

THE 41ST REPORT OF THE COLORADO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

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Introduction

This is the 41st report of the deliberations of the Colorado Bird Records Committee (hereafter, CBRC or Committee) on submissions to the CBRC for documentation and archival purposes. In this article, we provide the results of the circulation of 79 reports submitted by 52 observers documenting 57 occurrences of 48 species. This article deals primarily with 2004 occurrences, but reports date back to 1991 (those in bold). 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.

Documents reviewed include one of a species previously unconfirmed from the state, Black Vulture, bringing the state total to 477. Committee members voting on these reports were: 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, 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 term of one CBRC member, Coen Dexter, expired at the end of 2005 and Coen has agreed to fulfill a second term. John Vanderpoel, whose second term was to expire at the end of 2006, resigned from the Committee in November 2005 due to other increased duties. CFO and the CBRC offer our sincere thanks to John for his valuable service to the CBRC. The Committee will miss John's critical identification skills. However, Peter Gent has agreed to fill John's remaining one-year term and we welcome Peter's seasoned expertise. All CBRC members' term-expiration dates are printed on this journal's masthead. Tony Leukering, former CBRC member and Chair, has provided considerable insight and assistance in the transition of the Chair position and I thank Tony for his commitment to the CBRC and for reviewing this report.

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 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 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 the past ten years (1995-2004). 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 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 AOU Checklist of North American Birds (AOU 1998) through the 45th Supplement (Banks et al. 2004). 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, if known, 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 "(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: Res. = reservoir; SP = State Park; SWA = State Wildlife Area

RECORDS ACCEPTED

TRUMPETER SWAN - *Cygnus buccinator* (24/13). Three adults and one juvenile/immature were nicely photographed at Fentress Lake in *Boulder* between 11 December 2003 and 5 January 2004 (BS †; 2004-1; 7-0). Another adult was apparently found at Cattail Pond near Loveland, *Larimer*, on 9 November, 2004, but it was not until 14 November when the bird was documented (BS †, CW; 2004-64; 7-0).

TUNDRA SWAN - *Cygnus columbianus* (6/6). Two juveniles were present at Strauss Cabin Lake, *Larimer*, between 11 and 14 March 2004 (RHo †, BS †, NK; 2004-16; 7-0).

EURASIAN WIGEON - *Anas penelope* (25/7). An alternate-plumaged male graced Wellington SWA, *Larimer*, on 24 March 2004, when photographed (RHo †, GL; 2004-17; 7-0).

RED-THROATED LOON - *Gavia stellata* (30/11). A juvenal-plumaged bird was present at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson & Douglas*, between 31 October and 7 November 2004 (GW †, BS †, JK; 2004-63; 7-0).

* PACIFIC LOON - *Gavia pacifica*. Unusual for the West Slope, a juvenile was nicely documented at Sweitzer Lake, *Delta*, on 10 November 2001 (TL; 2004-2; 7-0).

REDDISH EGRET - *Egretta rufescens* (8/4). A white-plumaged sub-adult bird graced Lake Beckwith, *Pueblo*, on 29 April 2004 (DS; 2004-79; 7-0).

GLOSSY IBIS - *Plegadis falcinellus* (34/30). An alternate-plumaged adult was described from Wolford Mountain Res. on 17 April 2004 (NK; 2004-19; 7-0) and provided the first *Grand* record. Though the observer was not able to discern leg color, the description of the facial color and pattern indicated Glossy Ibis.

BLACK VULTURE - *Coragyps atratus* (1/1). Representing the first confirmed record for Colorado, an adult roosted at the dam of John Martin Res., *Bent*, on 13 and 14 August 2002 (DN†, CLW†; 2004-83; 7-0; Fig. 1). Though this species was predicted to occur in the state and other documentations have been reviewed in the past by the CBRC without approval, congratulations still go to Duane Nelson, the inveterate discoverer of first Colorado records who again dug up a great find.



Fig. 1. Establishing the first record for Colorado, this Black Vulture at John Martin Reservoir (here 14 August 2002) stayed for only two days (CBRC# 2004-83). Photo by Christopher L. Wood.

WHOOPIING CRANE - *Grus americana* (4/2). An unbanded juvenile associated with a Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*) at a small playa west of Anton, *Washington*, on 3 and 4 November 2004 (PW†, BB, MW; 2004-60; 6-1). This photographed record represents the fourth record for the state of the

naturally-occurring population breeding in and near Wood Buffalo National Park in Alberta.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER - *Limnodromus griseus* (25/10). A worn adult of the *hendersoni* race was photographed at Prewitt Res., *Washington*, on 25 July 2004 (BS†; 2004-80; 7-0).

RED PHALAROPE - *Phalaropus fulicaria* (28/11). A juvenile molting from juvenal to first-basic plumage was photographed at Jackson Res., *Morgan*, between 17 and 27 September 2004 (BG†, RHa†; 2004-49; 7-0; Fig. 2) and provided the fourth accepted record from the site since 1999! Unfortunately, three previous CBRC reports (Leukering and Semo 2004a, 2004b, 2005) perpetuated a mistake in the number of accepted records for the species occasioned by a glitch in the official electronic data set. With the acceptance of 2004-49, the state has 28 accepted records.



Fig. 2. This juvenile Red Phalarope lingered at Jackson Reservoir (here 17 Sept 2004) for at least 11 days (CBRC# 2004-49). Photo by Brian Gibbons.

PARASITIC JAEGER - *Stercorarius parasiticus* (8/4). A third-cycle subadult made lives miserable for the gulls and terns at Union Res., *Weld*, where found and photographed on 5 September 2005 (DF, TL†, NP, BS†, SS; 2004-45; 7-0).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus marinus* (22/13). A 2nd-cycle bird was first found at Terry Lake, *Larimer*, on 6 November 2004. On 12 November, it

relocated to nearby Long Pond, where it was photographed and remained until 14 November (RHo†, DF†, BS†; 2004-62; 7-0).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE - *Rissa tridactyla* (27/11). A photographed juvenile spent time loafing at Lon Hagler Res., *Larimer*, where present between 13 and 16 November 2004 (NK, TL†, RL, BS†; 2004-65; 7-0).

BLACK SKIMMER - *Rhynchops niger* (2/2). On the heels of the first state record in southeastern Colorado (2001), an adult was found in far southwestern Colorado at Pastorius Res., *La Plata*, on 29 April 2004 (SA, JB†, JW; 2004-30; 7-0). Unfortunately this bird was a one-day wonder and attempts to refind it the following day failed.

ANCIENT MURRELET - *Synthliboramphus antiquus* (5/3). For only the fifth state record, a juvenile was photographed at Bear Creek Reservoir at Bear Creek Lake Regional Park, *Jefferson*, on 8 November 2004 (MHe, DF†, PG, RHo†, TL†, RO, BS†; 2004-67; 7-0; Fig. 3). Though seen by many during the afternoon, it, like all other murrelet finds in Colorado, remained for only the day. All records of this species in the state are from October through December.



Fig. 3. Unlikely companions anywhere, the state's fifth Ancient Murrelet was photographed with Gadwall at Bear Creek Lake Regional Park, 8 November 2004 (CBRC#2004-67). Photo by Bill Schmoker.

* EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE - *Streptopelia decaocto*. Two first county records have been recently accepted by the CBRC. Four birds were sufficiently described from Rifle, *Garfield*, on 31 January 2004 (TM; 2004-6; 6-1) and two were seen at Antonito in *Conejos* on 13 February 2004 (VS, 2004-9; 6-1).

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO - *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* (18/4). One was at Lake Hasty Campground, *Bent*, on 7 May 2004 (GW, RO; 2004-42; 7-0).

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD - *Archilochus colubris* (7/6). Two were added to the state roster of accepted records, both of males in juvenal/basic I plumage. One was banded and photographed at Moraine Park in Rocky Mountain NP, *Larimer*, on 7 September 2004 (FE; 2004-46; 7-0). Because of the excellent photographs, in-hand measurements, and outside expert opinion, all CBRC members agreed with the identification as Ruby-throated Hummingbird. This bird portrayed classic Ruby-throated Hummingbird traits such as bright emerald-green upperparts, throat stippling consistent with a young male Ruby-throated, and the narrow shape of P10. Another immature male was seen near Colorado City, *Pueblo*, on 18 September 2004 (DS; 2004-58; 7-0). Observed indicators included bright green upperparts, a shorter and straighter bill than nearby Black-chinned Hummingbirds (*Archilochus alexandri*), a narrow-tipped P10, and a reddish-rose dusky stippling to the gorget. With recent increased identification knowledge of the separation of female and immature *Archilochus*, it is anticipated that increased numbers of records of Ruby-throated Hummingbird will be found in Colorado.

ACORN WOODPECKER - *Melanerpes formicivorus*. An adult came to a feeder and was photographed in Aguilar, *Las Animas*, between 16 and 18 May 2004 (SG†; 2004-35; 7-0).

VERMILION FLYCATCHER - *Pyrocephalus rubinus* (23/10). A female foraged along the South Picnic Area at Pueblo Res. SP, *Pueblo*, on 1 April 2004 (DQ; 2004-15; 6-1). This bird was noted as sallying and displayed an upright posture, a peachy wash across the lower belly and flanks, a darkish cheek patch, a white supercilium, and a dark crown, upperparts, and wings.

* GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER - *Myiarchus crinitus*. Though not on the main review list, this species was added to the supplemental review list in 2002 for all locations west of *Logan*, *Morgan*, *Washington*, *Kit Carson*, *Cheyenne*, *Kiowa*, *Bent*, and *Baca*. One was photographed at Jackson Res. SP, *Morgan*, on 1 October 2004 (BG; 2004-69; 6-1). Though little narrative description was provided, the photograph seemed reasonable to the majority of committee members and this record represents one of the furthest west records of this species in the state.

THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD - *Tyrannus crassirostris* (2/1). Amazingly, a juvenile foraged along a pasture near Parker in northwestern *Elbert* on 3 July

2004 (PJM†; 2004-33; 7-0; Fig. 4). This acceptance provides only the second record for Colorado, the first substantiated by photographic evidence, of this essentially Mexican species. In the U.S., the species is regularly found only in southern Arizona and is occasional in southern New Mexico, with vagrants observed also in California and Texas.



Fig. 4. Providing a second state record, this Thick-billed Kingbird (CBRC# 2004-33) was approximately 30 miles east of the location of the first state record in Waterton Canyon, *Jefferson*, in 1992. Photo by P. Mestas.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER - *Tyrannus forficatus* (21/15). A male was photographed at the corner of Black Forest and Vollmer Roads near Black Forest, *El Paso*, where present between 28 June and 1 July 2004 (KP†; 2004-34; 7-0). This site has been occupied by Scissor-tailed Flycatchers since 1999 and it is believed that this bird represents a returning male. The CBRC also received a documentation of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher from 1991, of a male found in quite a bizarre location: 2.5 miles northwest of Creede, *Mineral*, on 16 May 1991 (JSa†; 2004-12; 7-0). This occurrence becomes the sixth accepted Colorado record. The CBRC thanks John Rawinski, who unearthed the documentation that was submitted to the Rio Grande National Forest. This also provides a wonderful reminder to all birders that it is never too late to submit documentations of rare finds!

* YELLOW-THROATED VIREO - *Vireo flavifrons*. This species was removed from the main state review list in 2002; however, the CBRC still requests documentation for all sightings west of the Colorado Front Range. Establishing a first county record for *Montezuma*, a singing adult male was

seen at Yellowjacket Canyon on 26 May 2004 by two birders searching for the Lucy's Warblers (*Vermivora luciae*) at that location (PD, SA; 2004-25; 7-0).

BLUE-HEADED VIREO - *Vireo solitarius* (13/12). One was found at Barr Lake, Adams, on 6 September 2004 (BG, 2004-70; 7-0). The observer noted a bright white throat sharply demarcated by the dark, slaty-blue head, olive back and wings that contrasted strongly with the dark head, bright lemony-yellow flanks, and a yellowish wash at the base of the legs and vent, all strong indicators of Blue-headed Vireo. An adult was wonderfully photographed south of Lamar, Prowers, where present on 19 and 20 October 2004 (JSt; 2004-56; 7-0). One was also seen at Greenhorn Creek in Colorado City, Pueblo, on 25 October 2004 (DS; 2004-66; 7-0). This bird also displayed the classic Blue-headed Vireo traits such as olive-green upperparts strongly contrasting with a dark gray-blue head, a bright white throat sharply demarcated by the gray-blue head, and bright yellow wash to the flanks.

• CURVE-BILLED THRASHER - *Toxostoma curvirostre*. Establishing a very rare record for Larimer, one was spotted at the Environmental Learning Center in Fort Collins on 6 April 2004 (JMr; 2004-23; 7-0).

SPRAGUE'S PIPIT - *Anthus spragueii* (7/3). Three were found, one wonderfully photographed, at a becoming-traditional spot near Hale, Yuma, on 10 October 2004 (NP, BS†, GW†; 2004-55; 7-0; Fig. 5). There are no specimens for the state and photographs obtained of this record establish the first photographic evidence of the occurrence of this species in Colorado.



Fig. 5. One of three Sprague's Pipits near Hale, Yuma, on 10 October 2004 (CBRC#2004-55). Photo by Glenn Walbek.

LUCY'S WARBLER - *Vermivora luciae* (5/3). A nesting pair was discovered at Yellow Jacket Canyon in far western *Montezuma* on 16 May 2004. Additional documentation was received during the month, with the last recognized sightings (based on CBRC submissions) on 27 May (JP, PD, RHo, TL†, DH, MHi, BP, IP; 2004-21; 7-0). On that latter date, the nest hole was found, in a small Fremont Cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), perhaps 12 feet above the ground and the pair was observed entering the hole with food, suggesting that young had hatched. There is anecdotal information that suggests the birds may have been sighted past 27 May, though no documentation was submitted to the CBRC. This find represents the second known nesting of the species in Colorado, with the previous documented nesting occurring in 1913, also in *Montezuma*.

• CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER - *Dendroica pensylvanica*. An alternate-plumaged male bathed at a small residential pond at Hooper, *Alamosa*, on 18 May 2004 (JMg; 2004-27; 7-0), establishing a first record for that county and only the second accepted record for the San Luis Valley. The noted bright yellow crown, black lores, eyestripe, and malar, white auriculars, throat and belly, chestnut-colored flanks and sides, and white wingbars on dark wings soundly confirmed the identification.

PINE WARBLER - *Dendroica pinus* (20/6). A male foraged within a brushpile at Rye, *Pueblo*, on 22 May 2004 (DS; 2004-22; 7-0). This occurrence establishes the third county record with the previous records consisting of a bird at Olive Marsh in 1990 and a wintering bird at Valco Ponds in 1997-1998.

* HOODED WARBLER - *Wilsonia citrina*. An adult female, amazingly, was discovered feeding a recently fledged juvenile at Lower Piedra Campground in *Archuleta* on 27 July 2004 (RA; 2004-43; 7-0). This is the first confirmed nesting of this species in the southwestern portion of the state (of which there are few records even).

SCARLET TANAGER - *Piranga olivacea* (25/13). Representing the fourth record for *Boulder*, an alternate-plumaged male was banded west of Longmont on 27 May 2004 (JHn†; 2004-36; 7-0).

“SLATE-COLORED” FOX SPARROW - *Passerella iliaca schistacea*. Though “Slate-colored” Fox Sparrow is a regular summer breeder in upper montane willow carrs and streamsides, their presence during winter is extremely unusual as most winter in Arizona and New Mexico. An adult wintered at Glenwood Springs, *Garfield*, where present between 27 November 2003 and 2 April 2004 (TM; 2004-14; 7-0).

PAINTED BUNTING - *Passerina ciris* (27/17). A green individual (an immature or an adult female) was carefully described from Colorado City as occurring on 26 September 2004 (DS; 2004-51; 7-0), providing the second accepted Pueblo record. The first came from the City of Pueblo in May 1972.

* BALTIMORE ORIOLE - *Icterus galbula*. Exceedingly far west was an alternate-plumaged male photographed at a feeder system (eating oranges) in Pueblo, Pueblo, on 6 May 2004 (BBH; 2004-38; 7-0). Based on the narrative discussion and excellent photographs, no indication of Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*) genes could be detected.

* PINE GROSBEAK - *Pinicola enucleator*. One of few records of Pine Grosbeak on the eastern plains of Colorado, an adult female or immature was at Rocky Ford, Otero, on 5 November 2004 (SO; 2004-74; 7-0; Fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Pine Grosbeak at Rocky Ford, Otero, on 5 November 2004. Photo by Stan Oswald.

PURPLE FINCH - *Carpodacus purpureus* (32/8). A brown-plumaged bird (immature or adult female) was found foraging on Siberian Elm (*Ulmus crassifolia*) seeds at Chico Basin Ranch, El Paso, on 5 May 2002 (TL; 2004-3; 7-0). The observer dutifully separated the bird from Cassin's Finch (*Carpodacus cassinii*) by describing the extent and shape of chest streaking, the lack of streaking on the undertail coverts, the slightly curved culmen shape compared to the more arrow-shaped bill of Cassin's Finch, the extent and shape of the bright white supercilium and malar, and the lack of eye ring. The occurrence represents only the third record for El Paso.

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

The CBRC recognizes that its decisions, as one of its important duties, may have undesired results to various 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 within each species discussion.

LITTLE BLUE HERON - *Egretta caerulea*. Two juveniles were reported by two observers from Timnath Res., *Larimer*, between 25 and 29 July 2004 (2004-39), but received only one favorable vote (1-6). The birds were described as having white plumage, possessing a thick, gray bill, gray lores, dull green legs and feet, and a head shape different from that of Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*), though no discussion was provided of actually how the head shape differed. They also remarked that the posture and behavior differed from Snowy Egret, but again, provided no details. One observer did comment that the bare-part coloration between the two species was similar. Neither observer noted the black primary tips diagnostic for Little Blue Heron, though the birds were observed in flight. Overall, voting members decided that the information provided was insufficient to establish the identity of the birds.

GLOSSY IBIS - *Plegadis falcinellus*. An ibis described from near Hayden, *Routt*, on 18 April 2004 (2004-83), failed to receive full endorsement (2-5). The bird was noted as having mostly gray legs and dark gray face and a small amount of bluish coloration was perceived from "near the face". Apparently no white border bordering the bare facial skin was discerned, which is indicative of a bird in sub-adult plumage, a notoriously difficult plumage to identify *Plegadis*. Though the traits discussed are suggestive of Glossy Ibis, no information was provided to soundly eliminate a Glossy Ibis x White-faced Ibis hybrid, which are becoming increasingly common (see Faulkner 2005).

* **MISSISSIPPI KITE - *Ictinia mississippiensis*.** The description of one reported from south of Buena Vista, *Chaffee*, on the extremely early date (even for southeastern Colorado) of 21 April 2004 (2004-28; 3-4) lacked detail sufficient to substantiate a first county record and the earliest record ever for Colorado. The bird was observed at a reported distance of 300 feet with

binoculars, yet the observer, who had no prior experience with the species, maintained that eye color could be ascertained, which seemed perplexing. Perched atop a Pinyon Pine (*Pinus edulis*), the bird was described as the size of a Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*) and having a gray head, back, and breast, a black mask through the eye, and a pale-based bill, which would be difficult to determine with binoculars at a distance of the length of a football field. Despite the considerable distance, the eyes were described as reddish, but not the deep red of an adult bird. Confusing was that the wings were described as brownish, which Mississippi Kites do not display even in juvenile plumage. The tail was also noted as being barred. All these traits are not consistent with Mississippi Kite. Though the CBRC was not in agreement over what exactly the species may have been, it was believed that the description was too inconsistent and that other species more expected at that location and date were not completely eliminated.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT - *Limosa lapponica*. A potential first state record (provisionally since it was a single-observer report with no photographic or specimen confirmation) was described and illustrated from Lake Henry, Crowley, on 16 July 2004 (2004-32). Though the observer had no prior experience with this species, the information was suggestive but inconclusive, and did receive some CBRC support (2-5). The subject bird was described as being between dowitchers (*Limnodromus* spp.) and Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*) in size and being red on the head and breast, having an all-dark, upturned long bill, possessing black legs (which is not a Bar-tailed Godwit-only trait), and having barred flanks extending posteriorly to the tail. When in flight, the barring was noted as continuing dorsally across the mantle and uppertail, as well as on the underwings. Previous occurrences of Far Eastern and barely Alaskan species in Colorado, such as Arctic Loon and Slaty-backed Gull, suggest the potential for occurrence of Bar-tailed Godwit in the state, despite the fact that this almost entirely coastal species has a proclivity for estuarine marshes and tidal mudflats. The timing of the report seems acceptable, though West Coast states have few records from that period, with the vast majority of autumn records falling after mid-August (Mlodinow and O'Brien 1996). Issues CBRC members had were: 1) the lack of discussion on the extent of supercilium, especially whether the supercilium did not extend forward through the loreal region as would be expected for Bar-tailed Godwit; 2) the noted all-black bill (Bar-tailed Godwits have a pale base to the maxilla in alternate plumage); 3) the lack of detail on relative leg length compared to nearby Marbled Godwits (Bar-taileds are comparatively short-tarsied); 4) the presence of barring on the flanks, which is not a Bar-tailed Godwit trait, despite the over-exaggeration of that field mark in *The Sibley Guide to Birds*, one of the references used in the observer's decision; and 5) the perception of the

patterning of barring on the tail, uppertail coverts, and mantle - *L. l. baueri*, the expected Asian/Alaskan race of Bar-tailed Godwit in the western U.S., displays the greatest amount of dark barring on the tail, uppertail coverts, and mantle and that barring oftentimes looks simply as gray and the tail does not look quite so noticeably barred.

ARCTIC TERN - *Sterna paradisaea*. A juvenile/first-winter *Sterna* reported from North Poudre Res. #3 in Larimer on 22 September 2004 (2004-50) received no Committee support (0-7) because of the brevity of the report. The bird was observed at a great distance and the observer seemed a bit cautious about the sighting. The only traits confirmed by the observer were that it had a white forehead, black crown and nape, white and translucent primaries and secondaries with no dark trailing edge, and gray upperparts. The legs were not noted. The head and nape description do not eliminate Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) and the lack of a dark trailing edge to the secondaries is also indicative of both species. No dark trailing edge to the outermost primaries was noted, a trait juvenile/first-winter Arctic Terns should exhibit.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD - *Archilochus colubris*. An adult female or immature *Archilochus* coming to a feeder in Brush, Morgan, between 23 and 28 September 2004 (2004-61), failed to gain acceptance (2-5). Though photographs were obtained and submitted, they were inconclusive to clearly identify the species as Ruby-throated. The spatiotemporal location of the bird and the noted (and photographically conclusive) traits of green upperparts, clean underparts, and a straight culmen are suggestive of Ruby-throated compared to Black-chinned. Unfortunately, the two key field marks necessary to confirm the identity (shape of P10 and R4-5) were not able to be seen.

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE - *Contopus virens*. A heard-only bird by a very respected birder at Barr Lake, Adams, on 6 September 2004 (2004-72), received very little CBRC support. The noted humanistic song translation of "Peeweeeeup" was not sufficient to the vast majority of Committee members to accept, even though *Contopus* flycatchers were observed within the vicinity. The song of Eastern Wood-Pewee is readily mimicked by various other species, namely European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). Without any discussion on the quality, cadence, pitch and accenting of the song, the Committee was conservative and voted not to accept this record by a vote of 2-5.

* CHIHUAHUAN RAVEN - *Corvus cryptoleucus*. Chihuahuan Ravens apparently were quite common throughout the eastern plains of Colorado prior to 1900 (Andrews and Righter 1992). Records of this species in northeastern

Colorado since then are very few, however. Andrews and Righter (1992) note the furthest north modern records as those from *El Paso*. The recent occurrence of Chihuahuan Ravens north or west of southeastern Colorado remains unconfirmed as the species is now apparently restricted in the state to arid grasslands and semideserts. Additionally, identification of ravens is one of the most challenging identification quandaries in North America.

Two were reported from Boulder, *Boulder*, on 20 February 2004 (2004-8), but failed to receive CBRC acceptance (3-4). Though winter might be the expected period of northward vagrancy in this species, the habitat the subject birds were found in (residential neighborhood) is inconsistent with Chihuahuan Raven habits in Colorado (the species can occupy urban settings in areas south of Colorado, however). The birds were described as ravens by a shaggy throat and stout bill, which could eliminate American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) and their croaking voice was described as higher pitched and not as hoarse as Common Raven (*Corvus corax*). When in flight, the basal neck feathers appeared white, which is suggestive of Chihuahuan Raven, though Common Ravens, the expected species to occur at that location, can show light basal neck feathers when hit by the proper sunlight. This lightness to the basal neck feathers is generally a light sheen, however, and not actually truly white feathers.

The shape of the tail was, unfortunately, not noted, as that would have assisted in eliminating American Crow from contention. No discussion on flight style or shape in flight was provided, a feature that would have aided in separating the birds from Common Ravens. Though the birds were not studied at close length and no information was provided on the trait, the extent of nasal bristles can be a very valuable addition in separating the two ravens. Since no recent pattern of northward vagrancy by Chihuahuan Raven along the northern Front Range has been elucidated, the Committee will continue to remain conservative in its deliberations on this species until a clearer pattern develops, which may require photographic or specimen evidence, or tape-recorded calls.

TUFTED TITMOUSE - *Baeolophus bicolor*. A report of a potential first state record at Glade Park, *Mesa*, on 2 September 2004 (2004-47) received no Committee support (0-7) due to the extreme brevity of the report, the fact that congeners were not adequately eliminated, and the very strange location of the sighting. The only description of the bird provided was of a 6.5-inch-long gray, crested bird with rusty flanks and dark eyes. No other field characters of Tufted Titmouse were mentioned, such as the presence of a black forehead, the pale face, and the whitish/light gray color of the underparts contrasting

with the darker upperparts. This would have truly eliminated Juniper Titmouse (*Baeolophus ridgwayi*), the most likely species to be considered for the site, which can show some degrees of buffiness to the flanks at times.

WINTER WREN - *Troglodytes troglodytes*. The description of 12 or more Winter Wrens near Silver Jack Res., Gunnison, 20-21 July 2004 (2004-40) would have been unprecedented if accepted, though received little support from the Committee (2-5). There is little doubt that the observer did observe wrens, probably House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon*), a common species in that area. The 12 birds (adults and fledglings) inhabited a shrubby area with open grass, a habitat associated more with House Wren than for Winter Wren, which has not been documented as breeding in the state. The birds were simply described as small, dark brown birds with a short, upright tail and barred on the rear half. Some birds were noted as having short, slightly down-curved bills. The description actually can refer to either species, as House Wrens are barred extensively on the wings, tail, and undertail coverts. No information was provided on where on the rear end of the birds the barring actually was.

BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHER - *Polioptila californica*. A report of a pair of Black-tailed Gnatcatchers, a sedentary species, at Garden of the Gods in Colorado Springs, El Paso, on 6 May, 2004 (2004-44) consisted only of a brief, second-hand description. The CBRC generally opposes accepting second-hand reports, and this one lacked sufficient detail to indicate that a pair of Black-tailed Gnatcatchers was seen (0-7). The habitat at Garden of the Gods (mixed mountain-shrub/pinyon-juniper) is quite different from known habitat affinities within the species' range (low desert shrubland). The description of the birds were of gnatcatchers (though that was never substantiated by narrative) with dark caps, white eye rings, and black undertails. The black undertails were not mentioned as having white terminal tips, an indication of Black-taileds. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (*P. caerulea*) can appear dark beneath the tails depending upon light conditions and the extent of white on the dark rectrices must be noted. Even the observer had wondered if the sighting was "wishful thinking," implying that they may not have been totally convinced themselves.

SCARLET TANAGER - *Piranga olivacea*. An alternate-plumaged male was reported from Mount Falcon Park near Morrison, Jefferson, on 4 June 2004 (2004-29). The only description was of a brief look at a red bird with black wings that perched upright like a solitaire. That description can indicate Vermilion Flycatcher as well (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*). The very little information provided caused the majority of Committee members consternation and ultimately the record was not accepted by a 3-4 margin.

INDIGO BUNTING - *Passerina cyanea*. A description of an electric-blue bird the size of a House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) with black seed-eating bill came from a Fort Collins, Larimer, residence on the odd date of 23 February 2004; the bird stayed an additional 6-7 days. Though reported as an Indigo Bunting, which would be very unusual in Colorado at that time of year, the documentation submitted was extremely brief. The term "electric-blue" may have different connotations to some, but for most, may not suggest Indigo Bunting. Male Indigo Buntings in basic plumage are usually mottled grayish-brown/blue. Though there is evidence that vagrant birds can abort or postpone their prebasic molt when conditions are difficult, the potential for occurrence of a completely blue-colored Indigo Bunting in winter in Colorado would be very odd. As well, no discussion of the darker flight feathers and tail of an Indigo Bunting in alternate plumage (which is the plumage seemingly described) was provided. With such little information to analyze, the CBRC voted 1-6.

Reporters and Cited Observers

Susan Allerton, Robert Andrews, James Beatty, Bruce Bosley, Peter Derven, Fred Englemann, Jr., Doug Faulkner, Nancie Flenard, Peter Gent, Brian Gibbons, Susan Gifford, John Haas, BB Hahn (BBH), Roy Halpin (RHa), Joe Harrison (JHn), R. Burnell Held, Mike Henwood (MHe), Joan Hicks, Dean Hill, Mona Hill (MHi), Rachel Hopper (RHo), Kevin Keirn, Joey Kellner, Nick Komar, Gary Lefko, Tony Leukering, Roger Linfield, Josiah Malueg (JMg), Joe Mammoser (JMr), Tom McConnell, PJ Mestas (PJM), Duane Nelson, Ric Olson, Stan Oswald, Nathan Pieplow, Kerry Pilot, Bill Prather, Inez Prather, John Prather, David Quady, Jay Sarason (JSa), Bill Schmoker, Scott Severs, David Silverman, Virginia Simmons, Pearle Sandstrom-Smith, Jane Stulp (JSt), Joyce Takamine, Matt Wagner, Glenn Walbek, Peter Walker, Cole Wild, Jenny Winegardner, Christopher L. Wood (CLW).

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