

The 71st Report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee

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Introduction

This 71st report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee (hereafter CBRC or Committee) presents the results of deliberations of the CBRC involving 14 reports submitted by 13 observers and documenting 12 occurrences of 10 species from the period December 1997 to September 2013. Per CBRC bylaws, all accepted records received a final 7-0 or 6-1 vote to accept.

This report highlights species with 10 or fewer state records, including Colorado's second Magnificent Frigatebird, fourth Curlew Sandpiper and Harris's Hawk, fifth Cerulean Warbler and sixth Painted Redstart. No new species have been accepted since publication of the 70th CBRC Report (Faulkner 2014) and the Colorado state list remains 498.

Committee members voting on these reports were John Drummond (Colorado Springs), Doug Faulkner (Arvada), Brandon Percival (Pueblo), Mark Peterson (Colorado Springs), Bill Schmoker (Longmont), David Silverman (Rye) and Glenn Walbek (Castle Rock).

Committee News

The CBRC thanks David Silverman and Brandon Percival for their years of service to the Colorado Field Ornithologists as members of the CBRC, and we wish them continued success birding the Rye and Pueblo areas. The pool of potential Committee members is strong in Colorado, and typically we would seek new volunteers to fill in for members rotating off. However, the CBRC has experienced persistent periods of transition and currently faces a backlog of review work. In light of this, we have asked two former members, Peter Gent and Tony Leukering, to serve again and ensure that Committee functions continue to operate smoothly in 2015 and beyond.

Committee Functions

The Committee solicits documentation of reports in Colorado for all species published in its Main Review List (coloradobirdrecords.org/ReviewList.aspx), species with no prior accepted record in Colorado and sightings of regularly occurring species that are considered

out-of-range or out-of-season. Documentary materials should be submitted online at the CBRC website (coloradobirdrecords.org). Alternatively, one can fill out the form printed on the dust jacket of this journal and mail it to the CBRC Chair, or request an electronic document from the Chair or Secretary (see this journal's inside front cover for contact information).

Report Format

The records in this report are arranged taxonomically following the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) *Checklist of North American Birds* (AOU 1998) through the 55th Supplement (Chesser et al. 2014). We present the initials of the contributing observer(s), the official accession number and the vote tally in the first round and, if relevant, the second and third rounds (with the number of "accept" votes on the left side of the dash). The total number of state records is given in parentheses after the species scientific name.

The initial observer of the bird is underlined, if known, and is presented first only if that person contributed documentation; additional contributors' follow in alphabetical order by last name. If the initial observer is known with certainty, but did not submit documentation, those initials are underlined and presented last. Observers submitting a photograph or video capture are indicated with a dagger (†) and those who submitted a sketch by a lower-case, italicized "sk" (*sk*). In this report, county names are italicized. Abbreviations are used for the following: reservoir (Res.), state park (SP), and state wildlife area (SWA).

ACCEPTED RECORDS

Magnificent Frigatebird – *Fregata magnificens* (2). The surprise of 2013, not only did an individual of this majestic species find its way to Colorado, but it was photographed in two different counties one week apart (MV†, AM†; 2013-166; 7-0). The bird was first observed on 5 June 2013 by Mark Vaughn while fishing at North Delaney Buttes Lake, *Jackson*. Fortunately, Mr. Vaughn was familiar with the species from time spent in Mexico and along the U.S. Gulf Coast, knew it must be rare in Colorado AND happened to be car-

rying a camera in a waterproof bag. His documentation includes an account and photos of the frigatebird being chased away from North Delaney Buttes Lake by several nesting American Avocets. In a bizarre twist, later that fall Mike Henwood mentioned a second-hand report of a frigatebird at Highline Lake SP, *Mesa*, 12 June 2013. The park manager photographed this bird during its brief stay at the lake. Both sets of photographs show an immature Magnificent Frigatebird with a unique tail pattern—the left fork was about 80% the length of the right fork – clearly

establishing that both sightings were of the same individual.

Now then, one wonders about the bird's origin and where it wandered to during the intervening days between 5 and 12 June. Vagrancy of this species into the U.S. interior is typically associated with tropical storms or hurricanes, however, no named storms, either in the Eastern Pacific or Atlantic basins, came anywhere close to Colorado during the days preceding this bird's discovery in Colorado (accuweather.com/en/hurricane/tracker). I am unaware of any reports of this species in Utah or Wyoming the states closest to its occurrence in Colorado, further deepening the mystery of this bird's travels within the region.

White Ibis – *Eudocimus albus* (8). An adult was documented for the Alamosa area, *Alamosa*, 28 July 2013 (PN†, BH; 2013-182; 7-0). This bird was present for several days and the CBRC welcomes additional documentation supporting its extended visit. This is Colorado's sixth White Ibis record since 2000 and the first for the San Luis Valley.

Curlew Sandpiper – *Calidris ferruginea* (4). An adult in transitional plumage was documented for Jackson Res., *Morgan*, 30 August 2013 (JD†; 2013-192; 7-0). This is the second consecutive year that a Curlew Sandpiper was observed at Jackson Res. In 2012, Steve Mlodinow found a juvenile (2012-103) on 23 August. It is conceivable that these records pertain to the same individual given the rarity of this species in Colorado.

American Woodcock – *Scolopax minor* (10). The CBRC received docu-

mentation of one seen in flight at Valco Ponds in Pueblo, *Pueblo*, 15 Dec 1997 (BKP; 2013-102; 6-1). Chronologically, this is Colorado's fifth woodcock record. Of the state's ten records, four were discovered from mid-November to mid-December. The dissenting Committee member felt that while the orange underparts were suggestive of American Woodcock, the report did not sufficiently rule out Wilson's Snipe. The reporting observer noted that a lack of white on the upperwings should rule out Wilson's Snipe. As the dissenting member pointed out, however, Wilson's Snipe does not have a white trailing edge to the upperwing. Instead it is the palearctic Common Snipe (split from Wilson's Snipe as a separate species in 2002) that shows a white trailing edge to the wing's secondary feathers (Chandler 2009) and could be eliminated as a potential contender.

As an aside, although this sighting was 16 years old, the observer had notes that were used to write the documentation. The CBRC is receiving more documentations of "historical" observations than in years past. This is likely the result of eBird editors requiring rare species be documented to the CBRC as part of the validation process for that website. The Committee received 25 documentations of sightings more than five years old (from the submission date) in 2013. The number of such submissions was nine in 2012, six in 2011, and 27 in 2010. From 2005 to 2009, the CBRC received just one documentation of a sighting (excluding museum specimens or special requests) that had occurred at least five years prior to submission.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher – *Empidonax flaviventris* (8). The Committee accepted two more records of this species in 2013 bringing the total for the state to eight with four of those since 2011. A singing Yellow-bellied Flycatcher at the Lenz Farm shelterbelt, Yuma, 25 May 2013 (SM†; 2013-161; 7-0) was the first recorded for that county. Steve Mlodinow followed that sighting up with another during the fall. He found one at Jackson Res., Morgan, 10 September 2013 (SM; 2013-203; 7-0). That record is the first for Morgan.

Pacific Wren – *Troglodytes pacificus* (8). With the acceptance of two more records of Pacific Wren, it appears that Colorado may be on the fringe of the species' regular wintering range. Six of the state's eight accepted records are of individuals occurring in Colorado since Pacific Wren was elevated to full species status in 2010. The Committee has been very conservative in its evaluation and acceptance of documented Pacific Wrens. It's possible that some documentations not accepted as records pertain to this species.

One long-staying individual near the Environmental Learning Center in Ft. Collins, Larimer, 4 January 2011 – end of February 2012 (JM†; 2012-77; 7-0) represents that county's first record. Another Pacific Wren at Greenhorn Meadows Park, Colorado City, Pueblo, 22-31 December 2012 (DS; 2013-11; 7-0) provided that county with its fifth record.

Smith's Longspur – *Calcarius pictus* (5). A Smith's Longspur, either a female or transitionally plumaged male, was briefly seen on the ground

and in flight within a mixed flock of Horned Larks and other longspurs near Boulder, Boulder, 16 April 2013 (BK, PG; 2013-121; 6-1). This individual showed the buffy underparts and white outer tail feathers typical for Smith's Longspur. The dissenting Committee member was concerned that a Chestnut-collared Longspur in delayed molt, which would have buffy underparts similar to Smith's, was not sufficiently ruled out. Also of concern was the apparent lack of white wingbars. Two Committee members in favor of this record were also concerned about the lack of wingbars, although one noted that a review of on-line photos revealed that some birds showed little to no wingbars. This record is notable in that it is the first for spring migration (the other four records were during fall migration from mid-September to mid-October), it is the first for Boulder, and it joins the record from Park (2012-154) as the only records away from the far eastern plains.

Swainson's Warbler – *Limnithlypis swainsonii* (9). With the exception of one found in July, all of the previous Colorado Swainson's Warbler records have been of birds discovered in May during spring migration, so the appearance of one at Barr Lake SP, Adams, 7 September 2013 (CS† sk; 2013-198; 7-0) was a bit surprising. However, Swainson's Warblers typically initiate their southward migration in mid-August so this individual's timing in early September fits with that of a fall migrant – one perhaps suffering from a faulty internal compass.

Cerulean Warbler – *Setophaga ce-*

rulean (5). Proving once again that it's never too late to join the party, the CBRC received documentation of a male at Two Buttes SWA, *Baca*, 4 May 1999 (BKP, TD; 2013-103; 7-0). This bird represents the second record for *Baca*. Although the sample size is quite small, this is the earliest date of occurrence for Cerulean Warbler in Colorado. The two other spring records are from 16 May and 25-26 May. Colorado also has two fall records, both from September.

Painted Redstart – *Myioborus*

pictus (6). What may have been the bird highlight of CFO's 2013 convention in Cortez, a Painted Redstart was found during on a fieldtrip near Bauer Lake, *Montezuma*, 17 May 2013 (NK†; 2013-148; 7-0). Komar found the bird flitting around in a Ponderosa Pine and quickly alerted others in the group before the bird moved on. Several chase trips that day and the next were not able to re-find the bird. This is the third record since 2005 and the first for *Montezuma* and southwestern Colorado.

REPORTERS AND CITED OBSERVERS

The CBRC thanks the following individuals for submitting records of or discovering and reporting the rare species in Colorado discussed in this report: Todd Dilley, John Drummond, Brian Harmon, Peter Gent, Bill Kaempfer, Nicholas Komar, Joe Mammoser, Alan Martinez, Steve Mlodinow, Polly Neldner, Brandon Percival (BKP), Cathy Sheeter, David Silverman and Mark Vaughn.

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