

THE 39TH REPORT OF THE COLORADO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

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Introduction

The Colorado Bird Records Committee (hereafter, CBRC or Committee) here provides the 39th 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 85 reports submitted by 50 observers documenting 59 occurrences of 48 species. This article deals primarily with occurrences in 2003, but with a few 2002 occurrences and one 1996 occurrence that had originally been circulated without pictures and not accepted; the record was recirculated with pictures. All reports originating from a year prior to 2003 have the year **bold-faced**. Of the reports here considered, the CBRC accepted 50 records of 43 species and did not accept 11 reports (of 11 species). Per CBRC by-laws, all accepted records received final 7-0 or 6-1 votes to accept. Each report that was not accepted received fewer than four votes to accept in the final vote for that report.

The documents reviewed here include reports on Colorado's fourth Lucy's Warbler. Reports on other very rare species, White-tailed Kite and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, are commented upon here. The state list total remains at 477. Reports of Black Vulture and Kelp Gull are still circulating, and, if accepted, would add to the state list. The top seven observers submitting the most documents for inclusion here are: Bill Schmoker (13), Doug Faulkner (8), Rachel Hopper (5), Tony Leukering (4), and Ric Olson, Brandon Percival, and David Silverman (3 each). Another seven observers submitted two documents each. Committee members voting on these reports were Coen Dexter, Tony Leukering, Ric Olson, Brandon Percival, Larry Semo, John Vanderpoel, and Christopher L. Wood.

Committee News

Due to personal considerations, Rachel Hopper, who was elected to the CBRC to replace the retiring Chris Wood, has asked to be replaced. Doug Faulkner, our inveterate journal editor, has agreed to fill that slot. Joey Kellner has also agreed to serve again – he was last on the CBRC in 1999 - and will fill the slot vacated by the retiring Tony Leukering. The remaining members are Larry Semo (Chair), Coen Dexter, Ric Olson, Brandon Percival, and John Vanderpoel.

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 Larry Semo (see address above), the CBRC would greatly appreciate submission via the new CBRC website, which is now online (www.cfo-link.org; follow links to CBRC). The members' term-expiration dates are printed on this journal's masthead.

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 CBRC wishes to reiterate at this time 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 nomenclature and sequence of these lists follow the A.O.U. (1998, 2003, 2004). 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). Also in 2002, the CBRC added a few species to the state review list for which there are numerous previous reports and these species are indicated by a preceding square (); the

number of accepted records listed for these species is, obviously, only those accepted since 2002. 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.

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. Each record presents as much of the following information as we have available: number of birds, age, sex, locality, county, and date or date span. In parentheses, we present the initials of the contributing observer(s), the official record number, and the vote tally in the first round and, if relevant, second round (with the number of "accept" votes on the left side of the dash).

The initials of the finder(s) of the bird(s) are underlined 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* 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.

Abbreviations used in this report are: **BLSP**=Barr Lake SP, *Adams*; **BR**=Bonny Res., *Yuma*; **CBR**=Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso/Pueblo* (county indicated in account); **CVCG**=Crow Valley Campground, Pawnee National Grassland, *Weld*; **FLWE**=Ft. Lyon Wildlife Easement, *Bent*; **JR**=Jackson Res., *Morgan*; **LCC**=Lamar Community College, *Prowers*; **Res.**=Reservoir; **SP**=State Park; **SWA**=State Wildlife Area.

Part I: RECORDS ACCEPTED

TUNDRA SWAN - *Cygnus columbianus* (4/4). One juvenile wandered around *Pueblo*, being found 17 November **2002** at Valco Ponds SWA and then moving to Pueblo Res. where it was last seen on the local Christmas Bird Count, 14 December **2002** (BKP, LS †, RM; 2003-129; 7-0). An adult at Boulder Res., *Boulder*, was apparently present only 13 November 2003 (BS, BG; 2003-131; 7-0).

LEAST BITTERN - *Ixobrychus exilis* (1/73). As many as two matriculated at Ft. Lyon SWA, *Bent*, 3 May - 28 June 2003, but only one male was described in submitted documentation (PF, CLa, RO; 2003-44; 7-0). One observer reported seeing both male and female at this site (Semo and Percival 2004).

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - *Nyctanassa violacea* (16/6). A juvenile pleased many observers at Belmar Historic Park, Lakewood, *Jefferson*, 19 September - 11 October 2003 (KS, DF †, BS †; 2003-86; 7-0).

GLOSSY IBIS - *Plegadis falcinellus* (30/26). An adult in alternate was found at Headquarter's Pond, CBR, *Pueblo*, 11 May 2003 (TL; 2003-122; 7-0) for a first ranch record. An adult at Alamosa NWR, *Alamosa*, 10 July 2003 (CC; 2003-59; 7-0) provided the second reported and first accepted San Luis Valley record.

+PIPING PLOVER - *Charadrius melodus*. A juvenile provided a fifth BLSP area record 8-9 August 2003 (BS †, DF; 2003-60; 7-0).

RED KNOT - *Calidris canutus* (21/6). Two, an adult and a juvenile, were subsidiary benefits of chasing the Kelp Gull present at JR 18-21 September 2003 (BS †, TL, GW; 2003-128; 7-0), though only documented on the first of those dates.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER - *Tryngites subruficollis* (26/9). One juvenile was found at BLSP 29 Aug 2003 (DF †, BB, LB; 2003-17; 7-0).

- RED PHALAROPE - *Phalaropus fulicarius* (28/11). A basic-plumaged individual was present among Red-necked Phalaropes at BLSP 10 September 2002 (TL; 2003-66; 7-0).
- POMARINE JAEGER - *Stercorarius pomarinus* (15/7). A light-morph subadult terrorized gulls at Chatfield Res., Jefferson and Douglas, 5-14 November 2003 (BS †, JK; 2003-116; 7-0), though only one observer submitted documentation, that from 5 November.
- +LEAST TERN - *Sterna albifrons*. An adult (possibly two) was observed at Lathrop SP, Huerfano, 14 May 2003 (BR; 2003-40; 6-1). The observer reported seeing a Least Tern at each of the main lakes in the park, but could not discern whether those observations referred to the same individual. This location is well outside the known breeding range of the species in the state and, thus, the report is subject to review (Semo and Leukering 2004).
- INCA DOVE - *Columbina inca* (14/11). One was nicely photographed in Pueblo, Pueblo, 23 November 2003 (DR †, MA; 2003-83; 7-0).
- BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO - *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* (17/4). A rain-soaked juvenile was found early in the morning at Rose Pond, CBR, Pueblo, 30 August 2003 (BS, CLW; 2003-117; 7-0).
- LESSER NIGHTHAWK - *Chordeiles acutipennis* (16/11). One at the Neenoshe Reservoir Locust Grove 3 May 2003 (RH †, RO, BKP; 2003-45; 7-0) provided a first Kiowa record.
- +CHIMNEY SWIFT - *Chaetura pelagica*. One foraging over Chipeta SWA, Montrose, 20 May 2003 (TW; 2003-48; 6-1). Another was over Kremmling, Grand, 7 June 2003 on a CFO convention trip (DE, BS; 2003-63, 6-1). Both occurrences provided first county records. The lone dissenter for both records believed that Vaux's Swift was not ruled out in either case.
- MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD - *Eugenes fulgens* (10/6). An immature male visited Silverman's feeder in Rye, Pueblo, 17 September 2003 (DSi; 2003-74; 7-0).
- ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD - *Calypte anna* (8/3). An adult female visited feeders and flowers in Tina Jones' yard in Littleton, Jefferson, 3 October 2003 - 6 January 2004 (RH, MPe †, BS †, TJ; 2003-106; 7-0). This long-staying individual allowed many a Colorado birder to "tick" this one for the state. Thanks, Tina! On 6 January 2004, after a large snowstorm and very cold weather, the bird was captured and taken to a rehabilitator, where it subsequently died.
- +WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER - *Sphyrapicus thyroideus*. A female spent the 2003-2004 winter at the Cañon City Abbey, Fremont (BS †, SM; 2003-89; 7-0), documented only on 29 December 2003.
- YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER - *Sphyrapicus varius* (3/3). A juvenile first

found at Foster Grove Campground, Bonny SP., Yuma, 14 November 2003 stayed to at least late December; it was photographed on 18 December on the local Christmas Bird Count (PG, HK, TL †, CLW †, BKP; 2003-85; 7-0).

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE - *Contopus virens* (17/5). A singing male located at the Holmes Grove, CBR, El Paso, 30 August 2003 (BS, NG; 2003-120; 7-0) provided the first accepted state record since 1999.

+LEAST FLYCATCHER - *Empidonax minimus*. Single singing males were noted by the late Jack Merchant at two locations in summer 2003 (JM; 2003-57; 7-0). One was at Gypsum Campground on the west edge of Gypsum, Eagle, 6 June - 7 July, and the other was at Trail Gulch, five miles southeast of Eagle, Eagle, 14-28 June. The documentation was the last submitted by Jack and, thus, possibly the last typed documentation that the CBRC will receive. Another individual was found at the Highway 13 crossing of the White River west of Meeker, Rio Blanco, 27-28 June (EH; 2003-99; 7-0). These records highlight the recent great increase of detection of Least Flycatchers in western Colorado. Most of these individuals have been found in reasonable breeding habitat (typically gallery riparian woodland) and have been singing males. We greatly appreciate western birders documenting these occurrences to help in establishing this new pattern and encourage all to scrutinize *Empidonax* found during summer in western gallery forest.

+EASTERN PHOEBE - *Sayornis phoebe*. One was found along Fourmile Creek near Glenwood Springs 13-14 December (KP; 2003-93; 7-0) for a first Garfield record.

#WHITE-EYED VIREO - *Vireo griseus* (23/17 at the time). A report of a bird captured 29 May 1996 in Endovalley, Rocky Mountain N.P., Larimer, that had previously circulated and not been accepted, was re-reviewed along with pictures not circulated previously and accepted (RC; 51-96-65; 7-0).

BLUE-HEADED VIREO - *Vireo solitarius* (10/9). One on 7 September 2003 at Foster Grove Campground, Bonny SP, Yuma, (NP; 2003-69; 6-1) was on the early end of typical arrival dates for the species.

PHILADELPHIA VIREO - *Vireo philadelphicus* (27/13). One was at BLSP 29 August 2003 (DF, GW †; 2003-68; 6-1).

SEDGE WREN - *Cistothorus platensis* (16/4). One was immaculately photographed at incredibly close range at FCRP 18 October 2003 (MPe †, BM †, RH, BKP; 2003-79; 7-0). The bird was first found on 17 October and was present at least until 22 October.

WOOD THRUSH - *Hylocichla mustelina* (21/9). Those looking for a reported Varied Thrush at the FLWE on 26 October 2002 found a Wood

Thrush, too (BKP; 2003-10; 7-0). One was at Two Buttes SWA, *Baca*, 3 May 2003 (RO; 2003-43; 7-0).

+GRAY CATBIRD - *Dumetella carolinensis*. One noted 23 January 2003 about six miles southeast of Eagle, *Eagle*, provided one of few Colorado winter records and the first such for the county (JM; 2003-127; 7-0).

SPRAGUE'S PIPIT - *Anthus spragueii* (6/2). One was found by a visiting birder in southwestern *Baca* on 27 April 2003 (MPa; 2003-32; 7-0). Three of the previous five accepted records are from *Sedgwick*, and *Boulder* and *Larimer* each scored a record in 1976.

LUCY'S WARBLER - *Vermivora luciae* (4/2). A female caused excitement at Valco Ponds SWA, *Pueblo*, 13-15 April 2003 (MA, SM †, BKP, RM; 2003-27; 7-0), as she provided only the fourth accepted state record (the Grand Junction occurrence has never been submitted to the CBRC).

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER - *Dendroica dominica* (27/11). A superbly-photographed individual was at the Cañon City Abbey, *Fremont*, 1 December 2003 - 2 January 2004 (BS †, MPe; 2003-115; 7-0), though was documented by only one observer, on 20 December. This individual visited the wells created by wintering Williamson's and Yellow-bellied sapsuckers and provided a first county record.

+BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER - *Mniotilta varia*. An immature male graced the Ute Indian Museum at the sound side of Montrose, *Montrose*, 1 September 2003 (RW; 2003-71; 7-0). What was probably the same bird was found a few days later at Chipeta SWA a few miles away, but was not submitted to the CBRC.

KENTUCKY WARBLER - *Oporornis formosus* (30/13). A male was heard singing at Fountain Creek Regional Park, *El Paso*, 15 May 2003 (MCL; 2003-34; 7-0).

CANADA WARBLER - *Wilsonia canadensis* (25/10). An individual of undetermined sex was present at BLSP 31 August 2003 (DF; 2003-98; 7-0). Another, a female, was reported from the same location that day (Gent 2004), and that report is still in circulation. Amazingly, another individual, a male, was found on the same date, but at the Holmes Grove, CBR, *El Paso* (BS †, CLW; 2003-119; 7-0).

SCARLET TANAGER - *Piranga olivacea* (24/12). An immature male spent 6-20 December 2003 at Gray Rocks Commons, Ft. Collins, *Larimer* (DSw, RH †; 2003-94; 7-0) and was nicely photographed on the bird's final day at the location. As this species is extremely rare in North America in winter, it is unsurprising that this bird represents the first state winter record.

“RED” FOX SPARROW - *Passerella iliaca iliaca*. One visited Frog Pond, Colorado City, *Pueblo*, 26 October 2003 (DSi; 2003-81; 7-0). Another

was at the Wagon Wheel Campground at Bonny Res., Yuma, 14 November 2003 (PG, BKP; 2003-84; 7-0).

+WHITE-THROATED SPARROW - *Zonotrichia albicollis*. An immature tan-morph wintered at 10,600 feet elevation at the Loveland Basin ski lift near Loveland Pass, *Clear Creek*. The bird was first noted 30 Dec 2002 and last seen 22 April 2003 and documented only on the first date (BS †, KN †; 2003-5; 7-0). There is only one previous Colorado record for the species above ~8,700 feet.

+SNOW BUNTING - *Plectrophenax nivalis*. A male was near Craig, *Moffat*, 10 December 2003 (RH; 2003-107; 7-0).

PAINTED BUNTING - *Passerina ciris* (25/16). A single male was documented as occurring at Colorado's Painted Bunting hotspot – Cottonwood Canyon – 21 May - 22 June 2003 (CLi, LL, PM, MA; 2003-36; 7-0), documented on 25 May and 16 June (which supported occurrence only in *Las Animas*). As many as two males had been reported from this location that summer, but the CBRC did not receive documentation supporting such.

EASTERN MEADOWLARK - *Sturnella magna* (6/1). One sang about 20 times at the public Lesser Prairie-Chicken lek east of Campo, *Baca*, on 27-28 April 2003 (MPa; 2003-22; 7-0). The observer stated that he felt the bird referable to the southwestern subspecies, *liliani*. Eastern Meadowlarks have been found at and near the public lek each spring since, occupying high-structure grassland typical of southeastern *Baca* and northeastern New Mexico.

+BALTIMORE ORIOLE - *Icterus galbula*. An adult male was present at BLSP from at least late May through mid-July 2003 (DF, GG †, TL †; 2003-56; 7-0). The bird was seen feeding the same fledglings in July that a female hybrid oriole was feeding (Leukering pers. obs.), providing some proof for a first county breeding record.

+BLACK ROSY-FINCH - *Leucosticte atrata*. A relatively low-elevation record of this species was provided by an adult male near Colorado City, *Pueblo*, on 20 March 2003 (BBH †; 2003-21; 7-0).

PURPLE FINCH - *Carpodacus purpureus* (31/8). A well-described brown individual (female or immature male) was in Rye, *Pueblo*, 12 December 2003 (DSi; 2003-90; 7-0).

Part II: RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED, IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED

WHITE-TAILED KITE - *Elanus leucurus*. An individual was reported from near Cortez, *Montezuma*, 23 December 2003 - 1 January 2004 (2003-100; 0-7). The description sounded more like a leucistic raptor of some other species than it did a White-tailed Kite, as its wings were

described as being “pure white, top and bottom, with some gray on wing shoulders, but not really black.”

MEW GULL - *Larus canus* (25/15). An adult in alternate plumage was reported from JR 7 October 2003 (2003-111; 1-6). To most CBRC members, the description did not rule out Ring-billed Gull, particularly the “mantle not darker than Ring-billed” and the “pale eyes.” Additionally, Mew Gull typically starts molting into basic plumage quite early in the fall, so a bird in full alternate in October would be odd.

GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL - *Larus glaucescens* (10/5). A first-cycle large gull was photographed at Horsetooth Res., Larimer, 13 December 2003 (2003-77; 0-7). Even though at least one CBRC member routinely votes to not accept photo-only reports, this photo was also insufficient to identify the bird in question.

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD - *Eugenes fulgens* (10/6). A female was reported from Boulder 26-29 July 2003 (2003-58; 0-7), however the details provided were insufficient to convince the Committee.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER - *Empidonax flaviventris*. A well-studied bright *Empidonax* was at CVCG 12 June 2003 (2003-103; 2-5). One of the primary reasons for the report's non-acceptance is that one of the three submissions reported it as not being a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Additionally, various features described suggested Alder Flycatcher rather than Yellow-bellied, particularly as one observer mentioned that there was “no discernible eye ring.” This species is only provisionally on the state list, due to an accepted single-observer sighting in Pueblo in May 2000.

+LEAST FLYCATCHER - *Empidonax minimus*. A single, silent individual was reported from along the San Juan River near Pagosa Springs, Archuleta, 25 August 2003 (2003-75; 2-5). Many of the Committee were concerned by the relatively sketchy details provided, particularly for a member of a notoriously difficult genus. Specific important details lacking included plumage condition, bill shape, and primary projection.

+GRAY VIREO - *Vireo vicinior*. One was reported from Howard, Fremont, 16-17 June (2003-65; 2-5). Though the description was certainly suggestive of Gray Vireo, most CBRC members were unconvinced by the brief details provided. The area might support this sparse-Piñon-Juniper specialist, but to date, there are no county records.

WOOD THRUSH - *Hylocichla mustelina* (21/9). A bird reported from CVCG 3 August 2003 (2003-72; 3-4) split the Committee. The description mentioned important field marks, but the fact that others reported up to three individuals, with two possibly being juveniles swayed a number of the CBRC to vote against the record. This is because

breeding by Wood Thrush in the state is undocumented and Brown Thrasher, a confusion species for Wood Thrush, does breed locally.

VARIED THRUSH - *Ixoreus naevius* (20/7). A male was reported (by an unknown observer) three miles north of Golden, *Jefferson*, 1 December 2003 (2003-88; 1-6), but the only description provided was "like an American Robin but with a breast band." This, granted, suggests Varied Thrush, but the CBRC (and most other records committees) are unlikely to vote to accept such a brief description – even if of a very distinctive species.

SPRAGUE'S PIPIT - *Anthus spragueii* (6/2). A bird seen poorly by the reporter, but heard well, was near Ovid, *Sedgwick*, 18 October 2003 (2003-124; 3-4). Though the bird was probably correctly identified, there was essentially no description, except for that of voice, and that was not convincing. Unfortunately, the bird was seen better by others, but was not documented by them.

PRAIRIE WARBLER - *Dendroica discolor* (22/14). One was submitted as occurring at Colorado City, *Pueblo*, 4 May 2003, but the documentation lacked a description of the bird (2003-29; 2-5).

Reporters and Cited Observers

Mymm Ackley, Lyle Anise, Bob Brown, Leann Brown, Richard Cimino, Robin Corcoran, Cameron Cox, Brenda Dexter, Coen Dexter, Donna Emmons, Doug Faulkner, Peter Frechtel, Peter Gaede, Brian Gibbons, Gregg Goodrich, BB Hahn, Ed Hollowed, Rachel Hopper, Joey Kellner, Hugh Kingery, Nick Komar, Charlie Lawrence (CLa), Marie Cecile Lee, Tony Leukering, Cindy Lieurance (CLi), Leslie Lieurance, Paul Mackenzie, Joe Mammoser (JMa), Bill Maynard, Jack Merchant (JMe), Rich Miller, SeEtta Moss, Duane Nelson, Kent Nickell, Ric Olson, Arvind Panjabi, Michael Patten (MPa), Brandon K. Percival, Mark Peterson (MPe), Nathan Pieplow, Suzie Plooster, Kim Potter, Bob Righter, Dick Roth, Bill Schmoker, Karleen Schofield, Dave Silverman (DSi), Doug Swartz (DSw), Glenn Walbek, Ross Watkins, Tracy Wohl, Ronda Woodward, Christopher L. Wood.

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