

Changes to the Main Review List

Doug Faulkner

Chair, Colorado Bird Records Committee

The purpose of the Colorado Bird Records Committee (CBRC) is to provide a repository for information regarding the records of rare or unusual birds within the state of Colorado. In order to perform this function, the CBRC collects, reviews, renders opinions on, and permanently archives all documentation concerning such records. The list of rare and unusual species for which the CBRC requests documentation is maintained as the Main Review List (http://www.cfbirds.org/cbrcfiles/state_review_list.pdf). A Conditional List is used for species considered rare by geography or seasonality (see Semo et al. 2002). The CBRC recently reviewed the Main Review List for species that warrant removal, as well as for missing species that it considered should be on the list.

Per Section VII(D)2(b) of the CBRC bylaws (http://www.cfbirds.org/downloads/business/CBRC_Bylaws_Revised_11-3-2010.pdf), the guidelines for which species may be considered for removal from the list of review species are as follows:

1. there have been on average four or more sightings per year in the previous 10-year period,
2. there are more than ten accepted records, and
3. in the opinion of a majority of CBRC members, the species no longer requires further documentation, as the status and distribution of that species has been established.

A species may be added to the review list if the CBRC desires documentation to assess its status in the state.

The species included in this report were removed or added by a majority vote of the full CBRC. It is the intent of this Chair for the CBRC to review the Main Review List on an annual basis and to report on the Committee's decision in a timely manner.

In the species accounts below, note that the number of records for West Slope counties is mentioned separately. However, no attempt has been made to dissect the state in order to provide a precise accounting of each record or locality, and the same attention is not given to other parts of the state where these birds may be rare, such as the San Luis Valley, montane counties, and North Park.

SPECIES REMOVED FROM THE MAIN REVIEW LIST

Red-throated Loon – *Gavia stellata*

Except for an undated specimen of an immature collected at Antero Reservoir, *Park*, all of the state's records are from 1973 and later, reflecting the value of having a centralized organization (Colorado Field Ornithologists) and records committee to review and archive documentation of species considered rare in Colorado. Thirty-four of the 45 CBRC records are from the fall season, with a nearly even split between juveniles and adults. The earliest fall record is from 12 October, but the remaining nine October records fall after 20 October. November has the highest number of records (18), which span the month. There are six records for December and just one for January. The January record is anomalous not only for being the lone midwinter record, but also because it represents the longest staying individual in the state (Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, 3 January – 26 February 2008, 54 days), barely surpassing a bird at Missouri Heights Res., *Garfield*, 4 May – 25 June 1973, that stayed for 53 days. The species has been observed at other seasons, particularly spring, which has eight records scattered from early April to mid-May. The species is rare in summer, with single records for June and July. There are no records for March or August. West Slope counties with records include *Delta* (1), *Garfield* (1), and *Mesa* (2).

Glossy Ibis – *Plegadis falcinellus*

The state's first record is represent-

ed by an adult at Sweitzer Lake, *Delta*, 27 March 1986. Between 1986 and 1995 there were only three records of the species, but from 1995-2004 it averaged 3.3 accepted records a year, and since 2005 it has averaged 4.3 accepted records a year. The species has become expected in the state, including on the West Slope, which has records for *Delta* (1), *Eagle* (1), *Garfield* (1), *La Plata* (6), *Moffat* (1), and *Routt* (1). Pastorius Reservoir in *La Plata* has been a reliable location for at least one Glossy Ibis in late April since 2006. Nearly all of the state's records are of phenotypically pure adults in breeding condition found during spring migration in April and May. At least one of the two records for July (Alamosa NWR, *Alamosa*, 10 July 2003) is interesting in that the season and the location near known White-faced Ibis (*P. chihi*) colonies suggest the possibility of local breeding. There remain identification challenges with non-breeding-plumaged individuals, juveniles, and possible hybrids, but the CBRC has 66 records in its database, and additional records of phenotypically pure individuals are of diminishing value to the CBRC's mission to maintain a database of rare species records.

Red Phalarope – *Phalaropus fulicarius*

The only historical record for this species is provided by a specimen collected near Loveland, *Larimer*, 25 July 1895. The CBRC's 47 records indicate that this species is mainly a fall migrant through Colorado. Thirty-two records are from September and October, with outlying migrants observed

in August (3) and early November (2). Twenty-two of these autumnal records fall between 15 September and 15 October, suggesting peak migration during that four-week period. Red Phalarope is a very rare spring migrant, with five records for April and May. Summer records, which could be either late spring or early fall migrants, consist of two records each for June and July. There are no records for the December – March period. Most records are of adults in basic plumage. West Slope records are from *Delta* (1), *Mesa* (2), and *Rio Blanco* (1).

Black-legged Kittiwake – *Rissa tridactyla*

There is one record from prior to the CBRC's inception, of one collected in *Adams*, 13 November 1932. Over half (26) of the CBRC's 45 records occurred in November, and the only two October records are from late in that month, on 27 and 29 October. Including another eight records for early to mid-December, this species is considered a late fall migrant in Colorado. The species is very rare in winter (two records for January and none for February). Spring migrants have been observed during March (3), April (2), and May (2). There are no summer or early fall records (June – September). There is a single record for the West Slope (Connected Lakes, *Mesa*, 16 November 1991). Most records are of juveniles, with just a handful of adults and second-cycle individuals.

Great Black-backed Gull – *Larus marinus*

Colorado's first record is of one at

Centennial Park, *Arapahoe*, 3-4 January 1980. The species was not recorded again until November 1987. With just single-day occurrences of another three individuals representing three separate records in 1988 and 1989, it wasn't until 1993 that the species began to become a regular component of the state's avifauna. Since 1993, multiple individuals of this species have been recorded most years. The species has become so regular that the CBRC has experienced "documentation fatigue" from birders in the state over the past several years. Great Black-backed Gulls can be expected in Colorado from November to March. There are two records for both September and October, and single records for April and May. The April individual remained through mid-July; however, there are no records for which June or July is the initial month of observation. Adults comprise the majority of records. The West Slope does not have a record of this species.

Vermilion Flycatcher – *Pyrocephalus rubinus*

Two historical records are of individuals collected in May 1950 and May 1965. The species has been recorded in the state nearly annually since 1971. Half (22) of the state's 44 records occurred in April, with another ten in May. The four records from March are all from the latter half of that month, outlining the period when migrants may first be expected in the state. The species is very rare at other times of the year. The remaining eight records are from June (3), September (3), and December (2). At

least one of the June records (2011-85; Thompson Ranch, *Lincoln*, 8-9 June 2011) is of an individual first recorded in a previous month, in this case May. This exemplifies the CBRC's need to remind birders that first and last dates are important to understanding the patterns of occurrence of rare species in the state. The CBRC's database is meant to be a standalone source. Documentation from only a portion of an individual's stay in the state creates an unnecessary burden on those using this database since it causes them to also research other sources (e.g., eBird, News from the Field, *North American Birds*) for a more complete date span. Vermilion Flycatcher is known to have nested in the state on several occasions, although no nest is known to have produced fledglings. West Slope records are from *La Plata* (1), *Mesa* (1), and *Montrose* (1).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher – *Tyrannus forficatus*

Two were collected at an unknown location in *Baca* in 1923 for Colorado's first and second state records. Colorado has an additional three records prior to 1991. In 1996, the species started a pattern of nearly annual occurrence in the state, with multiple records in most years. The highest number of annual records is four in both 2005 and 2006. Eastern Colorado is on the periphery of the species' Great Plains breeding range, so a few individuals may be expected to occur in southeastern Colorado in spring and summer. The species is typically first recorded in late April (seven records for 16-29 Apr). May

has 13 records, June seven, and July three. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher is rarely recorded during fall migration, with records for August (4), September (2), and October (1). The species has not been recorded from November through March. The species is a rare nester in Colorado. *Eagle* is the only West Slope county with a record in the CBRC database, although Righter et al. (2004) state that there are ten for the area covered in that publication, and Dexter (1995) reports on a possible hybrid pairing, with a Western Kingbird (*T. verticalis*), in *Garfield*.

Wood Thrush – *Hylocichla mustelina*

Wood Thrush is primarily a spring and fall migrant in Colorado. Of the state's 35 records, 21 are from 2 April to 11 June, with 18 of these in May. There are 13 fall records for the period 13 September to 11 November. Eight of the fall records occurred in October. A pair collected in *Yuma* on 24 June 1915 represents the sole summer record. Colorado has two winter records, on 15 December 1984 and 8 January 1975. *Mesa* is the only West Slope county with a record (*Grand Junction*, 13-18 September 1972).

Varied Thrush – *Ixoreus naevius*

No records existed for this species until 1972, when one was documented for *Lakewood, Jefferson*, 27 November – 28 December. There are currently 46 records. The 1970s and 1980s each had four records, all in November and December. Five records come from the 1990s, including the first one for the month of October. Since 2000, multiple individuals of this species have

been recorded annually, except for 2005 which has one record, including four records each for 2006, 2007, and 2008. To date, the CBRC has reviewed four of seven documentations from an influx of this species in fall and winter 2011-12, and accepted all four. Varied Thrush is primarily found in Colorado from mid-October through the end of January. There are two records each for February and March. An adult female at Last Chance, *Washington*, 12 May 2006, represents the only spring record for Colorado. West Slope records are from *Delta* (1), *La Plata* (3), *Mesa* (1), and *Routt* (1).

Kentucky Warbler – *Geothlypis formosa*

One that resided in Bluebell Canyon, *Boulder*, 21 May – 21 June 1963, represents the state's first record. Kentucky Warbler has been recorded in most years since 1991. The most recorded in a single year is four in 2009. The species is strongly associated with spring migration, as 33 of the state's 39 records are of individuals occurring between 16 April and 1 June. Single males established territories in Gregory Canyon, *Boulder*, in 1998 and 2009, staying into July of both years. Fall records are few and far between. There is one record for August and two in October. The species has not been recorded in winter. Single individuals in *La Plata* and *Montrose* represent the only West Slope records.

Bay-breasted Warbler – *Setophaga castanea*

The species exploded onto the birding scene in 1973, the first year it was documented in the state, with

six records. The following year saw an incredible nine records for the species. Bay-breasted Warbler was recorded nearly annually through 1979. Interestingly, though there is only one record from the 1980s, in 1988, the species has been recorded nearly annually since 1995. Bay-breasted Warbler is recorded most frequently during spring migration (28 records), though the ten records spanning 5 September to 12 November suggest that it may routinely pass through the state during fall migration too. Twenty-three of the 28 spring records occurred in a narrow late-spring window, 15-31 May. Oddly, the only June records (six total) are from the 1970s. There is a single nesting record of a pair near Westcreek, *Douglas*, in 1978 (Kingery 1998). There are no West Slope records.

Blackburnian Warbler – *Setophaga fusca*

Unlike Bay-breasted Warbler, the Blackburnian Warbler is equally likely to occur in Colorado in spring and in fall. It has been of near-annual occurrence since 1983, with yearly high counts of four records in 1997 and 2000. The 29 spring records span 30 April to 1 June, while the 23 fall records are from 26 August to 18 November. The species has not been recorded in summer or winter. Birders on the West Slope have recorded the species on three occasions, once each in *Dolores*, *La Plata*, and *Montrose*.

Pine Warbler – *Setophaga pinus*

Pine Warbler may have been the most under-documented species on

the Main Review List. The species is the most “common” of the state’s rare warblers, and documentation fatigue has been contagious for several years. Nonetheless, the species has been documented annually since 2002. The highest number of records in a given year is five from 2005. Pine Warbler has been documented for every month, and is equally likely to occur during spring, fall, and winter. Only the summer months of June and July have few records (3 total). Single juveniles molting from juvenile to first basic plumage (Bonny Res., *Yuma*, 6 August 2005 and Ovid, *Sedgwick*, 4 July 2010) suggest breeding by this species in the region, if not in Colorado.

Yellow-throated Warbler – *Setophaga dominica*

The only state record prior to the CBRC’s inception is of a specimen collected in either June or July 1956. Yellow-throated Warbler is predominantly a spring migrant in Colorado, with 33 of the state’s 39 records from the period 3 April to 12 June, and 22 of those records in May. The species has been recorded thrice in fall (Denver, *Denver*, 14 October – 18 November 1989; San Luis, *Costilla*, 10 September 2009; Chico Basin Ranch, *Pueblo*, 12-13 September 2011) and twice in winter (Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, 7-9 December 1983; Cañon City, *Freemont*, 29 December 2003).

Scarlet Tanager – *Piranga olivacea*

Scarlet Tanager has been known in Colorado since 1902, when one was collected at Palmer Lake, *El Paso*,

17 May. Two additional pre-CBRC specimens residing at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science are from Pueblo, *Pueblo*, 20 May 1904, and Denver, *Denver*, 7 September 1956. Like Bay-breasted Warbler, the species was recorded on several occasions during the 1970s, but only once in the 1980s. Scarlet Tanager has been recorded nearly annually since 1995, with the high count of four in 2000. The species is primarily recorded in spring (18 of the state’s 34 records are from 30 April to 27 May). The eight summer records include a male that established a territory in Gregory Canyon, *Boulder*, 2007-2009. However, the only breeding record is of an adult male observed feeding an apparent hybrid (with Western Tanager *P. ludoviciana*) fledgling in North Cheyenne Canyon, *El Paso*, 8-9 August 2011. It is more rarely reported in fall (eight records from 10 August – 19 November), and there is a single record for winter (Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, 6-20 December 2003).

Painted Bunting – *Passerina ciris*

The state’s first record (Mesa Verde National Park, *Montezuma*, 29 August 1938) is also notable for being one of only three records for the West Slope (also Delta, *Delta*, 23-26 March 1998, and Placerville, *San Miguel*, 26 July 2002). The species was recorded five times during the 1970s and 1980s. However, it has been of near-annual occurrence since 1991. The annual high count is of four recorded in 2002. Spring arrivals are expected in late April (two records for 21 and 28 April), but the bulk of spring records

are from May (19). Painted Bunting has not been confirmed as a breeding species in Colorado, but several records for late June and July suggest the possibility. The species is rare in fall migration, with two records in late August and three in September. There are no records from October through mid-March.

SPECIES MOVED TO THE CONDITIONAL REVIEW LIST

Least Bittern – *Ixobrychus exilis*

Bailey and Niedrach (1965) considered this species to be an uncommon summer resident, with multiple nesting occurrences in *Adams, Boulder, Denver, Logan/Washington, and Weld*. It no longer holds that status in the upper reaches of the Front Range, although it is still recorded from time to time in *Boulder* and *Larimer*. With 25 state records, the species would not normally be considered a candidate for complete removal from the Main Review List. However, recent nesting attempts and its regular occurrence in southeastern Colorado have prompted the CBRC to stop soliciting documentations for that part of the state. Twenty-one of the state's 25 records are about equally split among May, June, and July. There is a single record for August and one for September. Least Bittern has been recorded on the West Slope in *Archuleta* (1) and *Mesa* (1).

Hepatic Tanager – *Piranga flava*

The CBRC database contains 23 records for this species, a total generally not high enough to warrant con-

sideration for removal from the Main Review List. However, the species is known to regularly breed in southeastern Colorado, particularly in *Huerfano* and *Las Animas*. Therefore, the CBRC no longer requests documentation for sightings in southeastern Colorado. Several individuals, most presumably spring migrant overshoots, have been recorded elsewhere in the state, including *Boulder, El Paso, Garfield, Jefferson, Montezuma, and Yuma*.

SPECIES ADDED TO THE MAIN REVIEW LIST

Golden-winged Warbler – *Vermivora chrysoptera*

The CBRC has elected to add Golden-winged Warbler to the Main Review List. The species was on the list until 2001 (Semo et al. 2002). With the acceptance of one in *Durango, La Plata*, 20 May 2010, there are currently 33 records for this species. However, there appear to be fewer reports of this species in the past several years than for other warbler species that, until recently, maintained a position on the list (e.g., Bay-breasted Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler). From time to time, the CBRC may add a species to determine its status in the state. Such recent actions include assessing the status of Trumpeter and Tundra Swans (*Cygnus buccinator* and *C. columbianus*, respectively) and the Red Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca iliaca/zaboria*). Therefore, the CBRC invites the birding community to submit documentation for sightings of this species to help us ascertain its current status in the state.

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Doug Faulkner, 6035 Parfet St., Arvada, CO 80004, cbrc@cfobirds.org