 1 and 2 Oct 2008

(MF †, CW †; 2008-111; 7-0). This is the second record for that location and the fourth for *Weld*. A first-basic female was at a Colorado Springs residence on 3 Dec 2008 (BM †; SC; 2008-137; 7-0) and provides the third record for *El Paso*.

**Cape May Warbler** – *Dendroica tigrina* (25/7). Two Cape May Warblers were discovered in 2008, quite a notable number for a species that has been less than annual during the past decade. A female was at Fountain Creek Nature Center in *El Paso* on 17 May (SSh; 2008-65; 6-1) and a male was photographed at CBR in *El Paso* on 27 May (BM †, BKP †; 2008-78; 7-0). These two records are the second and third for the county.

**Blackburnian Warbler** – *Dendroica fusca* (44/15). *Pueblo* hosted a first-cycle female at CBR on 6 Sep 2008 (BGi, BM; 2008-102; 7-0), the sixth for the county.

**Yellow-throated Warbler** – *Dendroica dominica* (34/14). An alternate-plumaged male near Wiley, *Bent*, on 3 May 2008 (AS, TL, JK; 2008-47; 7-0) was the third for the county.

**Grace's Warbler** – *Dendroica graciae*. Grace's Warblers are extremely rare away from their southwestern and south-central breeding grounds in Colorado. Notable in 2008 was the presence of two adult males on

the Eastern Plains, both representing first county records. One was at Crow Valley CG on 1 May 2008 (RH †, AS; 2008-40; 7-0), and the other was at Olney Springs in *Crowley* on 2 May 2008 (AS †; 2008-43; 7-0).

**Prairie Warbler** – *Dendroica discolor* (29/14). A second-year male at Greenlee Preserve, *Boulder*, on 25 May 2008 (TE; 2008-77; 7-0) was the fourth for the county. An adult female, apparently unmated, was discovered building a nest in Castlewood Canyon SP, where it was documented between 17 and 20 Jun 2008 (SSh †, GW †, GC; 2008-89; 7-0), representing the first record for *Douglas*.

**Bay-breasted Warbler** – *Dendroica castanea* (40/10). A male at Crow Valley CG on 1 Oct 2008 (AS; 2008-110; 7-0) was the fourth for *Weld*. Another male, the seventh for *El Paso*, was at CBR on 5 May 2008 (BGi; 2008-110; 7-0)



*Grace's Warbler*, Crow Valley Campground, Weld County, 1 May 2008. Photo by Rachel Hopper



**Kentucky Warbler** – *Oporornis formosus* (34/10). The second record of Kentucky Warbler for *Baca* was obtained with the bird present below the dam of Two Buttes Res. between 1 and 2 May 2008 (AS; 2008-41; 7-0).

**Mourning Warbler** – *Oporornis philadelphia* (27/12). Three new records were recently accepted. A second-year female was at CBR in *Pueblo* on 23 May 2008 (GW †; 2008-73; 6-1), representing the fifth record for the county. An immature female at Cherry Creek SP on 5 Sep 2008 (SS; 2008-100; 7-0) was the first for *Arapahoe*. Another immature bird along Boulder Creek in *Boulder* on 11 Sep 2008 (WS; 2008-104; 6-1) was the third for that county.

**Canada Warbler** – *Wilsonia canadensis* (31/10). A male, a first for *Pueblo*, was at CBR on 28 May 2008 (BM †, BKP †, GW †; 2008-81; 7-0).

**Hepatic Tanager** – *Piranga flava* (22/7). A female, surprisingly the first for *Baca*, was photographed below the dam of Two Buttes Res. on 4 May 2008 (AS †; 2008-48; 6-1).

**Fox Sparrow** – *Passerella iliaca*. Two additional records of “Red” Fox Sparrow



*Prairie Warbler*, Castlewood Canyon SP, 20 Jun 2009. Photo by Andrew Shaum

(*P. i. iliaca/zaboria*) were accepted. One was in rural Castle Rock, *Douglas*, on 22 Dec 2008 (RO †; 2008-125; 7-0) and another was at Bear Creek County Park in Colorado Springs, *El Paso*, on 3 Nov 2008 (BM †; 2008-131; 7-0).

**Golden-crowned Sparrow** – *Zono-*



*Canada Warbler*, Chico Basin Ranch, Pueblo County, 28 May 2009. Photo by Glenn Walbek

*trichia atricapilla* (25/15). An immature Golden-crowned Sparrow was at a feeder at a residence in Lakewood on 11 Oct 2008 (NL †; 2008-119; 7-0) and was the third for *Jefferson*. An adult was at CBR, *El Paso*, on 15 May (BGi †; 2008-63; 7-0) and was the second for the county; the first was only earlier that same year. Finally, the immature that showed up at Tunnel Drive in Cañon City, *Fremont*,



*Golden-crowned Sparrow, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, Jefferson County, 8 Nov 2008. Photo by Norm Lewis*

during the winter of 2007 returned as an adult to the same location, where it was documented on 22 Dec 2008 (LS †, RM; 2008-148; 7-0). The bird was apparently first detected on 17 Dec and remained into 2009, though no details were provided to the CBRC on the true date span of its presence.

**Painted Bunting** – *Passerina ciris* (32/16). Two were recently accepted. An adult female was photographed five miles south of Lamar on 5 May 2008 (JS †; 2008-51; 7-0) and an immature female was at Rye in *Pueblo* on 20 Aug 2008 (DS; 2008-96; 7-0).

**Bobolink** – *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*. Rare in *Prowers*, an alternate-plumaged male was photographed five miles south of Lamar on 18 May 2008 (JS †; 2008-70; 7-0).

### RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

The Committee recognizes that its

decisions may upset some observers. We heartily acknowledge that those who make the effort to submit documentation certainly care whether or not their reports are accepted. However, non-accepted records do not necessarily suggest that the birder misidentified or did not see the species. A non-accepted record only indicates that the documentation was not complete or convincing enough to catalogue on the list of confirmed bird records for the state. Non-accepted reports may provide evidence that does not mention certain requisite field marks or which indicates that the conditions of the observation did not permit the proper study of all necessary traits. All non-accepted records are archived at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science and may be reconsidered by the Committee if new information is provided (e.g., photos, documentation from other observers).

We summarize below why the following reports were not accepted.

**Eurasian Wigeon** – *Anas penelope*.

The report of an amazing six Eurasian Wigeons of both sexes in Boulder on 18 Oct 2008 gained little Committee endorsement (2008-150; 1-6). The observer's description of the males included that they had buff crown stripes, a green eye stripe, white markings on the side of the body, a whitish beak, green flecking along the flanks, and distinct black and white "bottoms." The females were only described as brown with mottled feathers and white beaks. The description of the females could apply to females of many waterfowl species, and the description of the males actually matches that of American Wigeon (*A. americana*). No mention of the buffy-orange head pattern or the

gray sides of a male Eurasian Wigeon was provided.

**Snow Bunting** – *Plectrophenax nivalis*.

A bird described from a feeder in Windsor, Larimer, on 11 Oct 2008 as being about the size of a House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) with a dark beak and extensive white featheration with patches of brown turned out to be a leucistic House Finch, as evidenced by the submitted photograph of the bird (2008-121, 0-7). The Committee cautions observers that leucism (presence of an abnormal amount of white featheration on a bird) occurs to a fair extent in many species and that additional physical features besides color should be used to determine the specific identity of a bird. In this case, the bird sported the normal thick, convex bill and the noticeably forked tail of a House Finch.

## REPORTERS AND CITED OBSERVERS

The CBRC graciously thanks the following individuals for submitting records of or discovering rare species in Colorado that prompted this circulation: Patricia Backes; GC: Greg Cook; SC: Susan Craig; CD: Coen Dexter; LE: Lisa Edwards; TF: Ted Floyd; MF: Mike Freiberg; BGe: Bob Germany; BGi: Brian Gibbons; TH: Thomas Hall; CH: Carolyn Hancock; RH: Rachel Hopper; BJ: Beverly Jensen; Anne Kaltreider; JK: Joey Kellner; NK: Nick Komar; SL: Steve Larson; DL: David Leatherman; TL: Tony Leukering; NL: Norm Lewis; BM: Bill Maynard; RM: Rich Miller; RO: Ric Olson; BKP: Brandon K. Percival; MP: Mark Peterson; SP: Suzi Plooster; LS: Larry Semo; SSh: Scott Shaum; DS: Dave Silverman; AS: Andrew Spencer; SS: Steve Stachowiak; BS: Brad Steger; JS: Jane Stulp; WS: Walter Szeliga; GW: Glenn Walbek; CW: Cole Wild.

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*Lawrence S. Semo*, 9054 Dover St., Westminster, CO 80021, lsemo@swca.com

