

## THE 38TH REPORT OF THE COLORADO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

Tony Leukering  
Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory  
14500 Lark Bunting Lane  
Brighton, CO 80603  
[cbrc@cfo-link.org](mailto:cbrc@cfo-link.org)

Lawrence S. Semo  
9054 Dover St.  
Westminster, CO 80021  
[lsemo@swca.com](mailto:lsemo@swca.com)

### Introduction

The Colorado Bird Records Committee (hereafter, CBRC or Committee) here provides the 38th report of its deliberations on submissions to the CBRC for documentation and archival purposes. In this article, we provide the results of the circulation of 89 reports submitted by 41 observers documenting 80 occurrences of 65 species and one hybrid. This article deals primarily with 2002 occurrences, but reports included here date back to 1996. Of the reports here considered, the CBRC accepted 63 records of 48 species and one hybrid and did not accept 17 reports. Per CBRC Bylaws, all accepted records received final 7-0 or 6-1 votes to accept. Each report that was not accepted received fewer than four votes to accept in the final vote for that report. The CBRC wishes to reiterate that the main reason reports are not accepted is that those reports either do not support the identification or do not fully describe the bird in question, thus failing to eliminate all other identification contenders.

The documents reviewed here include reports on Colorado's second Zonetailed Hawk and third Lucy's Warbler. Reports on other very rare species, Common Black-Hawk, Gyrfalcon, Curlew Sandpiper, and Common Ground-Dove are also commented upon here. Though this article reports on no species for which the Committee accepted a first state record, the state list total still climbs one to 477 with the split of Canada Goose into two species (A.O.U. 2004). We here add Cackling Goose to the state list on the strength of specimens of *hutchinsii* (#s 14708, 14709, 26814, 26974, and 33782) at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, as reported by Bailey and Niedrach (1965). Additionally, two reports of Black Vulture are currently circulating and, if accepted, would add a species to the state list. The top four observers submitting the most documents for inclusion here are: Jim Beatty (11), Ric

Olson (7), Tony Leukering (6), and Susan Allerton (5). Seven observers submitted three documents each and another seven submitted two documents each. Committee members voting on some or all of these reports were Coen Dexter, Tony Leukering, Ric Olson, Brandon Percival, Karleen Schofield, Larry Semo, John Vanderpoel, and Christopher L. Wood.

### Corrigenda

In Part I of the 2001 report (Leukering and Semo 2003), please correct the accession number of the Western Scrub-Jay report in Summit County. The number should be 2001-91, not 2001-71 as reported. The latter accession number correctly refers to a record of Yellow-crowned Night-Heron. Also, the Golden-crowned Sparrow record reported in Part I as 2001-024 and corrected to 2001-131 in Part II (Leukering and Semo 2004) should really be 2001-113. Boy, did we make a hash of that one! Finally, the vote tally of 7-0 was omitted from a Black Scoter record (2001-93) published in Part II (Leukering and Semo 2004).

### The Finders of Birds

The CBRC tries to keep up with who finds various rare birds and endeavors to report that information in its reports, whether or not the finder submits documentation. However, in many instances, we are unable to determine from the documentations submitted or from the seasonal report in *Colorado Birds*, who actually first put name to any given rare bird. So, we ask those submitting documentation to the Committee to indicate who found the bird, but only if that information is known with certainty. In the case that one does not know who the finder is, please indicate that. The CBRC thanks you.

### Committee Functions

All reports received (written documentation, photographs, videotapes, and/or sound recordings) by the CBRC 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, both the main and supplementary lists (Semo et al. 2002, Semo and Leukering 2004), and for reports of species with no prior accepted records in Colorado. While documentary materials can be submitted in hard copy to Tony Leukering (PO Box 660, Brighton, CO 80601), the CBRC would greatly appreciate submission via the new CBRC website, which is scheduled to be available before the end of 2004. The members' term-expiration dates are printed on this journal's masthead. Please note that though Leukering's term of service to the CBRC will be completed at the end of 2004, the physical address for snail mail submissions will remain the same—at least in the short term.

### Report Format

The organization and style of this report follow that of Leukering and Semo (2003), with some alterations. This report consists of three parts: Part I consists of accepted records, Part II lists those reports that were not accepted because the documentation did not support the identification and/or eliminate all similar species, and Part III lists those reports of birds whose identification was not questioned but whose wild origin was.

The nomenclature and sequence of these lists follow the American Ornithologists' Union (1998, 2003). As of 1 January 2002, the CBRC removed from the main review list, but **only** from the main review list, those species preceded by the pound, or number, sign (#; Semo et al. 2002), thus the reports here are from a period when the species were on the main review list. Those species' names preceded by the plus symbol (+) are species that are rare in certain parts of the state or at certain times of the year and for which the CBRC requests documentation from those areas (Semo et al. 2002, Semo and Leukering 2004). Finally, an asterisk preceding a species' name indicates that the species is not currently on any CBRC review list (Semo et al. 2002), but that the report is of some interest, due to location, date, plumage, etc., but for which documentation would not be required. Note that the CBRC added two species to the review list in 2002 despite a long history of occurrence in the state: Tundra Swan and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Thus, the numbers of accepted records of these species only refer to those submitted after 2001.

The numbers in parentheses after each species' name represent the total number of accepted records for Colorado followed by the number of accepted records in the past ten years (1993 - 2002). The latter number is of importance, as it is one of the criteria for a species' placement on the main CBRC review list (Semo et al. 2002). However, note that the number of accepted records will decline for some species as the CBRC tackles the backlog of determinations as to how many of the accepted records are simply recurrences in subsequent years of a known individual.

Within each species account, records are listed chronologically by first date of occurrence, with all reports originating from a year prior to 2002 having the year **bold-faced**. 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), official record number, and 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 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 and initials of those that submitted videotape are indicated by a lower-case, italicized "v" (*v*). Thus, the parenthetical expression of a report in Part I "(JD *v*, RA†, PEL, BR, DAS; 2002-36; 4-3, 5-2)" means: JD found the bird(s) and submitted documentation (including video) and as the finder, is first in the list of those that 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 2002-36; and in the three rounds of voting, the first-round vote was four "accepted" votes and three "not accepted" votes, the second-round vote was 5-2 in favor of accepting the report, and since this report was listed in Part I, the report was accepted at a CBRC meeting. The decision on most reports is completed on the first round.

In this report, county names are italicized, in keeping with the style established for the *News from the Field* section in this journal (e.g., Semo and Wood 2003). 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.

Abbreviations used in this report are: **ACR**=Adobe Creek Reservoir (aka Blue Lake), *Kiowa/Bent* (county indicated in account); **BLSP**=Barr Lake SP, *Adams*; **BR**=Bonny Res., *Yuma*; **CVCG**=Crow Valley Campground, Pawnee National Grassland, *Weld*; **LCC**=Lamar Community College, *Prowers*; **LSP**=Lathrop SP, *Huerfano*; **MR**=Milton Res., *Weld*; **PaR**=Pastorius Res., *La Plata*; **PCP**=Pueblo City Park, *Pueblo*; **PuR**=Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*; **Res.**=reservoir; **SP**=State Park; **SWA**=State Wildlife Area; **TBSWA**=Two Buttes SWA, *Baca/Prowers* (county indicated at each citation); **ZP**=Zink's Pond, near CR 215 south of Durango, *La Plata*

### **Part I: Records Accepted**

TRUMPETER SWAN - *Cygnus buccinator* (22/13). An immature was found at TBSWA, *Baca*, on 22 March 2002 (DL; 2002-33; 7-0). The documentation submitted included lovely sketches of the bird's head in profile and head-on, nicely illustrating the important features in identifying our native swans.

TUNDRA SWAN - *Cygnus columbianus* (2/2). The CBRC only recently added

Tundra Swan to the main review list and we here report on the first two reviewed and accepted records. Two adults graced Horseshoe Lake in LSP 10-12 March 2002 (DS, DJ; 2002-31; 7-0), though the birds were only documented on the last date of that period. Two adults with a juvenile in tow visited Martin Lake in LSP in November 2002 but were only documented on the 7th (JBy, JKy; 2002-189; 7-0). One Committee member expressly did not accept the accompanying juvenile, as he felt that the description of that individual did not eliminate Trumpeter Swan.

EURASIAN WIGEON - *Anas penelope* (24/10). A male put in an appearance at Wiley, *Prowers*, on 21 March 2002 (DL; 2002-32; 7-0). The bird was apparently not present the next day.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK - *Anas rubripes* (18/6). A female foraged with Mallards at Lower Latham Reservoir, *Weld*, on 30 November 2002 (TL †, RO; 2002-102; 7-0) and was tallied on Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's (RMBO) Early-winter Waterbird Count. A couple of members expressed some concern about the long distance at which the bird was seen (~700 meters), but the pictures and descriptions left no doubt as to the identity of the bird. The last accepted state record occurred in 1999.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK x MALLARD - *Anas rubripes* x *platyrhynchos*. A very American Black-Duck-looking male dabbler was found at the Haxtun sewage ponds, *Phillips*, 30 November 2002 (DF †; 2002-128; 7-0) on RMBO's Early-winter Waterbird Count. Though the bird could easily have passed for a "pure" American Black Duck, the presence of white outer webs to the outer rectrices and the upturned uppertail coverts (called "tail feathers" in the report) indicated that Mallard genes could be found if one were to look closely enough. The darkness of the bird also ruled out Mottled (*A. fulvigula*) and Mexican (*A. platyrhynchos diazi*) ducks.

+ PACIFIC LOON - *Gavia pacifica*. An adult visited LSP 25 November 2002 (BS; 2002-109; 7-0) for a first documented *Huerfano* record. Semo et al. (2002) asked for documentation of occurrences of this species west of the 6000' Front Range contour; LSP rests at about 6200'.

\* RED-NECKED GREBE - *Podiceps grisegena*. An alternate-plumaged adult foraged on a pond at the Pueblo Nature Center, *Pueblo*, 2 May 2002 (DS; 2002-44; 7-0).

BROWN PELICAN - *Pelecanus occidentalis* (14/8). A juvenile or immature was at PuR 4-13 May 2002 (NP, LA; 2002-207; 7-0), but was documented as occurring only on the 8th.

ZONE-TAILED HAWK - *Buteo albonotatus* (2/2). Three lucky observers followed an adult from PCP to PuR, *Pueblo*, 27 April 2002 (DL, JMA;

2002-43; 6-1). This occurrence provides only the second state record, with the first occurring in the Colorado National Monument, *Mesa*, in July 1999.

+ PIPING PLOVER - *Charadrius melodus*. One at BR 17 April **2001** (DF; 2002-15; 7-0) provided a rare record in Colorado away from the breeding areas in the lower Arkansas River valley.

\* MOUNTAIN PLOVER - *Charadrius montanus*. One, presumably a migrant, was near Mack, *Mesa*, on 9 April **2001** (KP; 2002-35; 7-0). The date reported here is that provided on the documentation. However, Righter et al. (2004) mention this record but state it as occurring on 10 April 2002. The documentation's author (in litt.) provided Leukering confirmation of the published date of 10 April 2002.

RUDDY TURNSTONE - *Arenaria interpres* (29/12). An alternate-plumaged adult graced BR on 20 May 2001 (NP; 2002-121; 7-0).

\* PECTORAL SANDPIPER - *Calidris melanotos*. Two were probing the mud at PaR 15 April 2002 (JBy; 2002-37; 7-0). Righter et al. (2004) report no spring records in western Colorado. Another, in basic plumage, was at the west end (east of the causeway) of Lake Cheraw, *Otero*, on the very late date of 19 December 2002 (TL; 2002-178; 7-0). The bird was at the same location as a Dunlin and both were recorded on the Rocky Ford Christmas Bird Count conducted that day.

RED PHALAROPE - *Phalaropus fulicaria* (27/11). An adult in basic plumage foraged on MR 25 August 2002 (RO; 2002-74; 7-0). Another adult visited Vega Res., *Mesa*, 12 October 2002 (RL; 2002-86; 7-0). The latter bird provided only the second accepted West Slope record, the first being a bird at Meeker, *Rio Blanco*, on 27 April 1979. Righter et al. (2004), however, note two other reports, including one at Vega Res.

MEW GULL - *Larus canus brachyrhynchus* (25/15). A basic-plumaged adult visited PuR 11 March 2002 (BKP; 2002-30; 7-0) and an individual in first basic plumage was at Runyon Lake, *Pueblo*, 11 December 2002 - 11 January 2003 but was documented as occurring only on 29 December 2002 (RM, BKP; 2002-208; 7-0).

\* SABINE'S GULL - *Xema sabini*. An adult provided some excitement at San Luis Lake, *Alamosa*, 26 September 2002 (DRi; 2002-84; 7-0). As Andrews and Righter (1992) report no previous records in the San Luis Valley, the record is certainly of interest. The icing on Rintoul's cake was provided by the fact that the bird was in definitive alternate plumage; adults are not seen with great frequency in Colorado.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE - *Rissa tridactyla* (26/11). An adult in basic plumage graced Union Res., *Weld*, 6 December 2002 (BS, CLW; 2002-112; 7-0) and, apparently, provided only the second Colorado record of an adult.

- + EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE - *Streptopelia decaocto*. One was about one mile east of Ft. Morgan, *Morgan*, on 23 December **2001** (RP; 2001-147; 5-2, 7-0), providing a first accepted county record. Birds had been reported from Ft. Morgan for over a year prior to this record, but without submission to the CBRC.
- \* WHITE-WINGED DOVE - *Zenaida asiatica*. One near ZP on 17 April 2002 (JBy; 2002-38; 7-0) provided a rare county record. Another was at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR, *Adams*, 13 May 2002 (DRh; 2002-88; 6-1).
- BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO - *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* (16/3). Yaeger found one at PCP in spring 2002 on the somewhat-early date of 13 May (MY; 2002-63; 7-0)
- YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER - *Sphyrapicus varius* (2/2). The CBRC only recently added this species to the state review list (Semo et al. 2002) and the records reported here are the first reviewed. An adult male visited the vicinity of ZP on 1 October 2001 (JBy; 2002-211; 7-0) and an immature female matriculated at PCP during the winter of 2001-2002 and was documented on 2 March 2002 (RO; 2002-24; 7-0).
- ALDER FLYCATCHER - *Empidonax alnorum* (12/5). An individual heard to call once was in the shelterbelt of a private ranch west of Norfolk, *Larimer*, on 11 June 2002 (TL; 2002-148; 6-1). Though the plumage was seen quite well and described, one Committee member was concerned about identifying an Alder Flycatcher on the strength of only one call note, as Willow Flycatcher can give some Alder-like call notes.
- VERMILION FLYCATCHER - *Pyrocephala rubinus* (22/10). An immature male spent the **2001** Christmas holiday (23-31 December) in Pueblo, *Pueblo* (MY; 2002-190; 6-1), but was only documented as occurring on the first date. Colorado has only a few previous winter records of the species. Another immature male brightened the LCC grove on 30 April 2002 (BG; 2002-160; 7-0).
- SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER - *Tyrannus forficatus* (19/14). An adult at Dotsero, *Eagle*, on 17 May 2002 (JMe; 2002-89; 7-0) provided a first accepted West Slope record. Righter et al. (2004) state that there are more than 10 reports from the area of the book's purview, including that of an apparent nester (Dexter 1995, Potter 1998), but nary a one of those has been submitted to the CBRC.
- \* YELLOW-THROATED VIREO - *Vireo flavifrons*. One was at Welchester Tree Park, *Jefferson*, on 26 May 2002 (MC; 2002-65; 7-0). Though reported as a male, the sexes in this species are virtually identical in plumage and the bird was not singing. The late date might suggest that the bird was actually a female.

- BLUE-HEADED VIREO - *Vireo solitarius* (9/8). One was studied thoroughly at the RMBO office in BLSP on 25 October 2000 (DF; 2002-130; 7-0).
- PHILADELPHIA VIREO - *Vireo philadelphicus* (26/13). One was at CVCG on 19 May 2002 (RO; 2002-125; 7-0).
- + WINTER WREN - *Troglodytes troglodytes*. One was seen in a yard in Hotchkiss, *Delta*, on 15 November and 28 December 2002 (AR; 2002-206; 6-1).
- + EASTERN BLUEBIRD - *Sialia sialis*. Two males visited McElmo Creek 10-13 January 2002 (SA, GS, JBy; 2002-14; 7-0) for a first accepted *Montezuma* and West Slope record. However, a report from *Eagle* that predates this one is still in circulation. Additionally, there are other West Slope reports of the species that predate these (Righter et al. 2004), but none has been submitted to the CBRC.
- GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH - *Catharus minimus* (36/23). One haunted the banding station, but eluded the nets, at Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso*, on 12 May 2002 (BS, TL; 2002-48; 7-0). On the same date and at nearly the same time, another was at CVCG (RO; 2002-126; 7-0).
- WOOD THRUSH - *Hylocichla mustelina* (19/7). One was at Lair O' the Bear SP, *Jefferson*, on 9 May 2002 (KS; 2002-184; 7-0), another skulked at BR (the report did not specify where at the reservoir) on 19 May 2002 (HK, UK; 2002-60; 7-0), and a third haunted Niwot, *Boulder*, on 7 October 2002 (CLW; 2002-202; 7-0).
- VARIED THRUSH - *Ixoreus naevius* (20/13). A female was a nice find on the Crosier Mountain Trail near Drake, *Larimer*, on 21 February 2002 (RD; 2002-28; 7-0) and another was at the Ft. Lyon Wildlife Easement, *Bent*, 23-26 October 2002 (BKP, DN; 2002-205; 7-0), but was documented as occurring only on the last date.
- LUCY'S WARBLER - *Vermivora luciae* (3/1). An amazing find was a female Lucy's Warbler at LCC on 21 April 2002 (BG; 2002-182; 7-0). The observer included a nice sketch of the bird. This report provides the first accepted record since the collection of three adults and a nest in the Four Corners area in 1913 (Andrews and Righter 1992). A report of a singing male at Grand Junction in May 1991 was never submitted to the CBRC.
- + BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER - *Dendroica caerulescens*. A female was a great find in Hooper, *Alamosa*, 4 May 2002 (KM; 2002-49; 7-0). The documentation included an excellent sketch of the bird. Not only is the species relatively rare in Colorado in spring (versus typically much more common in the fall), it is almost unknown in the state west of the eastern plains. There are two other interesting facets of this record: the reporter's age at the time of the sighting was 14 and the reporter's entire family saw the bird!



- HERMIT WARBLER - *Dendroica occidentalis* (12/4). A female visited BLSP briefly on 4 May 2002 (TL; 2002-119; 7-0) and provided the first accepted *Adams* record and the first accepted Colorado record since 1999.
- BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER - *Dendroica fusca* (37/20). An alternate-plumaged male provided some color along the south side of BR 19 May 2002 (HK, UK; 2002-61; 7-0).
- YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER - *Dendroica dominica* (26/10). A male foraged in the trees at Lake Beckwith, *Pueblo*, 2 May 2002 (DS; 2002-46; 7-0).
- PINE WARBLER - *Dendroica pinus* (19/7). A male that sang several times at Fairmount Cemetery in Lamar, *Prowers*, on 19 April 2002 (BG; 2002-163; 7-0), made for a nice find and provided the first accepted state record since 1999.
- PRAIRIE WARBLER - *Dendroica discolor* (22/15). An immature male flitted about the willows at CVCG on 1 September 2002 (JMa, JH; 2002-53; 7-0).
- + BLACKPOLL WARBLER - *Dendroica striata*. Durango birders found two alternate-plumaged males in *La Plata* in spring 2002, one at PaR 7-8 May (SA, JBy; 2002-47; 7-0) and another at Vallecito Res. on 20 May (JBy, SA; 2002-66; 7-0). Apparently the former bird was photographed by a New Mexico birder, but the CBRC did not receive any photographic submission. We would still greatly appreciate the submission of photos of the bird. Neither of these records is cited in Righter et al. (2004). The only previous county report was of a bird that occurred on 8 May 1971.
- # PROTHONOTARY WARBLER - *Protonotaria citrea*. A male enlivened Prospect Ponds Natural Area, *Larimer*, on 21 September 2002 (JBn; 2002-194; 6-1).
- KENTUCKY WARBLER - *Oporornis formosus* (30/13). One visited TBSWA, *Baca*, 5 May 2002 (BKP; 2002-134; 7-0). The observer thought that the bird was a female, though allowed that it might have been an immature male.
- MOURNING WARBLER - *Oporornis philadelphia* (20/12). An immature skulked in Durango, *La Plata*, 12 September 2002 (JBy; 2002-79; 6-1) and provided a first West Slope record. Righter et al. (2004) did not include this occurrence.
- CANADA WARBLER - *Wilsonia canadensis* (23/8). For the second fall in a row, Olson found a Canada Warbler in *Weld*, with the 2002 bird gracing the gallery woodland around MR on 6 September (RO; 2002-76; 7-0).
- + FIELD SPARROW - *Spizella pusilla*. One at Runyon Lake, *Pueblo*, 21-23

February 2002 (RM; 2002-29; 7-0) was quite a nice find. Not only was the bird out of place, it was also out of season, as there are few acceptable winter records in Colorado - though Leukering and Semo (2004) reported on another winter record from 2002.

**GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW** - *Zonotrichia atricapilla* (17/11). An immature foraged with a large flock of White-crowned Sparrows across the road from the Wray Fish Hatchery, *Yuma*, on 6 January 2002 (TL; 2002-124; 7-0) and provided the easternmost Colorado record of the species. The previous easternmost and *Yuma* record is of a specimen collected at *Yuma* 4 November 1923. Another immature was along the Piedra River just upstream of Navajo Res., *Archuleta*, 29 January - 2 February 2002 (SA, JBy; 2002-18; 6-1). This occurrence provides a first county and only second accepted record from the southwestern corner of the state - the previous being a bit over 27 years earlier from the Animas River valley, *La Plata*, on 10 October 1974 (record# 56-74-128).

- \* **ROSE-BREASTED GROSBILL** - *Pheucticus ludovicianus*. A basic-plumaged male visited the Miller yard in Boulder, *Boulder*, on 4 November 2002 (BM; 2002-97; 6-1).
- + **WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL** - *Loxia leucoptera*. As many as 15 graced Grandview Cemetery in Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, during January 2002 (RH v; 2002-185; 6-1), though documented only for 4-5 January. The dissenting vote was due to the lack of a written description. See Leatherman and Nelson (2003) for more details on this occurrence.
- + **COMMON REDPOLL** - *Carduelis flammea*. As many as five individuals graced Merchant's feeder southeast of Eagle, *Eagle*, 4 January - 22 March 2002 (JMe; 2002-85; 7-0). From the plumage descriptions, at least a few of the birds were adult males ("one had a strong rosy color on its breast, others a fainter rose"). Redpolls exhibit delayed plumage maturation - that is, they do not attain definitive plumage in their first plumage cycle. This means that in the field one cannot typically discern the sex of birds that lack pink or red on the chest; such birds could be females or immature males. A flock of five was along the South Platte River in Waterton Canyon 17 February 2002 (RO; 2002-19; 7-0). The birds were seen on both sides of the river, that is in both *Douglas* and *Jefferson*.

### **Part II: Records Not Accepted, Identification Not Established**

**SNOW GOOSE** - *Chen caerulescens*. A "white goose with black primaries and small bill" was described from Dollar Lake on the Medano Ranch, *Alamosa*, on 18 June 2001 (2002-106; 1-6). Though the observer wrote that the bird was "too big for Ross's [Goose]," no direct size

comparison with any other species was provided to enable the Committee to determine the size of the bird and the description (detailed above) did not eliminate Ross's Goose from consideration.

**TUNDRA SWAN** - *Cygnus columbianus* (2/2). One was reported at TBSWA, *Baca*, on 13 April 2002 (2002-39; 1-6). Though the description of the bird's head and bill provided some cause to vote to accept, the report was not accepted for two main reasons. The first was that the description of the head and bill were not quite detailed enough for most Committee members. The second, and perhaps the most damning, was the exquisitely documented Trumpeter Swan from the same location only 22 days earlier (see above). All else being the same, had the location been one of the better-birded water bodies near the Front Range, the CBRC might have voted to accept this report, as a hiatus of 22 days at a well-birded site would have indicated that the documents received described two different birds.

**BROWN PELICAN** - *Pelecanus occidentalis* (14/8). A pelican was reported at Big Meadows Res., *Mineral*, 2-3 July 2002 (2002-70; 2-5). Unfortunately, though both observers were experienced with the species, the description was brief, sketchy, and unconvincing. One CBRC member suggested that the bird might have been an ash-stained American White Pelican, as the bird's described foraging behavior ("... sitting on the water attempting to catch fish - flapping its wings to move forward in the water") seemed to match that of the more expected species.

**TRICOLORED HERON** - *Egretta tricolor* (20/8). A bird identified as an adult Tricolored in basic plumage was present in Boulder, *Boulder*, on 3 September 2002 (2002-191; 1-6). Though the observer eliminated Great Blue Heron from consideration by the bird being smaller with a "distinct gray neck with a white stripe down the front," there was no direct size comparison to any other bird provided and the described neck pattern fits Great Blue Heron. As the observer did not mention the belly color, which easily separates Great Blue from Tricolored, the CBRC was left with no choice but to not accept the identification as correct.

**SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** - *Elanoides forficatus* (4/1). Two adults were reported perched on yardarms of utility poles along I-25 between mile markers 52 and 59 (near Walsenburg), *Huerfano*, on 19 July 2002 (2002187; 0-7). As the observer was traveling on the interstate and did not stop to study either of the birds, the descriptions were necessarily brief, only including white head and underparts and dark "sides/wings" on one bird and the white head and black back, wings, and tail on the second bird. Though these features are certainly

consistent with the plumage of Swallow-tailed Kite, they are also consistent with some plumages of Swainson's Hawk, particularly birds in first basic plumage (a hideously variable plumage in Swainson's Hawk). Of course, Swainson's Hawk would be much more likely in that area and the CBRC was unanimous in thinking that the descriptions did not eliminate that species. For such an exceedingly rare bird, a more detailed plumage description would be required for acceptance.

**COMMON BLACK-HAWK** - *Buteogallus anthracinus* (4/2). A black raptor seen 16 miles north of Yuma, *Yuma*, on 5 December 2002 (2002-114; 0-7) was reported as referring to this species. The description, though somewhat suggestive, contained inconsistencies with the Committee's current understanding of Common Black-Hawk identification characters and behavior. The bird was perched on a fence post over prairie and was described as bigger than a Golden Eagle and almost as large as a Bald Eagle; Common Black-Hawk, in reality, is only about the size of a Rough-legged Hawk. The described tail pattern (a single white band on a dark tail) can be matched by some plumages of Rough-legged Hawk, which would be a much more expected species on the eastern plains of Colorado in December than would Common Black-Hawk, particularly as the latter species is an invertebrate specialist, preying particularly on crabs and crayfish, so would find a very hard living in *Yuma* in winter.

**CURLEW SANDPIPER** - *Calidris ferruginea* (1/1). An adult in basic plumage was reported from Jackson Res., *Morgan*, on 19 October 2001 (2002-127; 3-4). Though the details provided were consistent with an identification of Curlew Sandpiper, they did not completely rule out the more likely Stilt Sandpiper. The Committee will always be conservative on reports of extreme rarities.

**LAUGHING GULL** - *Larus atricilla* (29/17). Either an adult or an older immature was reported flying around over Prewitt Res., *Washington*, 9 September 2001 (2002-140; 2-5). Though the description provided suggested Laughing Gull (particularly the extensive dark on the underwing), various Committee members were concerned by the lack of description of a different wing shape, as compared to that of the Franklin's Gull in the vicinity and the difficulty in separating immature Franklin's Gulls from adult Laughing Gulls.

\* **WHITE-WINGED DOVE** - *Zenaida asiatica*. The CBRC received a submission on an occurrence in Fort Collins, *Larimer*, on 8 May 2002 (2002-51; 1-6). Unfortunately, the submission completely lacked a description of the bird.

**COMMON GROUND-DOVE** - *Columbina passerina* (4/2). The CBRC made a

final decision on a report that had been circulating through the Committee since 1997. Two doves were reported from southwestern *Adams* on 14 December **1996** (25-96-39; 4-3, 1-6). Many on the Committee were concerned that the birds were seen without aid of a binocular and that two birds were together, something at least a bit odd for such an extreme rarity. Additionally, for such a rare species in Colorado, the description left a bit to be desired.

BLUE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD - *Lampornis clemenciae* (12/4). A female was reported at a private residence in Golden, *Jefferson*, 28 September **2001** (2002-209; 0-7). Though the description was quite suggestive of a female Blue-throat, the details provided were not sufficient to convince the Committee members. At least one member of the Committee has re-identified a reported female Blue-throated in Colorado as a female Magnificent, so the entire Committee is cautious of reports that are not exhaustive in their detail on such birds.

+ HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER - *Empidonax hammondii*. An *Empidonax* flycatcher relatively meticulously described was found at the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, *Jefferson*, on 7 November 2002 (2002-212; 2-5). However, the genus is conservative in plumage, with most species being similar to each other. Banding data from Barr Lake suggest that Dusky Flycatcher is the most likely late-season "Empie" in Colorado, though others' field experience suggest that it is Hammond's. Regardless, any *Empidonax* flycatcher found in Colorado after early October is of interest, as late fall is a typical time for out-of-range birds. The details provided eliminate most species, but do not eliminate Least Flycatcher, which, in the eastern part of the continent, is the most likely species to occur in November. The eye ring shape described seems more consistent with Least than with Hammond's. The "lower mandible [sic] was not noticeably different in color than upper mandible [sic]," but the observer did not indicate that he saw the bird high enough in the vegetation to be sure of seeing the true color of the mandible - a feature very difficult to see well unless the bird is overhead. Unfortunately, the features that would have nailed the description and which can be crucial in any *Empidonax* identification - primary projection and relative tail length - were not mentioned.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER - *Pyrocephala rubinus* (22/10). Despite the fact that males in spring are quite distinctive, the CBRC voted to not accept the report of one at Carrizo Canyon, *Baca*, on 8 April 2002 (2002-36; 1-6). Unfortunately, the documentation submitted contained absolutely no description of the bird, just a description of the time and place of occurrence. Another male was reported from the

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher site south of Lamar, *Prowers*, on 5 May 2002 (2002-72; 2-5). The description provided was brief and sketchy. Additionally, one CBRC member was present at the site on that date and saw a male Summer Tanager. These concerns caused the CBRC to vote to not accept the report.

WOOD THRUSH - *Hylocichla mustelina* (19/7). One reported at a dried water hole with willows and elms surrounded by grassland near Ault, *Weld*, on 5 November 2001 (2002-23; 2-5) received little support. Of concern to the Committee members were the late date, the habitat, and the "olive-brown down the back." While any one of these concerns would probably not have caused the report to not be accepted, the combination put this report here. Another Wood Thrush was not accepted in this circulation, one at PCP on 28 May 2002 (2002-193; 1-6). On this one, the Committee's concerns included the brief view and the lack of underparts description (due to not seeing the underparts). However, the observer did describe the distinctive face pattern of Wood Thrush.

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW - *Ammodramus savannarum*. The CBRC was initially split on the report of a bird on Florida Mesa, near Durango, *La Plata*, 16 December 2001 (2001-39; 4-3, 0-7). Though quite a few details were suggestive of Grasshopper Sparrow, the Committee was concerned about the bird consorting with juncos, the described gray flanks and notched tail, and the call note.

PURPLE FINCH - *Carpodacus purpureus* (30/9). An adult male reported from the Broad-billed Hummingbird yard in Clifton, *Mesa*, on 24 November 2002 (2002-188; 1-6) was not accepted. The Committee was concerned that the report was written six months after the sighting and that the features described did not eliminate an adult male Cassin's Finch which would have been more likely at the location. The CBRC cannot stress too much how difficult separation of Cassin's and Purple finches is, making a thorough and convincing description paramount for acceptance.

### **Part III: Records Not Accepted, Questionable Origin**

GYRFALCON - *Falco rusticolus* (9/8). Observers photographed a striking adult white-morph individual at Longmont, *Boulder*, 1 December 2001 (2001-125; 0-7) that was described as "making more noise than a hawk or accipiter ever would." The Committee was confident that the bird was identified correctly. However, a message to COBirds (the internet listserv currently operated by the Colorado Field Ornithologists) contemporaneous with the date of the sighting provided details on the escape of a falconer's white Gyrfalcon and a

plea for information on its whereabouts if it were seen by birders. White-morph Gyrfalcons are very rare in the western U.S. to begin with, but adults of that color are virtually unheard of here. Thus, the Committee did not accept this report as pertaining to a wild individual.

### Reporters and Cited Observers

Susan Allerton, Lyle Anise, Jason Beason (JBn), Jim Beatty (JBy), Tamie Bulow, Mark Chavez, Caroline Coleman, Cynthia Daly, Ruth Dick, Donna Emmons, Norma Erickson, Doug Faulkner, Brian Gibbons, Paula Hansley, Joe Himmel, Harold Holt, Rachel Hopper, Dave Johnson, Jonathan Kelly, Hugh Kingery, Urling Kingery, Dave Leatherman, Tony Leukering, Kalen Malueg, Joe Mammoser (JMa), Sharyl Massey, Jack Merchant (JMe), Bill Miller, Rich Miller, Todd Myers, Duane Nelson, Ric Olson, Brandon K. Percival, Nathan Pieplow, Dave Rhoades (DRh), Dave Rintoul (DRi), Andrea Robinsong, George San Miguel, Bill Schmoker, Karleen Schofield, Dave Silverman, Robert Steller, Joyce Takamine, Catherine West, Christopher L. Wood, Mark Yaeger.

### Literature Cited

- American Ornithologists' Union [A.O.U.]. 1998. *Check-list of North American Birds*. Allen Press, Lawrence, KS.
- American Ornithologists' Union [A.O.U.]. 2003. The forty-fourth supplement to the *Check-list of North American Birds*. *Auk* 119:897-906.
- American Ornithologists' Union [A.O.U.]. 2004. The forty-fifth supplement to the *Check-list of North American Birds*. *Auk* 120:985-995.
- Andrews, R. and R. Righter. 1992. *Colorado birds: a reference to their distribution and habitat*. Denver Mus. Nat. Hist., Denver.
- Bailey, A.M. and R.J. Niedrach. 1965. *Birds of Colorado*, Vol. I. Denver Mus. Nat. Hist., Denver.
- Dexter, C. 1995. Possible hybridization of Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and Western Kingbird. *C.F.O. Journal* 29:20.
- Leatherman, D. and D. Nelson. 2003. Some White-winged Crossbill observations during the winter 2001-2002 invasion of Colorado's lower elevations. *Colorado Birds* 37:56-63.
- Leukering, T. and L.S. Semo. 2003. Report of the Colorado Bird Records

Committee: 2001 records, part I. *Colorado Birds* 37:138-155.

Leukering, T. and L.S. Semo. 2004. The 37th report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee. *Colorado Birds* 38:73-88.

Potter, K.M. 1998. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher. *Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas* (H. E. Kingery, ed.). Colorado Bird Atlas Partnership and Colorado Division of Wildlife, Denver.

Pyle, P. *Identification Guide to North American Birds*, Part I. Slate Creek Press, Bolinas, CA.

Righter, R., R. Levad, C. Dexter, and K. Potter. 2004. *Birds of western Colorado Plateau and Mesa Country*. Grand Valley Aud. Soc., Grand Junction, CO.

Semo, L.S. and T. Leukering. 2004. Corrigenda and additions to "Amendments to the state review list". *Colorado Birds* 38:23-28.

Semo, L.S., T. Leukering, and J.E. Stewart. 2002. Amendments to the state review list. *J. Colo. Field Ornith.* 36:180-183.

Semo, L.S. and C.L. Wood. 2003. The news from the field: the summer 2002 report (June-July). *Colorado Birds* 37:30-42.

Wood, C.L. and L.S. Semo. 2002. News from the field: the spring 2002 report (March-May). *J. Colo. Field Ornith.* 36:200-225.

