

# The 65<sup>th</sup> Report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee

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## **Introduction**

This 65<sup>th</sup> report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee (hereafter CBRC or Committee) presents the results of deliberations of the CBRC involving 67 reports submitted by 29 observers and documenting 49 occurrences of 27 species (or recognizable forms) from the period October 2000 to March 2012. Per CBRC bylaws, all accepted records received a final 7-0 or 6-1 vote to accept. Each report that was not accepted received five or fewer votes to accept.

Highlights of this report include the state's second record of Western Gull, multiple Glaucous-winged and Iceland Gull records, 11 records of Snowy Owl from winter 2011-2012, and the state's fifth Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. With publication of this report, the state list remains at 493 species.

Committee members voting on these reports were John Drummond, Doug Faulkner, Peter Gent, Bill Maynard, Bill Schmoker, David Silverman, and Glenn Walbek.

## **Committee Functions**

The Committee solicits documentation of reports in Colorado for all species published in its review list, including both the main list ([http://www.cfobirds.org/records/review\\_list.htm](http://www.cfobirds.org/records/review_list.htm)) and the conditional lists (Semo et al. 2002; <http://www.cfobirds.org/records/reports.htm>), and for reports of species with no prior accepted record in Colorado. Documentary materials should be submitted online at the CBRC website (<http://www.cfobirds.org/CBRC/login.php>).

## **Committee News**

Committee members may serve two consecutive three-year terms. At the end of December 2012, Glenn Walbek completed his first term on the CBRC. He has graciously agreed to serve a second term. Also at the end of December 2012, Peter Gent's second consecutive term ended. This also concluded Peter's third stint (not the bird) on the Committee, including one as Chair. I personally thank Peter for his sound advice, insight, and support during my first year as Chair. Thank you Glenn and Peter for your service to CFO and the CBRC.

## Corrigendum

The 64<sup>th</sup> CBRC Report (October 2012) mistakenly noted the photograph date of two *hrota* Brant as 20 December 2011. The actual date is 2 December 2011. Thanks to Nick Komar for alerting me to this error.

## 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 during the most recent 10-year time period (2002–2011). 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 53<sup>rd</sup> Supplement (Chesser et al. 2012). 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, the second and third rounds (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 (or people) contributed documentation; additional contributors' initials follow in alphabetical order by last name. If the finder(s) is (are) known with certainty, but did not submit documentation, those initials are underlined and presented last. Observers submitting a photograph or video capture have a dagger (†) following their initials; initials of those who submitted video are indicated by a lower-case, italicized "v" (*v*); and those who submitted audio spectrograms 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 is listed 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" 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.



*"Mexican Duck" (Mallard),  
Pueblo City Park, Pueblo  
County, 12 January 2012.  
Photo by Steve Mlodinow*

*Snowy Owl,  
Aurora Reser-  
voir, Arapahoe  
County, 28  
December 2011.  
Photo by John  
Drummond*



*Anna's Hummingbird, private residence  
near Lakewood, Jefferson County, 14-16  
October 2011. Photo by Mark Chavez*



*Scarlet Tanager, Valco Ponds SWA,  
Pueblo County, 19-21 October 2011.  
Photo by Brandon Percival*

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 first and final dates on which a rare species was seen, as that provides historical evidence of the true extent of its stay.

For this report, abbreviations are used for Chico Basin Ranch (CBR), Crow Valley Campground (CVCG), Highway (Hwy), Reservoir (Res.), State Park (SP), and State Wildlife Area (SWA).

## RECORDS ACCEPTED

**Brant** – *Branta bernicla* (21/9). The CBRC reviewed documentation of a juvenile *nigricans* (Black Brant) observed at Bittersweet Park, Greeley, *Weld*, 13 December 2003 – 2 January 2004, and Brunner Lake, *Broomfield*, 24 January - 24 February 2004 (DF†, AG†, RH†, RL, BS†, BGu; 2003-96; 7-0). Schmoker presented a detailed plumage comparison, including a photo collage, leaving no doubt that the two sightings were of the same individual. Gent (2004a) noted that this individual had been present since fall 2003 (no date given) and that it had also been observed at Lower Latham Res., *Weld*, in late December; however, there is no mention of a Brant in the fall 2003 *News from the Field* (Gent 2004b). Additional documentation on this individual providing an expanded date range or new location would be appreciated. Two juvenile *nigricans* Brant were observed at City Park Lake, Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, 15 November 2011 (RH†, DLe; 2012-16; 7-0).

**Eurasian Wigeon** – *Anas penelope* (40/16). The CBRC continues to work through a backlog of historical

documentations that for one reason or another had not been circulated previously, including this one of a male at Pueblo City Park, *Pueblo*, 24 October 2002 (RL; 2002-108; 7-0). This individual apparently overwintered, with a reported stay of 12 October 2002 - 19 April 2003 (Gent 2003, Semo et al. 2003). Overwintering individuals are very rare in Colorado. The great majority of accepted reports have been from mid-March through mid-April, though a much smaller fall peak exists from mid-October into mid-November.

**American Black Duck** – *Anas rubripes* (19/1). The state's 19<sup>th</sup> record is represented by an adult male at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, 19 February 2012 (SM; 2012-18; 7-0). Interestingly, an apparent female American Black Duck × Mallard hybrid was present at Jackson Res. the same day, seemingly paired with a male Mallard (Leukering and Mlodinow, in press). The species is known for Colorado from specimens dating back to 1904. However, it has become increasingly difficult to find in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as there is only one other recent record (Union Res., *Weld*, 30 November

2002; CBRC#2002-102), but nine spread throughout the 1990s.

**Mexican Duck** – *Anas platyrhynchos diazi*. The CBRC accepted two additional records of this form in 2012: of an adult male at Pueblo City Park, *Pueblo*, 1-25 January (SM†, TL†; 2012-3; 7-0), and of another male at the Firestone Gravel Pits, *Weld*, 4 March 2012 (SM; 2012-20; 7-0). Birders are encouraged to read the article by Leukering and Mlodinow (2012) regarding this species' taxonomy, hybridization, identification, and occurrence in Colorado.

**Yellow-billed Loon** – *Gavia adamsii* (23/8). Two records for this species from 2005 were recently accepted by the CBRC. Both records pertain to juveniles observed at multiple locations during their stays in Colorado. A juvenile was at Standley Lake, *Jefferson*, 4-5 November, and what is presumed to be the same individual resided at Chatfield Res., *Douglas/Jefferson*, 7-17 November (DF, AS†, LS; 2005-113; 7-0). The passage of another juvenile, considered different from the November bird based on noticeable plumage differences, through the state was remarkably captured by observant birders along the Front Range (BM†, BKP†, AS, JK; 2005-135; 7-0). It was initially discovered at Chatfield Res., *Douglas/Jefferson*, on 3 December, then observed at Big Johnson Res., *El Paso*, and at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, on 4 December. Percival photographed the bird at both Big Johnson Res. and Pueblo Res. on the same day, after which the bird was not seen again.

**Neotropic Cormorant** – *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* (21/10). An adult

was documented for Cherry Creek SP, *Arapahoe*, 22 October 2011 (KN†, CH; 2011-147; 7-0). The documentations mention that 1-2 adults and 1-3 juveniles were present that day. However, the CBRC decided that the documentations supported the occurrence of only a single adult (by photograph), as the reports differed in the number of adults/juveniles involved, and one observer expressed caution about the identification of the juvenile cormorants.

**Mountain Plover** – *Charadrius montanus*. Very rare after mid-September (Andrews and Righter 1992), one was photographed at the BYO Playa north of Briggsdale, *Weld*, 2 October 2011 (NK†; 2011-130; 5-2, 6-1).

**Western Gull** – *Larus occidentalis* (2/2). Nine months after the state's first (Chatfield Res., *Douglas/Jefferson*, 1-18 June 2011; CBRC#2011-45), Colorado's second Western Gull was discovered at Prewitt Res., *Washington*, 17 March 2012 (SM†; 2012-28; 6-1). This third-cycle individual, and a documented adult currently under review by the CBRC, highlighted the gull menagerie at Prewitt Res. during March 2012, where a massive fish die-off provided ideal feeding conditions for attracting and holding rarities (see also the Iceland Gull and Glaucous-winged Gull accounts).

**Iceland Gull** – *Larus glaucooides* (21/19). A juvenile visited Siena Pond, *Broomfield*, 14 January 2012 (SM; 2012-6; 6-1) for that county's first record. A second-cycle individual made an appearance at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, 19 February 2012 (SM†; 2012-21; 7-0). In addition, Prewitt

Res., Washington, held three Iceland Gulls in March 2012; one second-cycle, 11 March (SM†; 2012-23; 7-0); one subadult, 11 March (SM; 2012-24; 7-0); and one first-cycle, 17 March (SM; 2012-27; 7-0). Colorado's Iceland Gull records span 13 November to 1 April, and all have been from the eastern half of the state.

**Glaucous-winged Gull** – *Larus glaucescens* (21/11). The CBRC originally did not accept as a Colorado record the documentation submitted for a first-cycle individual at Cherry Creek SP, *Arapahoe*, 24 February 2002. Another observer heard about the CBRC's decision and submitted additional documentation of the bird's occurrence on 26 February 2002 corroborating the bird's presence (RL, RO†, AS†; 2002-139; 7-0). An unprecedented four individuals of this species were found during a two-week period in March 2012. Prewitt Res., Washington, held three of them: one second-cycle, 11 March (SM; 2012-22; 7-0); one first-cycle, 17 March (SM; 2012-26; 7-0); and one adult, 25 March (SM†; 2012-35; 7-0). *Boulder's* second was represented by a first-cycle individual at Panama Res. #1, 15 March 2012 (SM; 2012-36; 7-0). Although the species has been found at other times of the year, a strong trend of occurrence in March is apparent, as 12 of the state's 21 records are from that month.

**Arctic Tern** – *Sterna paradisaea* (18/9). A second-cycle individual at North Poudre Res. #3, *Larimer*, 22 September 2004 (RH; 2004-50:7-0) was within the expected mid-fall period of occurrence for this species in

Colorado. Eleven of the state's 18 records are from mid-September to early October.

**Pomarine Jaeger** – *Stercorarius pomarinus* (25/7). An adult light-morph individual was at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, 1 Oct 2000 (TL; 2007-64; 7-0); it was also reported for 30 September. The *News from the Field* for fall 2000 (Gent 2001) includes an incredible number of jaeger reports (5 Pomarine, 8 Parasitic, and 1 Long-tailed). The CBRC database has documentation for three Pomarines (13 October, Chatfield Res., *Douglas/Jefferson*; 1 Oct, Jackson Res., *Morgan*; 8 October, Bonny Res., *Yuma*) and only one Parasitic (9-13 October, Chatfield Res., *Douglas/Jefferson*), with no documentation of the Long-tailed. If you have photographs or other documentation of the remaining jaegers, please submit them to the CBRC so we can keep an accurate accounting of these species' occurrences in the state.

**Parasitic Jaeger** – *Stercorarius parasiticus* (11/4). The second Parasitic for 2004, and just the fourth in the past 10 years, a juvenile, harassed gulls (and undoubtedly other species as well) at Luna Res., *Weld*, 31 October 2004 (TL, JV; 2004-59; 7-0). Leukering observed the jaeger chasing a gull across 11 Road, which forms the boundary between *Broomfield* and *Weld*, thereby surreptitiously adding a species to the *Broomfield* list.

**Long-tailed Jaeger** – *Stercorarius longicaudus* (24/16). The CBRC added three records for this species dating back to 2003. A juvenile was at Barr Lake SP, *Adams*, 31 August 2003 (TL, BGi; 2003-151; 7-0). The first iden-

tified Long-tailed for western Colorado was an adult at a gravel pit along the Gunnison River south of Grand Junction, Mesa, 1-2 September 2009 (CD†, DLe; 2011-7; 7-0). Western Colorado has very few reports of jaegers (Richter et al. 2004) and only two records confirmed to species – of this individual and of a subadult Pomarine at Stagecoach Res., Routt, 17 June 1999 (CBRC#1999-46).

**Snowy Owl** – *Bubo scandiacus* (29/8). The U.S. witnessed a massive irruption of this species during the 2011-2012 winter that even included Hawaii's first record (<http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/the-winter-of-the-snowy-owl>). Colorado was not excluded from the event, with the CBRC unanimously accepting 11 records for this species (Table 1). The reported ages and sexes of these individuals are left out of this report since there is some difficulty in distinguishing between some age/sex classes (e.g., immature male and adult female). The *News from the Field* reports

covering the winter and spring seasons (Such and Such 2012a, 2012b) included several other observations for which the CBRC did not receive documentation. It is not too late! Just how extensive was the Snowy Owl invasion of 2011-2012? One way to gain perspective is to consider that prior to this past winter, Colorado had a total of 18 records and just seven for the 12-year span from winter 1999-2000 through winter 2010-2011.

**Blue-throated Hummingbird** – *Lampornis clemenciae* (14/2). Representing a first county record for Larimer, a female came to a feeder at a private residence in the Poudre Canyon along Hwy 14 near Hewlett Gulch, where it was documented for 3 July 2011 (DLo v; 2011-96; 6-1). The reporting observer noted that the bird had been present for several weeks prior to his observation. All of the state's records have occurred from mid-June into late September, the vast majority from montane or West Slope locations.

Table 1. CBRC Snowy Owl Records for Winter 2011–12.

Accession #	Location	County	Reporting Observers	Record Date Span
2011-178	N. Sterling SP	Logan	KMD†, BK	20 Dec 2011
2011-181	Aurora Res.	Arapahoe	JD†	28 Dec 2011
2012-2	Jumbo Res.	Sedgwick	BK	1 Jan 2012
2012-5	Harvest Rd	Adams	DF†, NL, SM, SW†, PP	2-25 Jan 2012
2012-44	Harvest & Piccadilly Rds	Adams	DF†, TL†, KN†	8 Jan – 21 Feb 2012
2012-43	12 Rd north of LL Rd	Prowers	TL†, JS†	28-29 Jan 2012
2012-70	26.5 Rd south of Hwy 50	Bent	JS†, L&NV	4 Feb 2012
2012-14	49 Rd south of 108 Rd	Weld	TH, DLe	14 Feb 2012
2012-33	Red Lion SWA	Logan	SM†	25 March 2012
2012-34	Hwy 52 and 79 Rd	Weld	SM†, BS†	25 March 2012
2012-37	I-70 near Bovina	Lincoln	RM†	26 March 2012

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird** – *Archilochus colubris* (14/9). Custer's first record was represented by a presumed female (the bird lacked the red gorget spotting typical of immature males) at a private residence near Lake Isabel, 31 August 2011 (BKP†; 2012-11; 7-0).

**Anna's Hummingbird** – *Calypte anna* (10/2). An immature visited a feeder at a private residence near Lakewood, Jefferson, 14-16 October 2011 (MC†; 2012-19; 7-0). Although Anna's Hummingbirds have been found in spring and summer, they are more likely to occur in Colorado during late fall, as six of the state's ten records have initial sighting dates between 27 September and 5 December, inclusive.

**Costa's Hummingbird** – *Calypte costae* (6/5). Although it may be too early to say for certain, the occurrence of one at a feeder in Rye, Pueblo, on the lone date of 3 September 2011 (DS; 2011-112; 6-1) adds another data point leaning toward a trend of summer/fall visits by Costa's. Two of the six records are from September, while there are single records for May, July, August, and December.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** – *Empidonax flaviventris* (5/4). The state's fifth, and the second for Pueblo, was observed in Rock Canyon, 27-28 August 2011 (BKP†; 2012-10; 7-0). The species appears to be a rare spring and fall migrant. Initial dates of occurrence are 20 and 28 May for the two spring records and 13 and 27 August for the fall records. The outlier is a single summer record for 24 June. In Kansas, eBird data suggest that peak

spring occurrence there is during the third week of May and peak fall occurrence is during the third week of September.

**Great Crested Flycatcher** – *Myiarchus crinitus*. Very rare in Pueblo, one was found in Rock Canyon below the Pueblo Res. dam, 8 September 2011 (BKP†; 2012-12; 7-0).

**Bell's Vireo** – *Vireo bellii*. Rare away from the far eastern plains, one was documented for CBR, El Paso, 4 September 2011 (BM†; 2012-9; 7-0).

**Hermit Thrush** – *Catharus guttatus*. Documentation of an adult of the Northern Group (*C. g. nanus*; Pyle 1997) at CVCG, Weld, 16 April 2011 (SM; 2011-72; 7-0) continues the recent trend of observers noting subspecific identities of Colorado's avifauna. Andrews and Righter (1992) did not note subspecies, but Bailey and Niedrach (1965) considered the subspecies *euboria* (now *euborius*; Pyle 1997), a member of the Northern Group, to be a regular migrant in spring and fall. It is worthwhile for birders to note subspecies so that future Colorado ornithological references can more fully elucidate the state's avifaunal composition. However, the CBRC does not normally review subspecies of non-main review list species unless there is reason to believe that such an occurrence is rare, or in order to gain more information in anticipation of a species split (e.g., Red Fox Sparrow). In this case, the Chair considered the lack of information in the ornithological literature for this subspecies group since 1965 in sending the documentation to the Committee for review. With the substantial interest by the Colorado birding communi-





*Golden-crowned Sparrow*, Teller Farms Open Space, Boulder County, 12 March 2012. Photo by Steve Mlodinow

ty in noting subspecific identities and Colorado's geographic juxtaposition between several eastern and western subspecies ranges, the CBRC will need to provide more clarity for which subspecies, if any, should be documented. Stay tuned.

**Golden-crowned Sparrow** – *Zonotrichia atricapilla* (32/17). Presumably the same sparrow that overwintered at Teller Farms, Boulder, in 2010-2011 (CBRC#2011-31) returned for a second winter. It was documented by a single observer for 3 March 2012 (SM†; 2012-32; 7-0).

**Northern Cardinal** – *Cardinalis cardinalis*. Another rarity for Pueblo

found by Percival, one male was discovered at Valco Ponds, Pueblo, 18 October 2011, that was joined by another male cardinal on 22 October (BKP†; 2012-13: 7-0).

**Scarlet Tanager** – *Piranga olivacea*. A female-plumaged tanager was at Valco Ponds SWA, Pueblo, 19-21 October 2011 (BKP†; 2011-145; 7-0). This individual differed from one found in that area on 8 October (CBRC#2011-138) due to a partial single white

wingbar on its greater primary coverts. According to outside expert opinion obtained by the reporting observer, that characteristic is seen in a small fraction of Scarlet Tanagers. Otherwise, the bird's other plumage features and bill characteristics were a good fit for Scarlet Tanager.

**Purple Finch** – *Haemorhous purpureus* (41/11). A female-plumaged individual was at a private residence in Boulder, Boulder, 3-4 February 2011 (MB; 2012-8; 7-0). The vast majority of Colorado's records have been from mid-October through January, with a surprising dearth of sightings later in winter or during early spring.

## REPORTERS AND CITED OBSERVERS

The CBRC graciously thanks the following individuals for submitting records of or discovering the rare species in Colorado discussed in this report: Maggie Boswell, Mark Chavez, Coen Dexter, John Drummond, Kathy Mihm Dunning, Doug Faulkner, Peter Gent, Brian Gibbons (BGi), Al Guarente, Bryan Guarente (BGu), Thomas Hall, Rachel Hopper, Chuck Hundertmark, Bill Kaempfer, Joey Kellner, Nicholas Komar, David Leatherman (DLe), Norm Lewis, Dan Loiz (DLo), Tony Leukering, Roger Linfield, Robert Martinez, Bill Maynard, Steve Mlodinow, Kayleen Niyo, Ric Olson, Brandon

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