

The 88th Report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee

By Peter R. Gent, Chairman of the CBRC

Introduction

This 88th Report of the CBRC documents decisions on records submitted in the last six months of 2024, which include several older records. Included are records from November and December 2024 of a Crissal Thrasher, a species new to the state, which increases the Colorado state list to 521 species. In addition, this report details the sixth record of Groove-billed Ani, the eighth record of Crested Caracara, the eighth and ninth records of Zone-tailed Hawk and the ninth record of Black Vulture. The 23 records in this report were submitted by 18 observers, and I thank them for their support of the CBRC. Accepted records received either six or seven positive votes from various combinations of seven committee members. AWR indicates Accepted Without Review and applies to species not on the CBRC Review List.

Accepted Records

NORTHEAST (Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Weld, Yuma)

Red-throated Loon – *Gavia stellata* (Luke Pheneger*; 2024-033; 7-0): One in basic plumage was seen at Prewitt Reservoir SWA, *Washington*, on 19 Oct 2024.

Sprague's Pipit – *Anthus spragueii* (Luke Pheneger; 2024-048; 6-1): Two birds were seen and recorded at Little Muddy State Land Trust, *Adams*, on 16 Oct 2024. (Luke Pheneger; 2024-047; 7-0): Three birds were seen and recorded at Antelope Flats State Land Trust, *Morgan*, on 16 Oct 2024.

SOUTHEAST (Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Las Animas, Otero, Prowers, Pueblo)

Pomarine Jaeger – *Stercorarius pomarinus* (Brandon Percival*; 2023-070; 7-0): A juvenile dark-morph bird was seen at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, between 15 and 18 Dec 2023.

Parasitic Jaeger – *Stercorarius parasiticus* (Brandon Percival*; 2024-042; 7-0): A juvenile was seen and photographed at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, on 20 Sep 2024.

Little Gull – *Hydrocoloeus minutus* (Brandon Percival, Alan Ketcham*; 2024-040; 7-0): A juvenile was

photographed at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, on 17 and 18 Sep 2024.

Yellow-billed Loon – *Gavia adamsii* (Brandon Percival*; 2023-069; 7-0): One was at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, between 15 Dec 2023 and 9 Feb 2024.

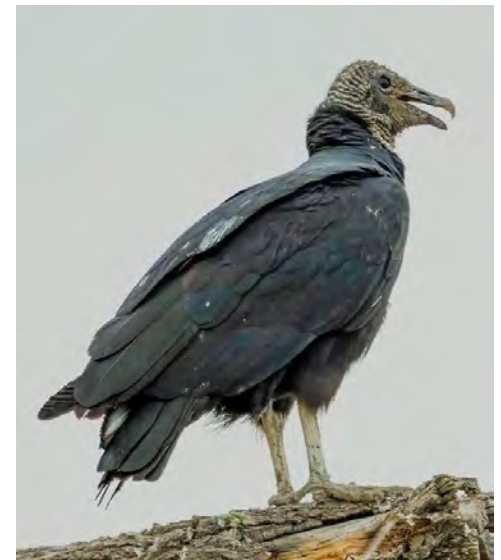
Crissal Thrasher – *Toxostoma crissale* (Brian Genge*, Josh Bruening*; 2024-032; 7-0): One bird was initially seen in Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca*, on 30 Nov 2024 by Genge and Luke Pheneger. Up to three birds have been seen between 6 Dec 2024 through the end of March 2025 in the same area. This occurrence provides the first record of this species in Colorado; one not wholly unexpected as the species occurs fairly regularly in northern New Mexico around Santa Fe and Taos.



Crissal Thrasher. 11/30/2024, Baca County. Photo by Brian Genge.

NORTH CENTRAL (Boulder, Broomfield, Grand, Jackson, Larimer)

Black Vulture – *Coragyps atratus* (Peter Gent*, Eric DeFonso*; 2024-036; 7-0): An adult was found by Christian Nunes at Boulder Res., *Boulder*, on 10 Sep 2024, providing the ninth Colorado record of the species. It was first documented in



Black Vulture. 9/10/2024, Boulder County. Photo by Courtney Rella.

the Pawnee National Grasslands in 1978, but the last five sightings have all been recently in 2023 and 2024.

CENTRAL (Chaffee, Clear Creek, Douglas, Fremont, Gilpin, Jefferson, Lake, Park, Summit, Teller)

Groove-billed Ani – *Crotophaga sulcirostris* (Lorraine Lanning*, Josh Bruening*; 2024-043; 7-0): An immature was found by Lanning at Leyden Lake, *Jefferson*, on 10 Oct 2024. Many people saw this confiding bird very closely during the rest of the day. This occurrence provides Colorado's sixth record of the species, and the first since one in Denver in September 2019.

Yellow-billed Loon – *Gavia adamsii* (Alan Ketcham*; 2024-035; 7-0): Very surprising was a bird in breeding plumage photographed at Eleven Mile SP, *Park*, on 4 Oct 2024.



Groove-billed Ani. 10/10/2024, Jefferson County. Photo by Lorraine Lanning.



Yellow-billed Loon. 10/4/2024, Park County. Photo by Alan Ketcham.

SOUTH CENTRAL (Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Custer, Huerfano, Rio Grande, Saguache)

Parasitic Jaeger – *Stercorarius parasiticus* (John Rawinski*; 2024-041; 7-0): Another very confiding bird was a juvenile at Blanca Wetlands, *Alamosa*, on 28 Aug 2024.



Parasitic Jaeger. 8/28/2024, Alamosa County. Photo by John Rawinski.

Zone-tailed Hawk – *Buteo albonotatus* (John Cobb*; 2024-038; 7-0): An adult was photographed a few miles north of Hooper in the San Luis Valley, *Saguache*, on 23 Oct 2024, providing the ninth Colorado record.

WEST CENTRAL (Delta, Gunnison, Mesa, Montrose, Pitkin)

Zone-tailed Hawk – *Buteo albonotatus* (Christopher Chappell; 2024-037; 7-0): The eighth state record was provided by one at the Colorado National Monument, *Mesa*, on 7 Sep 2024. The previous record was of one in Lamar in May 2019.

White-eyed Vireo – *Vireo griseus* (Catherine Hagen; 2024-045; 7-0): One was recorded in Hagen's yard in Aspen, *Pitkin*, on 21 Jun 2024.

Painted Bunting – *Passerina ciris* (Carol Comeau*; 2024-029; AWR): A female or immature was photographed at the Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP, *Montrose*, on 14 Sep 2024.

SOUTHWEST (Archuleta, Dolores, Hinsdale, La Plata, Mineral, Montezuma, Ouray, San Juan, San Miguel)

Crested Caracara – *Caracara plancus* (Paul Morey*, Coen Dexter*; 2024-044; 7-0): An adult was seen near Sleeping



Crested Caracara. 12/5/2024, Montezuma County. Photo by Brenda Wright.

Ute Rest Area on Hwy 160, *Montezuma*, between 3 and 21 Dec 2024, providing the eighth Colorado record, and the first in Montezuma County.

Cape May Warbler – *Setophaga tigrina* (Coen Dexter, Brenda Wright*; 2024-052; AWR): One was seen and photographed near Cortez, *Montezuma*, between 5 and 11 Dec 2024. The species is very rare on the West Slope, and this report provides a new species for Montezuma County.

Not Accepted Records

NORTHEAST (Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Weld, Yuma)

Boreal Chickadee – *Poecile hudsonicus*. (2024-031; 0-7): A chickadee with a

brown cap was photographed in the North Country Club neighborhood, *Denver*, on 9 Jul 2024. The bird was with Black-capped Chickadees, and all committee members thought this bird was referable to that species with a pigment abnormality resulting in a brown, rather than black, cap. See https://www.birds.cornell.edu/crows/brown-headed_chickadee.htm. Note that this bird shows white feathers in the wings, whereas Boreal Chickadees have all dark wings.

Sprague's Pipit – *Anthus spragueii*. (2024-050; 3-4): A bird was reported from Sterling Prairie State Trust Land, *Logan*, on 18 Oct 2024. A majority of committee members thought that either a photograph or sound recording is necessary to ensure the correct identification of this species.

Southeast (Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Las Animas, Otero, Prowers, Pueblo)

Mexican Duck – *Anas diazi*. (2024-013; 4-3, 1-6): A bird was photographed at Cattail Crossing, *Pueblo*, on 9 Mar 2024. As happens frequently, this species produced a lively debate among committee members. The bird had white outer tail feathers and a slight curl in an upper tail feather, which persuaded most members to think this bird was a Mallard x Mexican Duck hybrid.

NORTH CENTRAL (Boulder, Broomfield, Grand, Jackson, Larimer)

Ruff – *Calidris pugnax*. (2024-039; 3-4): Photographs of a bird at Boyd Lake SP,

Larimer, on 7 Sep 2024 do not show very bright legs, and a majority of committee members believed that a Pectoral Sandpiper could not be ruled out.

SOUTHWEST (Archuleta, Dolores, Hinsdale, La Plata, Mineral, Montezuma, Ouray, San Juan, San Miguel)

Hepatic Tanager – *Piranga flava*. (2024-026; 4-3, 0-7): A bird was seen briefly and voice-recorded north of Chimney Rock, *Archuleta*, on 5 Jul 2024. In the first round three committee members thought that the call note in the recording did not eliminate Western Bluebird, and that opinion persuaded all other members in the second round of voting.

Committee Functions

The Committee solicits documentation of reports in Colorado for all species published in its Review List (<https://cobrc.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 (<https://cobrc.org>).

Committee News

At the end of 2024 Jason St. Pierre rotated off the Committee having served two consecutive 3-year terms. He was replaced by Mike Thompson, who lives west of Cortez and will serve a 3-year term until the end of 2027. Both Eric DeFonso and David Tonnessen agreed to serve second 3-year terms, also until the end of 2027. Committee members voting on these records were Linda Chittum, Eric DeFonso, Peter Gent, Michael Lester, Ric Olson, Mark Peterson, Cathy Sheeter, Jason St. Pierre and David Tonnessen, and I thank them for their service on the Committee.

Report Format

The records in each section of this report are arranged taxonomically following the American Ornithological Society's (AOS) Checklist of North American Birds

(AOS 1998) through the 65th Supplement (Chesser et al. 2024). Presented are the accession number, the names of the contributing observer(s), 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 initial observer of the bird, if known, is presented first. Additional contributors follow in chronological order of the sighting. Observers submitting a photograph or video capture are indicated with an asterisk. In this report, SP indicates a State Park and SWA a State Wildlife Area.

References

American Ornithological Society (AOS): 1998. *Checklist of North American Birds*. 7th ed. Allen Press, Lawrence, Kansas.

Chesser, R. T., S. M. Billerman, K. J. Burns, C. Cicero, J. L. Dunn, B. E. Hernandez-Banos, R. A. Jimenez, O. Johnson, A. W. Kratter, N. A. Mason, P. C. Rasmussen, and J. V. Remsen, Jr. 2024. *Sixty-fifth Supplement to the American Ornithological Society's Check-list of North American Birds*. *Ornithology* 141, (3) 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ornithology/ukae019>

CFO MEMBERSHIP

Membership in Colorado Field Ornithologists provides many advantages in addition to supporting research and conservation projects for Colorado's birds. Members receive discounts on CFO convention fees, early registration for field trips (many of which fill before they are more widely announced), discounted membership with Western Field Ornithologists and an annual subscription to Colorado Birds, as well as access to the current digital version of Colorado Birds as well as the journal's archive. Members may choose to have a print version of the journal mailed to them. CFO will alert members to upcoming events, online presentations and when new issues of Colorado Birds are available on the website using email and posts to the COBirds listserv and the CFO social media posts. Donations to CFO are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

For more information and to sign up or renew, please visit our website at cobirds.org/membership.

Membership Types:

Individual Digital: \$40

Individual Print (US Only): \$50

Student/Youth (Digital): \$25

Additional Household Member (Digital): \$15

Data Privacy: All members consent to having regular emails sent to the email address they provide as this is the primary form of communication between CFO and members. Personal information and emails will never be shared with or sold to a third party.