

## THE 42<sup>ND</sup> REPORT OF THE COLORADO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

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### Introduction

This 42<sup>nd</sup> report presents the results of Spring 2006 deliberations of the Colorado Bird Records Committee (hereafter CBRC or Committee) on submissions to the CBRC for documentation and archival purposes. This article provides results of the circulation of 128 reports submitted by 53 observers documenting 118 occurrences of 60 species. This article deals primarily with 2004 occurrences, but reports date back to 1991. 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. Those records with 4 or 5 accept votes transcend to a 2<sup>nd</sup> Round of deliberations.

The documents reviewed include the report of two species previously unconfirmed from the state, White-eared Hummingbird and Tropical Parula, bringing the state total to **480**. Four potentially additional species to the state list are still pending within the CBRC - Kelp Gull (*Larus dominicanus*), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*), Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*), and, recently, Hooded Oriole (*Icteria cucullatus*).

One change to the statewide Main Review List has now been adopted. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*) is no longer on that list, but documentation will still be required for all locations west of the Continental Divide. Please see the section on accepted Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers within this document for the justification behind this decision.

Committee members voting on these reports: Coen Dexter, Doug Faulkner, Peter Gent, Joey Kellner, Ric Olson, Brandon Percival, and Larry Semo.

### Documenting and reviewing rarities

The primary purpose of the CBRC is to archive reports of occurrences of species that are considered rare in the state. Secondly, the Committee's purpose is to provide a scientific context for accepting records of birds,

primarily sight records, to the official state list of species that have occurred in the state. To complete the second task, the CBRC requests that the birding public submit documentation on such occurrences to be reviewed by the Committee. The review is primarily to ascertain whether the submitted documentation supports, in the consideration of seven state experts, the identification presented. Thus, the primary pieces of information that the Committee requires is a written description of the bird(s) and how similar species were ruled out.

Current photographic technology has greatly increased the number of photographs (particularly, digital) that the CBRC has received and these photos greatly assist the Committee in determining whether the documentation provided supports the identifications. However, this technological benefit has a disadvantage. Some observers are now simply submitting photographs with date and location with no written description. While the photographs certainly prove the identification, the lack of a written description leaves at least some of the CBRC members feeling uneasy. Without written descriptions, many pieces of information are lost forever. While pictures are great and you will not hear a single CBRC member complain about too many photographs, those photos are single images of a bird or flock of birds; they may not convey everything that a thorough, well-written description could provide. Remember, the CBRC is primarily an archive and with only a single picture as documentation for an individual rarity occurrence, future researchers may not be able to determine the age, sex, or origin of a given rarity; something that may be considered important in the future.

### **Committee News**

The second consecutive term of Brandon Percival expires at the end of 2006. John Vanderpoel's second consecutive term expires at the end of 2006. John resigned from the CBRC at the end of 2005 due to other commitments and Peter Gent graciously stepped in to complete John's final year of term. Per CBRC Bylaws, a Committee member can only hold two consecutive three-year terms before mandatorily taking at least one year off. Both so-noted vacancies become available beginning in 2007 and the Committee is actively evaluating potential new candidates for positions. Committee member requisite qualifications include 1) Expertise in avian identification, 2) History of CBRC support through consistent documentation submissions, and 3) Continual access to computer technology, especially the Internet.

### **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 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 Larry Semo (9054 Dover Street, Westminster, CO 80021), the CBRC would greatly appreciate submission via the on-line CBRC website (<http://www.cfo-link.org/CBRC/login.php>).

### Report format

The organization and style of this report follow that of Leukering and Semo (2003), with some alterations. An asterisk preceding a species' name indicates that the species is not currently on any CBRC review list (Semo et al. 2002), but that reviewed reports are of unseasonable or locally rare occurrences. As of 2002, the CBRC removed from the statewide 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 those species were on the Main Review List. Those species' names preceded by an asterisk (\*) are species rare in certain parts of the state and for which the CBRC requests documentation from those areas (Semo et al. 2002, Semo and Leukering 2004). Finally, the filled circle (•) indicates those species not on any review list and not particularly out-of-season but for which the CBRC circulated for review a record of some interest, due to location, date, plumage, etc., but for which documentation would not be required.

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 previous ten-year period preceding the submission. The latter number is of importance, as it is one of the criteria for a species' placement or removal from the statewide Main Review List (Semo et al. 2002). However, note that the number of accepted records will decline for some species as the CBRC continues to tackle the backlog of determinations as to how many of the accepted records are simply recurrences in subsequent years of a known individual.

The records in this report are arranged taxonomically following the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) *Check-list of North American Birds* (AOU 1998) through the 47<sup>th</sup> Supplement (Banks et al. 2006). Within each species account, records are listed chronologically by first date of occurrence. 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), if known, 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, initials of those that submitted videotape are indicated by a lower-case, italicized “v” (v), and those who submitted sonagrams are indicated by a lower-case, italicized “s” (s). Thus, the parenthetical expression “(JD v, RA†, TL, JV, CW; 2001-36; 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 2001-36; 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 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 (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 when documentations do not provide such.

Abbreviations used in this report are: CG=Campground; Res=Reservoir; SP=State Park; SWA=State Wildlife Area

### **RECORDS ACCEPTED**

TRUMPETER SWAN - *Cygnus buccinator* (26/13). A group of four (3 adults and one immature) were present at Lake Maria, *Huerfano*, on 30 November 2003 (DS; 2003-91; 7-0), providing a first county record. Descriptions of the bill and forehead patterns were conclusive as to the identity of Trumpeters.

TUNDRA SWAN - *Cygnus columbianus*. Since the CBRC placed Tundra Swan on the statewide Main Review List in 2002 (Semo and Leukering 2002)

because of identification challenges between it and Trumpeter Swan and a pattern of decreased occurrence in the state, there have been six accepted records prior to this circulation. The Committee has accepted a dilatory, but well-appreciated, documentation of a first-cycle bird photographed at the Sambrito Wetlands in Navajo SP, *Archuleta*, 24 March 2002 (AS †, NP; 2002-153; 7-0). Documentation was provided only by the photographing observer.

EURASIAN WIGEON - *Anas penelope* (26/8). A male was well-described and adequately photographed at Barr Lake, *Adams*, 1-3 December 2003 (DF †, TL †; 2003-97; 7-0). This provides the fifth record of this species for *Adams* and the third for Barr Lake; the most recent Barr Lake observation was from 1986.

\*SURF SCOTER - *Melanitta perspicillata*. Though scoters are regular fall migrants along the Front Range and some mountain parks in autumn, records from the Eastern Plains are quite rare, and even more unusual for spring. Forming the first record for *Bent*, a basic-plumaged bird integrated with Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*) at Lake Hasty on the late date of 1 May 2004 (NP; 2004-79; 7-0).

#RED-NECKED GREBE - *Podiceps grisegena*. The CBRC generally does not review reports of Red-necked Grebes from the Eastern Plains of Colorado following its removal from the statewide Main Review List in 2002 (Semo et. al, 2002). However, through 2002, there had been no records of this species occurring in Colorado during the summer period. The CBRC has accepted a bird that still retained basic plumage present on a pond at *Weld* County Road 24 between at least 1 and 3 June 2003 (MB, BGe; 2003-46; 6-1). Despite a sound Red-necked Grebe plumage description, most Committee members questioned one of the observers comments that the bird appeared larger than a Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*). Apparently no Western Grebes were nearby for size comparison and it is assumed that the size comment was erroneous as Red-necked Grebes are not physically larger than Western Grebes.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - *Nyctanassa violacea* (17/7). A juvenile present at Rock Canyon below Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, 18 and 19 September 2003 (RM †; 2003-92; 7-0) is the second for *Pueblo*.

\*OSPREY - *Pandion haliaeetus*. Representing the first confirmed winter season record for Colorado, one was photographed at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, on 20 December 2003 (TL †; 2003-101; 7-0). Unconfirmed reports indicated that this bird had been present at Pueblo Res. earlier during the same month, though no details were submitted to the CBRC.

CURLEW SANDPIPER - *Calidris ferruginea* (2/2). A juvenile at Prewitt Res., Washington, found by Kellner, is the second record of this Eurasian shorebird for Colorado. First found on 18 September 2005, the bird remained for a number of days and was seen by many birders, though submitted documentation to the CBRC establishes a date range for the historical records as only from 18-19 September (JK †, AS †, PG; 2005-96; 7-0).



Juvenile Curlew Sandpiper at Prewitt Res., Washington (CBRC# 2005-96). Photo by Andrew Spencer on 19 Sept 2005.

RUFF - *Philomachus pugnax* (2/1). Establishing the second accepted record for Colorado, a juvenile of this Eurasian shorebird was found by Oswald at Lake Meredith, Crowley, and present at least 5-6 October 2002 (SO v, PG, RH †, TL, LS †; 2003-18; 7-0). The sole previous record was of a bird seen in Weld in late May and early June 1977.

#SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER - *Limnodromus griseus*. Short-billed Dowitchers are rare in the state, especially on the Western Slope. As the Eastern Plains have received a fairly substantial host of Short-billed Dowitcher reports, the CBRC removed this species from the statewide Main Review List in 2002 (Semo et.al, 2002), though still requires details on birds across the state

in adult and/or basic plumage. Beatty and Allerton found two in alternate plumage at Pastorius Res., *La Plata*, on 24 April 2004, though documentation was received by only the first-named observer (JBy, SA; 2004-96). This is the first confirmed record of Short-billed Dowitcher for *La Plata*.



Juvenile Ruff at Lake Meredith, *Crowley* (CBRC# 2003-18). Photo by Rachel Hopper on 6 Oct 2002.

RED PHALAROPE - *Phalaropus fulicarius* (29/11). An adult in basic plumage was superbly photographed on the late date of 6 November 2003 at Lake Henry, *Crowley* (AS †; 2003-39; 7-0). This is the first accepted record for *Otero*.



Red Phalarope at Lake Henry on 6 Nov 2003 (CBRC# 2003-39). Photo by Andrew Spencer.



LAUGHING GULL - *Larus atricilla* (29/17). The Committee belatedly received documentation of a second-cycle bird present at Boyd Lake, *Larimer*, in 2002 (NK; 2002-137; 7-0) that was previously documented by Hopper and accepted. This documentation was for an observation of the bird two days prior to the previously accepted record and the official period of occurrence for this individual bird is now 21 through 23 November 2002. The CBRC greatly appreciates documentation for birds previously accepted if those records provide additional date spans of occurrence or additional information that may be important for the historic account.

LITTLE GULL - *Larus minutus* (23/12). Three additional Little Gull records were accepted during this circulation. A juvenile was at Standley Lake, *Jefferson*, between 11 and 12 September 2002 (DF; 2002-3; 7-0). A surprising TWO juveniles floated around Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe*, on 17 and 18 September 2002 (RL, RO; 2002-80; 7-0). An adult in basic-plumage was photographed at Bingham Lake in The Pinery, *Douglas*, on 15 and 16 November 2004 (GW †, HK, TL †; 2004-68; 7-0)

MEW GULL - *Larus canus* (26/16). An adult in definitive-basic plumage graced Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, on 19 December 2003 (TL †; 2003-62; 7-0). It is unknown if the bird lingered longer at this location as no other details of its occurrence were provided. This is the fourth record for Pueblo Res.

\*HERRING GULL - *Larus argentatus*. Herring Gulls are extremely rare in southwestern Colorado. Beatty had the foresight to provide details to the CBRC of an occurrence he had of one in 2003. The CBRC accepts Jim's sighting of a 3<sup>rd</sup>-cycle bird present near Durango, *La Plata*, on 27 March (JBY; 2003-24; 6-1) based on a majority of opinion, though one Committee member maintained that the description did not adequately rule out other large gulls.

GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL - *Larus glaucescens* (11/6). Forming the 11<sup>th</sup> record for Colorado, a first-cycle bird was present at Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe*, where documented on 29 and 30 March 2003 (BGU, GW †; BB; 2003-22; 7-0). Cherry Creek Res. has hosted 5 of the 11 records of this species in the state. Interspecific matings are common among Glaucous-winged Gulls, especially with Western (*Larus occidentalis*) and to a lesser degree, Herring Gull. First-filial and back-cross offspring containing Glaucous-winged Gull lineage present an extremely problematic situation for observers and Bird Records Committee's attempting to determine the specific identity of birds within that group. The diluted heritage of many Glaucous-winged Gulls west of Colorado forces observers in those regions to oftentimes not identify many of the "Glaucous-winged Gulls" they encounter. The CBRC has been very critical



in its analysis of potential Glaucous-winged Gulls in the state because of hybridization issues. The above-noted Cherry Creek bird displayed no phenotypic characteristics that suggested anything but a pure (at least to human eyes) Glaucous-winged Gull. Based on migratory patterns of many northwestern breeders that pass through Colorado, it seems that the population of Glaucous-winged Gulls that vagrate to Colorado may come from populations much further north (Alaska), outside of the Glaucous-winged and Western Gull inbreeding zone. With photographic-only evidence, it is obvious that we cannot preclude, based on genetics, that all or any of the accepted Glaucous-winged Gulls in the state are indeed pure, and the Committee must rely on phenotypic traits to provide an opinion.



Glaucous-winged Gull at Cherry Creek Res, *Arapahoe*, on 29 March 2003 (CBRC#2003-22). Photo by Glenn Walbek.

\*SABINE'S GULL - *Xema sabini*. Documentation was received for a previously accepted record of an alternate-plumaged adult, very rare for Colorado. The finder of this rare find at San Luis Lake, *Alamosa*, provided details for his sighting on 21 September 2002 (RL; 2002-84; 7-0). The previous documentation was for 26 September (Dave Rintoul), thus the state now has a more accurate reflection of the stay of this individual bird.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE - *Rissa tridactyla* (27/11). The CBRC accepted a belatedly submitted report of an adult in basic plumage present at Chatfield Res. in both *Douglas* and *Jefferson* on 23 November 2001 (AS †, GW; 2002-152;

7-0). A poor photograph was obtained, which for some Committee members did not necessarily confirm Black-legged Kittiwake, though written descriptions of the birds were supportive of the species. This is the third record for Chatfield Res., all from the period 2000-2001.

\*LEAST TERN - *Sternula antillarum*. Rare for its westward location, one was northeast of Florence, *Fremont*, between 14 and 16 May 2004 (AB, MP †; 2004-84; 7-0). The finder reported that he believed the bird was seen by others through 21 May, though the CBRC did not receive details from any birders affirming that date.

ARCTIC TERN - *Sterna paradisaea* (12/6). The CBRC completed its review of several Arctic Tern records from 2000 to 2003, of which an additional four records have been established for the state. A bird transitioning from juvenal to basic plumage was present at Union Reservoir, *Weld*, 6-7 October 2000, where carefully studied and illustrated (JV v; 2000-168; 7-0). The CBRC wishes to apologize to John Vanderpoel for the belated response in circulating this record. A juvenile was present at Standley Lake, *Jefferson*, 10-11 September 2002 (TL, LS; 2003-130; 7-0). An alternate-plumaged bird was stunningly photographed at Lake Holbrook, *Otero*, on the surprising date of 18 June 2003 (VT †; 2003-52; 6-1). Unfortunately, no written description of the bird or the account of its discovery was provided to the CBRC and the CBRC will be conducting internal discussions and external consultations with other Bird Records Committees regarding the potential future validity of photograph-only documentations in regards to the historic perspective of avian records. The fourth accepted Arctic Tern record was of at least one (and possibly two) alternate-plumaged bird seen and excellently documented at Union Res., *Weld*, (the fourth occurrence of this species at this location) on 13 September 2003, and later found the same day at Boulder Res., *Boulder* (BS; 2003-126; 7-0). Of the twelve records of Arctic Tern for Colorado, eight have come from the period 10 September through 8 October.

#EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE - *Streptopelia decaocto* The spread of this species across Colorado has been well-documented, yet a number of counties have no accepted records. Two additional counties were recently added to the list of confirmed locations. A group of eight were well-described from Norwood, *San Miguel*, in the southwestern portion of the state, where seen on 7 September 2003 (TL; 2003-3; 7-0). A pair set up camp in Arvada, *Jefferson*, where first seen 29 December 2002, lingering into early 2003 and later, which established the first record for that county (CS †, LS †; 2003-14; 7-0).

INCA DOVE - *Columbina inca* (16/11). Little documentation of the birds

present at Rocky Ford, *Otero*, have been submitted to the CBRC since the few years following their discovery of nesting at that locale. Continued presence was confirmed at Rocky Ford in 2002 with the acceptance of an adult weakly described, but sufficient to accept, seen on 1 September (RL, 2002-167; 7-0). It is known that Inca Dove's continue to reside in Rocky Ford and the CBRC is deliberating on the removal of this species from the two known breeding areas of the state: Rocky Ford and Lamar, *Prowers*. More out-of-place, one was photographed in Kit Carson, *Cheyenne*, on 21 November, 2004 (TL †; 2004-94; 7-0). There is now a total of eight Colorado counties with confirmed Inca Dove sightings.



Adult Arctic Tern at Lake Holbrook, *Otero*, on 18 June 2003 (CBRC# 2003-52). Photo by Van Truan.

**SNOWY OWL** - *Bubo scandiaca* (12/5). Two additional records were accepted. A juvenile day-roosted along the *Bent* side of Adobe Creek Res. (Blue Lake), where nicely photographed on 16 January 2002 (DN †; 2002-13; 7-0). Another, seemingly an adult female, was photographed north of Lake Holbrook along *Otero* County Road 25 (LS †, VT; 2002-1; 7-0). These records represent the first accepted records of this species for *Bent* and *Otero*.

**WHITE-EARED HUMMINGBIRD** - *Hylocharis leucotis* (2/2). Unprecedented, Colorado received its **FIRST** and **SECOND** state-record White-eared Hummingbirds during the summer and early autumn of 2005. The first, an adult female, showed up at the feeder of Allerton's house northeast of Durango, *La Plata*, where first documented by Beatty on 19 June and stayed apparently until 7 August, though the last documentation of the bird came on 24 July (JBy †, PG, JK †, CWi, SA; 2005-69; 7-0). Surprisingly, during the stay of the first

state record, an immature female was found roughly 22 miles north in northern La Plata. The homeowner (Brown) reported that the bird first arrived at their feeder on 20 July. Documentation was achieved on 30 July by Faulkner and Semo and the bird apparently remained at that location to, quite coincidentally, 7 August, the same date of departure as the bird at Allerton's home (DF †, LS †, RB; 2005-77; 7-0). The occurrence of White-eared Hummingbirds in Colorado during the summer and early autumn of 2005 is not wholly unexplained. White-eared Hummingbird erupted north and east of its normal range in quite large numbers during the period according to regional reports in *North American Birds* (2005 Vol 59 no. 4 and 2006 Vol. 60, no.1). In Arizona, where the species is regular in single digit numbers in the southeast corner, over 13 were reported during summer and fall, with noteworthy northern occurrences in the Pelloncillo Mountain range and along the South Fork of the Lower Colorado River, representing the first northern Arizona record. In New Mexico, besides a report from Gila Hot Springs in the southwestern corner of the state, one was in *Catron*, in the west-central area and one was in the Sacramento Mountains, a first for southeastern New Mexico. Texas also experienced an unprecedented magnitude of White-eared Hummingbird reports, with up to 14 being seen in the Davis and Chisos mountains from late summer through October. Extralimital was the bird in the Southern Plains at Lubbock in mid-July. The most wayward occurrence was one in Michigan from mid- to late-August, representing the first record for the Western Great Lakes region and the second record east of the Mississippi. The previous record east of the Mississippi River was a wintering bird present in Mississippi in 1996.

COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRD - *Calypte costae* (3/3). An adult male believed to be of this species was photographed at a very unusual location, the Mount Evans Pay Station in *Clear Creek* at an approximate elevation of 10,800 feet (BS †, CWo; 2003-123; 7-0). On 11 July 2003, Wood and Schmoker observed a small, chunky hummingbird coming to a feeder at the pay station that drew interest. The bird had a purple gorget with long gorget tails that extended posteriorly to the top of the bended wing. The bill was of moderate length and mostly straight, though did have a small degree of curvature through the mid-portion. Other characteristics supportive of Costa's Hummingbird evident in the submitted photographs included a white, postocular spot, light grayish-white (non-buffy) underparts that blended toward green along the flanks, and dark wingtips that projected beyond the dark tail tip. This record, the third for Colorado and all since 2001, came almost a month prior to a bird captured for banding at Rocky Mountain NP, *Larimer*, that was previously accepted by the Committee (2003-64) and over two years later than the first accepted record from Crow Valley CG, *Weld*, in 2001 (2001-46).

\*RED-HEADED WOODPECKER - *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*. Red-headed Woodpecker is quite rare on the Front Range of Colorado and records further west are very few. Very unusual was a high montane observation of an adult near Leadville, *Lake*, on 10 July 2004 (RL; 2004-97; 7-0), which formed an obvious first county record.

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER - *Sphyrapicus varius*. In 2002, the CBRC approved the addition of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker to the statewide Main Review List as reports of the species seemed to be in decline and there was no clear picture of the status and distribution of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in the state. Since that period, many observers have provided details on Yellow-bellied Sapsucker occurrences across eastern Colorado. David Leatherman, whose intense interest in the species and tenacity and ability to find Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in Colorado, prepared an assiduous treatise on his observations of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in the state, including photographs and species of tree observed in. His submittal accounted for 37 additional records from *Larimer* (31), *Boulder* (1), and *Prowers* (5) stemming from a period November 1987 through January 2005. Newly accepted records submitted from David Leatherman are listed below.

1. 20 November 1987 - adult (male?), Fort Collins (FC), *Larimer*
2. 22 November 1987 - juvenile, FC
3. 23 January through 13 March 1988 - juvenile male, FC
4. 15 December 1988 through 21 February 1989 - adult male, FC
5. 2 December 1989 - adult, FC
6. 13 December 1989 through 7 January 1990 - juvenile, FC
7. 5 January through 13 March 1991 - adult male, FC
8. 3 November 1991 - juvenile, male, FC
9. 5 November 1991 - 14 March 1992 - juvenile female, FC
10. 5 November 1991 - juvenile male, FC
11. 23 November 1991 through 2 February 1992 - adult male, FC
12. 12 January 1992 - Juvenile (seemingly female), FC
13. 9 February 1992 - juvenile male, Boulder, *Boulder*
14. 9 February 1992 - juvenile female, Boulder
15. 13 November through 24 December 1992 - adult female, FC
16. 6 December 1992 through 6 March 1993 - adult male, FC
17. 15 November through 15 December 1993 - adult male, FC
18. 2 March 1994 - adult male, FC
19. 4 March 1994 - juvenile female, FC
20. 30 November 1994 - juvenile, FC
21. 16 March 1995 - juvenile female, FC
22. 23 March 1995 - adult female, FC
23. 13 February 1995 - juvenile female, FC

24. winter of 1996-97 - Lyons, *Boulder*
25. 10-18 December 1999 - juvenile female, FC
26. 8-10 March 2000 - juvenile female, FC
27. 20-21 November 2000 - male, Lamar, *Prowers*
28. 21 November 2000 - juvenile female, Lamar
29. 20 November through 8 December 2001 - juvenile, FC
30. 21 November 2001 - 22 March 2002 - juvenile female, Lamar
31. 21 January through 2 March 2002 - adult male, FC
32. 12-16 February 2002 - adult male, FC
33. 23 November 2003 - 1 February 2004 - juvenile male, FC
34. 4 January through 14 March 2004 - juvenile, Lamar
35. 20 January 2004 - adult male, Lamar
36. 24 November 2004 through 9 January 2005 - juvenile, FC
37. 9 January 2005 - juvenile male, FC

With the acceptance of these records, the CBRC has voted to remove Yellow-bellied Sapsucker from the statewide Main Review List. This species will no longer need to be documented for all locations east of the Continental Divide. Documentation will still be required for observations of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker west of the Continental Divide, however.

ALDER FLYCATCHER - *Empidonax alnorum* (14/7). Two additional records of Alder Flycatcher, a difficult, but not impossible species, to separate from Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax trailii*) using non-auditory criteria. Auditory and visual clues were used to confirm the identity of an Alder Flycatcher near Fort Lupton, *Weld*, on 4 June 2001 (TL, CWO; 2002-171; 7-0), forming a first record for that county. The quintessential ‘fee-bee-yo’ song was heard many times along a riparian area adjacent to the South Platte River. Plumage and shape characteristics supportive of Alder Flycatcher included the olive-green upperparts, a narrow, partial eye-ring that was most profound at the rear of the eye, a faintly white throat contrasting with darker auriculars, an olive-gray chest band, pale whitish-yellow underparts, dark tail with pale outer webs to the sixth rectrices, a relatively long, primary projection, and a completely orange maxilla contrasting with a dark mandible. Even more unusual, one was spotted and nicely photographed high in the mountains south of Leadville, *Lake*, during the CFO Convention on 7 June 2003 (LK, GW †; 2003-50; 7-0), which is, not surprisingly, a first county record. Photographs strongly eliminated Willow Flycatcher and the bird was heard singing its distinctive song at least once. With increased knowledge of the separation of Alder Flycatcher from Willow Flycatcher, especially from populations of the greener, eastern race of Willow Flycatcher (*E. t. trailii* and *E. t. campestris*, of whom some consider synonymous), it appears that Alder Flycatcher may be an

annual late spring/early summer migrant across the Eastern Plains of the state. The Committee still wishes to warn observers that not all “Traill’s” Flycatchers are identifiable when not vocalizing, however, and it requires a consistent suite of characteristics to successfully separate the two when in the field.



Alder Flycatcher near Leadville, *Lake*, on 7 June 2003 (CBRC# 2003-50). Photo by Glenn Walbek.

**VERMILION FLYCATCHER** - *Pyrocephalus rubinus* (24/12). The circulation accepted two additional records for the state. A female, present at Higbee Cemetery, *Otero*, in late summer 2002, was soundly documented for the date 14 September (RL; 2002-155; 7-0). A first-cycle female was seen in Carrizo Canyon, *Baca*, on 25 May 2003 (TR; 2003-38; 7-0). More than a third of Colorado’s 24 Vermilion Flycatcher records have occurred since 2000.

**\*GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER** - *Myiarchus crinitus*. A well-described bird was observed west of its usual range near Dixon Res., *Larimer*, on 14 September 2004 (RH; 2004-98; 7-0). The observer carefully provided separation details on the various plumage aspects of the bird, especially in comparison to Ash-throated and Brown-crested flycatchers (*Myiarchus tyannulus*), the latter a species that should be seriously considered in autumn in Colorado.

**#YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** - *Vireo flavifrons*. Although this species was removed from the statewide Main Review List in 2002 because of accretive occurrence frequency, the CBRC still accepts and solicits reports of pre-2002 observations of Yellow-throated Vireo for review as to provide a clearer picture



of the status of this species in the state. Leukering acceptably provided details of an alternate-plumaged bird present at Chatfield SP, *Jefferson*, on 15 May 2001 (TL; 2002-165; 7-0), providing the third confirmed record of this species for *Jefferson* through 2001, all from Chatfield SP.

\*JUNIPER TITMOUSE - *Baeolophus ridgwayi*. Representing the first record for *Summit*, a high-elevation, non-Pinyon-Juniper habitat county, one wandered to a feeder in Silverthorne, where present between December 2001 and at least 5 February 2002 (TP †; 2002-17; 7-0).

\*EASTERN BLUEBIRD - *Sialia sialis*. Very rare for southwestern Colorado, a male and female were at Navajo SP, *Archuleta*, on 28 April 2004 (JBy, PDe; 2004-92; 7-0).

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH - *Catharus minimus* (37/21). Providing a first for *Kit Carson*, one was seen at Flagler SWA, on 7 May 2003 (JBy; 2003-139; 6-1).

WOOD THRUSH - *Hylocichla mustelina* (24/11). A healthy four additional records were accepted with this circulation. Very tardily submitted, but still of great value, the CBRC accepted submissions of two different Wood Thrushes captured at the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's banding station at Barr Lake, *Adams*. Of special interest is that both birds were banded within one day of each other, 15 and 16 October 1996 (TL †; 2002-161 and 2002-164, respectively; both 7-0). In-hand photographs and molt patterning of each bird (and the lack of a band on the second bird when captured) confirmed two different individuals in first-basic and definitive-basic plumage. Acceptance of these two records is testimony that it is never too late to submit records! These records represent the first, and only, established accounts of this species for heavily-birded *Adams*. Beatty spotted one below Two Buttes Res., *Baca*, on 4 May 2003 (JBy; 2003-149; 7-0), establishing the third record for that county. Lastly, one skulked at Last Chance on 20 May 2004 (TL; 2004-101; 7-0), which is the first confirmed record for *Washington*.

VARIED THRUSH - *Ixoreus naevius* (22/13). A male, the first for *Broomfield*, was briefly described, but diagnostically photographed, from a private residence in Broomfield on 3 December 2004 (EZ † AZ; 2004-90; 7-0).

\*CURVE-BILLED THRASHER - *Toxostoma curvirostre*. One was in Grand Junction, *Mesa*, on 9 June 2004, establishing a very rare record for Colorado's West Slope (PDi; 2004-85; 7-0). The observer carefully noted all pertinent field characteristics including the size of bird, length of tail, length and shape of bill, overall coloration, spot patterning to the upperbreast, and eye color.



Wood Thrush at Barr Lake, *Adams*, on 15 Oct 1996 (CBRC# 2002-161). Photo by Tony Leukering.

TROPICAL PARULA - *Parula pitiayumi* (1/1). Despite a host of exceptional vagrant records in 2005, the most unpredicted was the appearance of a territorial male Tropical Parula at Grandview Cemetery in Fort Collins, *Larimer*. Leatherman first detected the singing bird on 18 June, but was unable to get decisive views of it until days later. On 20 June, Joe Mammoser obtained good views and opined Tropical Parula as the identity. Easy to detect when singing, this oftentimes prevaricative bird frustrated many as it would seemingly disappear for long stretches at a time. However, over the course of the next 17 days, with the bird last seen on 4 July (DAL), a majority of Colorado birders did get nice views of one of Colorado's greatest records. The CBRC received numerous photographic and written evidence for historical support of the record, as well as a sonagram (DAL, JM †, DF, PG, LG †, TH †, NL, NP(s), BS †, CWi †; 2005-71; 7-0). Colorado's Tropical Parula represents the northernmost documented occurrence of this species, with the nearest vagrancy location being from the Texas Panhandle at Lubbock on 18 May 2003 (Mark Lockwood, Chair, Texas BRC, pers. comm.). Apart from other more southerly vagrant records from Texas, other vagrant Tropical Parulas have been found in the southern tier of states of Arizona, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER - *Dendroica fusca* (38/21). Extremely unusual for its location, and obviously a first county record, an alternate-plumaged male was nicely documented from the Animas River in Durango, *La Plata*, where present on 13 May 2002 (JBY, 2002-56; 7-0). In contrast to Bay-breasted Warbler, in which Colorado vagrant records have declined greatly over the past twenty years, the number of Blackburnian Warbler reports has substantially increased. Through 2002, the majority (22 of 38 records) of Colorado's Blackburnian Warbler records were collected since 1990.

PINE WARBLER - *Dendroica pinus* (21/8). Two additional Pine Warbler records were accepted. The first was of a male in alternate plumage present at Fairmount Cemetery in Lamar, *Prowers*, between 7 and 10 May 2002 (BGI, DL †; 2002-136; 7-0), for the second *Prowers* record, both from the same season and year. A basic-plumaged bird spent the winter of 2003-04 amongst urban-planted conifers at a schoolyard in Greeley, *Weld* (RH, RL, CWO †, SM). Though the bird spent considerable time at this location, unfortunately the only date span in which documentation was provided was from 21-31 December 2003 and those will become the official record dates of occurrence for this bird unless additional documentation is provided that expands that period.

PRAIRIE WARBLER - *Dendroica discolor* (24/14). An alternate-plumaged male was southeast of Neeskah Res., *Kiowa*, on 2 May 2004 (NP; 2004-81; 7-0). For a well-birded location and general "hot-spot" for eastern warblers in Colorado, surprisingly, this is the first record of Prairie Warbler for *Kiowa*.

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER - *Dendroica castanea* (35/9). An alternate-plumaged female was captured and banded at the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory banding station at Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso*, on 19 May 2002 (TL †; 2002-4; 7-0). Chico Basin Ranch was honored with the presence of yet another Bay-breasted Warbler, an alternate-plumaged male on the *Pueblo* side of the property on 10 May 2003 (BS; 2003-118; 7-0). Finding not one, but two Bay-breasted Warblers on back-to-back years during the 2000 decade at Chico Basin Ranch is surprising and encouraging. Almost half (19) of the 39 records of this species in Colorado occurred prior to 1980 and observations since that period have been quite lackluster, even for a vagrant.

KENTUCKY WARBLER - *Oporornis formosus* (31/13). The first record for *Bent* was obtained with the observation of a male at Fort Lyon SWA on 1 May 2004 (NP; 2004-76; 7-0). Apparently the bird was discovered by four other individuals earlier in the day (BP, GR, WR, JT), though the Committee received no details from the finders.

CANADA WARBLER - *Wilsonia canadensis* (27/10). A first-year female graced the east side of Barr Lake, *Adams*, on 31 August 2003 (DE; 2003-2; 7-0), the third record for *Adams*, two coming from the fall of 2003.

SCARLET TANAGER - *Piranga olivacea* (26/14). The records for two alternate-plumaged males were obtained, one from 2002 and the other from 2004. Both birds brightened a private residence near Lamar, *Prowers*. The first was of a bird photographed on 19 May 2002 (JS †; 2002-172; 7-0) and the second was photographed on 24 May 2004 (JS †; 2004-37; 7-0). Both birds were submitted as one documentation and originally assigned one CBRC accession number. For accuracy, the Committee has reassigned the accession number of one of the two birds and those two valid accession numbers are published herein. These records become the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> respective records for *Prowers*.

\*SNOW BUNTING - *Plectrophenax nivalis*. The distribution of Snow Bunting was defined more clearly in 2002 in which those areas of the state requiring documentation was established (Semo and Leukering 2002). A basic-plumaged male was seen at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, on 30 January 2003 (BM †, BP; 2003-8; 7-0). Diagnostic photographs of the bird were provided to the CBRC, though unfortunately no written account of the observation, information on if the submitted photographs represent the first or last observation of the individual, or whom the finder was, were provided to the Committee.

\*ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK - *Pheucticus ludovicianus*. A rare West Slope record was provided with the acceptance of an alternate-plumaged male present at Ouray, *Ouray*, between 30 May and 1 June 2004 (SH; 2004-26; 7-0).

\*ORCHARD ORIOLE - *Icterus spurius*. Extremely rare for western Colorado, an adult male was seen at Pastorius Res., *La Plata*, on 9 May 2004 (JBY; 2004-95; 7-0).

\*BALTIMORE ORIOLE - *Icterus galbula*. Rare for its westward location, an alternate-plumaged male that temporarily set up territory at a residence in Masonville near Fort Collins, *Larimer*, where it sang persistently from at least 9 through 15 June 2003 (JBN; 2003-25; 7-0). Written descriptions of the bird eliminated a potential hybrid Baltimore x Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullocki*).

\*COMMON REDPOLL- *Carduelis flammaea*. The CBRC placed Common Redpoll on the review list for the majority of the state in 2002 (Semo and Leukering, 2002) as records outside the northeastern counties are extremely

few and details should be provided for the historical record of occurrence of this species in Colorado. Two first county records were accepted during this circulation: *Bent* and *Montrose*. Three were seen in flight, but provided diagnostic calls, at Lake Hasty SP, *Bent*, on 20 November 2004 (TL; 2004-91; 6-1). One dissenting Committee member questioned the validity of specific identification based on such a brief encounter, though the majority of members thought the description was adequate. Much less debatable, an adult female was diacritically photographed at a feeder in Montrose, *Montrose*, on 29 November 2004 (CK; 2004-86; 7-0).

### **RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED**

The Committee recognizes that its decisions, as one of its important duties, may have undesired results to some observers. It is heartily acknowledged that those who took effort to submit documentations certainly care whether or not their reports are accepted. However, a non-accepted record only indicates that the documentation was not complete or convincing enough to catalogue it on the list of confirmed bird records for the state. Non-accepted reports may provide evidence that may not mention certain requisite field marks or may indicate that the conditions of the observation did not permit the proper study of all necessary traits. Non-accepted records do not necessarily suggest that the birder misidentified or did not see the species. Summaries of why the following records were not accepted are included for each decision.

EURASIAN WIGEON - *Anas penelope*. A female wigeon reported cavorting with American Wigeons west of Pagosa Springs, *Archuleta*, on 11 November 2003, failed to gain Committee support as a Eurasian Wigeon (2003-145; 3-4). This sleeping bird was described as displaying a bright rufous head contrasting with grayer upperparts and a white throat, characteristics suggestive of Eurasian Wigeon, but not conclusive. Unfortunately the observer was not able to discern the pattern or coloration of the underwings, which should be darkish gray and finely barred. No discussion was presented on if the bird displayed other Eurasian Wigeon traits such as lack of scapular markings, pale edges to the tertials, and proportionately smaller head than American Wigeon. As identification of female wigeon is often subjective, and hybrids are always a possibility, a more detailed cadre of field traits would have been necessary to accept this record.

BLACK VULTURE - *Coragyps atratus*. The report of an "immature" Black Vulture perched on a transmission wire with Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*) in Fort Collins, *Larimer*, on 10 September 2002, met little CBRC support (2002-78; 1-6). No elimination from juvenile Turkey Vultures, which also have non-red heads, was provided and no discussion on posture or shape was

presented. The bird was noted as being dark, although the view allowed by the observer was east-facing toward the morning sun, a period when all vultures at the roost should be dark. Without additional details, such as observations when in flight, the Committee did not have enough substantial information to accept this report.

**GYRFALCON** - *Falco rusticolis*. The laconic description of a large, mostly white raptor near Montrose, *Montrose*, on 21 January 2001 supplied details not conclusive of gyrfalcon (2002-166; 0-6). The description that the bird was primarily white with black spotting and blackish wings and made a repetitive "ke ya" vocalization can intimate gyrfalcon. However, other raptor species with aberrant plumages must also be considered. The only separation between the subject bird and a white red-tailed hawk was that the subject bird flew faster. No information was furnished describing the bird's overall shape, size, or flight pattern (beyond fast). Despite no confirmed records for the state, gyrfalcons in white plumage - a race dominant in the Greenland area and not the anticipated gray morph occasionally found in Colorado - seems to be the most often reported. The only verified white gyrfalcons in Colorado have been of escaped falconry birds. Full or partial albinism is relatively common in red-tailed hawks and observers should use caution when identifying large raptors in white plumages. Unfortunately, the provided description of the Montrose bird did not fully eliminate aberrant plumaged birds of other species from contention.

**MEW GULL** - *Larus canus*. A juvenal at Warren Lake, *Larimer*, on 30 November 2001, was briefly described by an experienced observer, but only two members voted to accept (2002-170; 2-5). Despite the submission of photographs, the written description did not provide enough salient details and the photographs were of very poor quality and were not conclusive to support Mew Gull. If higher quality photographic evidence is available, the CBRC would re-review the record.

\***GREATER ROADRUNNER** - *Geococcyx californianus*. There was no Committee support for a record of a bird in Salida, *Chaffee*, on 20 October 2002, as the observer provided absolutely no description of the bird (2002-90; 0-7).

**YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER** - *Sphyrapicus varius*. Very unusual for the time and place, an adult male was reported from Coller SWA, *Mineral*, on 2 July 2004. Though an interesting account, there is enough overlap in plumage between Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Red-naped Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus nuchalis*) that a record of this magnitude should be held to a much higher standard than reports of this species in winter. The documentation, written

eight months following the sighting, was suggestive of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, though plumage overlaps and still unclear separation criteria between the *Sphyrapicus*, suggests that this very out-of-range observation would need photographic evidence to accept (2004-99; 3-4).

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE - *Contopus virens*. A report of a singing, non-seen Eastern Wood-Pewee at Bonny Res., Yuma, on 6 May 2003 failed to gain acceptance (2003-137; 2-5). Indeed, the bird may have been an Eastern Wood-Pewee; however, the CBRC is reluctant to accept heard-only pewees as other birds can, and do, mimic the song of Eastern Wood-Pewee, especially European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). As the observer did not provide information on why European Starling was eliminated, it would have at least required a visual on a pewee species to provide enough clues as to the identity of this bird.

\*BLUE JAY - *Cyanocitta cristata*. Though most likely a Blue Jay, the report of one in Cahone, Dolores, on 9 November 2002 provided no description of the bird (2002-159; 1-6). The observer noted that a photograph was taken, though it was not submitted to the CBRC. The CBRC requested a copy of that photograph, and to this date, it has not been provided. If the observer submits a photograph, the CBRC will open up the record again for review.

SEDGE WREN - *Cistothorus platensis*. On 23 April 2002, a Sedge Wren was reported and documented from Barr Lake, Adams. The finder of this bird later recanted his original identification as video footage was obtained of the subject bird with the finder present, who agreed that it was indeed the same bird discovered earlier. Video documentation clearly indicated that the bird was a Marsh Wren and not a Sedge Wren as originally noted. Other observers who observed the bird later opined that it was a Sedge Wren, not knowing that the original observer did not agree with that premise anymore. Though documentation submitted from the non-finder observers could suggest Sedge Wren, the video of the bird proved the contrary (2002-40; 0-7).

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH - *Catharus minimus*. The report of one at Crow Valley CG, Weld, on 11 May 2003 certainly may have been of this species, though a majority of Committee members voted against (2003-42; 3-4). Reported by a very experienced observer, most CBRC members were confused over the plumage description being reddish-brown, which would be suggestive of Veery, a species not eliminated from contention by the observer.

BENDIRE'S THRASHER - *Toxostoma bendirei*. Continuing the saga of the status of Bendire's Thrasher in the San Luis Valley, an intriguing report was



reviewed of a bird seen near LaGarita, *Saguache*, on 6 August 2003. Unfortunately, committee members were reluctant to accept the record as Curve-billed Thrasher in juvenal plumage was not eliminated. Noted breast spotting shapes were suggestive of Curve-billed Thrasher, as well as Bendire's Thrasher. The breast was discussed as "dirty white", which is more indicative of Sage Thrasher. Ultimately, the CBRC noted too many inconsistencies to accept as Bendire's Thrasher (2003-11; 1-6).

\*SUMMER TANAGER - *Piranga rubra*. A female reported from north of Vallecito Res., *La Plata*, on 28 August 2003 did not eliminate Hepatic Tanager (*Piranga flava*) from consideration (2003-141; 2-5). Indeed the description of size and gray bill and the location and habitat actually suggest Hepatic Tanager. Without a rationale of why the bird was not Hepatic Tanager, the CBRC felt reluctant to accept the record.

PAINTED BUNTING - *Passerina ciris*. The report of an immature/female-plumaged bird at Carrizo Canyon, *Baca*, seen 15-16 June 2003 carried little weight through the Committee (2003-55; 2-5). The noted pattern of black upperparts and yellow uppertail coverts is inconsistent with all plumages of Painted Bunting. Other details provided were less than helpful, with the song simply described as "finch-like", the consistent use of "dark" to describe the head, wings, and tail (the latter of which are brown fringed in either green or red and the former being either green or blue), and no mention of an eye ring.

### Reporters and Cited Observers

The CBRC graciously thanks the following individuals for submitting records of rare species in Colorado which prompted this circulation: Susan Allerton, Jason Beason (JBn), James Beatty (JBy), Michelle Bloom, Bob Brown, Richard Brown, Alex Cringan, Peter Derven (PDe), Paul Didier (PDi), Glenn Dunmire, Doug Faulkner, Peter Gent, Brian Gibbons (BGi), Gregg Goodrich, Larry Griffin, Bryan Guarente (BGe), Beverlee Guild (BGU), Thomas Heinrich, Sue Hirshman, Rachel Hopper, Hugh Kingery, Connie Kogler, Nick Komar, David Leatherman, Norm Lewis, Cindy Lieurance, Leslie Lieurance, Roger Linfield, Bill Maynard, Steve Messick, Rich Miller, Duane Nelson, Ric Olson, Stan Oswald, Brandon Percival, Nathan Pieplow, Tim Profota, Thom Rahn, Gene Rutherford, Wendi Rutherford, Bill Schmoker, Chris Sedlmayr, Larry Semo, David Silverman, Andrew Spencer, Jolan Truan, Van Truan, John Vanderpoel, Glenn Walbek, Cole Wild (CWl), Chris Wood (CWo), Sherrie York, Andrea Zorawowicz, Eric Zorawowicz.

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### **CFO SUPPORTS ETHICS CODES**

The Colorado Field Ornithologists is dedicated to the conservation of avian species and to increasing the public awareness of human impact on birds. As one step toward achieving these goals, the CFO Board has endorsed the American Birding Association's (ABA) *Birding Code of Ethics* and the Ornithological Council (OC) of North American Ornithological Societies' *Code of Ethics*.