

The 49th Report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee

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Introduction

This 49th report presents the results of deliberations of the Colorado Bird Records Committee (hereafter CBRC or Committee) on partial results of circulations held during the summer and fall of 2008. This article provides results of the circulation of 109 reports submitted by 36 observers documenting 63 occurrences of 39 species from the period 2001 through 2008, although most records treated here pertain to 2007. Nine records involving nine individual birds were not accepted because of insufficient documentation or because descriptions were inconsistent with known identification criteria. 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. Those records with 4 or 5 accept votes have transcended to a second round of deliberations, and results of those records will be published at a later date.

Highlights of this report include the fifth state record of Common Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*), the fourth record of Harris's Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*), the fifth accepted observations of both Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*) and Painted Redstart (*Myioborus pictus*), and the third record for Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*), which constitutes the first documented occurrence of that species in Colorado in 34 years. Three potentially new species to the state list are still pending within the CBRC: Vaux's Swift (*Chaetura vauxi*), Pacific-slope Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*), and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*E. flaviventris*).

Committee members voting on these reports were Coen Dexter, Doug Faulkner, Peter Gent, Rachel Hopper, Joey Kellner, Bill Maynard, Ric Olson, and Larry Semo.

Changes to the Main Review List

Each year the Committee examines species on the review list to determine whether they meet the Committee's general criteria for review under its bylaws (an average of fewer than three records per year

over the most recent ten years) and, if not, whether Committee evaluation is still warranted. For some species, as the Committee accumulates data, patterns and trends of occurrence defining the predictable status and distribution of the species emerge. For such species, if identification is straightforward, the Committee may decide not to review further records. On these criteria, two species, Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) and Tundra Swan (*C. columbianus*) have both been removed from the main review list, and a third species, Lucy's Warbler (*Vermivora luciae*), has been moved to a conditional review list. For both swans and for Lucy's Warblers in Yellowjacket Canyon, no documentation needs to be submitted to the CBRC for occurrences after 30 August 2008.

Trumpeter Swan has been on the main review list since the CBRC's inception in 1972. The first record for Colorado was of a bird procured as a specimen from Fort Collins, Larimer, on 25 November 1915. By 1980, there were only two additional records, the birds occurring during the period December-February. Four records were gathered during the 1980s during the period November-June. In the 1990s, the increase of records gained momentum, with 12 records falling between November and March. During the first decade of this century, there have been an additional 14 records accepted, with many more still in circulation or not yet circulated. This increase in the number of records coincided with reintroductions or introductions of the species across the northern tier of states. The species is now considered regular in small family groups during the late fall period, with some remaining to winter when open water is available, the last reports usually being from March.

Prior to the 1990s, Tundra Swans were known to be a rare to uncommon regular migrant through Colorado, especially in the northwestern portion of the state. However, based upon obvious misidentifications of Tundra and Trumpeter Swans in the late 1990s and a perception that the number of Tundra Swans occurring in the state was decreasing, the Committee placed the species on the statewide main review list in 2002 (Semo et al. 2002). Since the species was placed on the list, the Committee has accepted 17 records, and reports from COBirds and other sources seem to indicate that the current status of the species is rare to uncommon but regular in fall migration, birds arriving usually in early November and departing the state once lakes freeze over in late December. Spring records are rarer, but a few birds usually migrate through Colorado during March. In contrast to Trumpeter Swans, which usually stay within their annual family group, Tundra Swans form larger flocks, with as many as 15 birds documented within the same flock in Colorado.

Since the discovery of nesting Lucy's Warblers in Yellowjacket Canyon in western *Montezuma* in 2004, a small number of breeding pairs has nested within the same stretch of the drainage every year. As the species appears to be regular at that location, the Committee will no longer solicit details on the occurrence of the species at that site. However, as the abundance and distribution of the species elsewhere in *Montezuma* is unknown, the CBRC will still request documentation of birds from other drainages within the county as well as areas up- or downstream from the known breeding location. As the CBRC has determined for Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*), Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*), Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*), and others, observations of Lucy's Warblers from elsewhere in the state require documentation to be accepted by the CBRC.

Committee Functions

All reports received by the CBRC (written documentation, photographs, videotapes, and/or sound recordings) 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, including both the main and supplementary lists (Semo et al. 2002), and for reports of species with no prior accepted records in Colorado. Those lists can be found at <http://www.cfo-link.org/birding/lists.php>. Documentary materials should be submitted online at the CBRC website (<http://www.cfo-link.org/CBRC/login.php>).

Committee News

Coen Dexter's second consecutive term has ended at the end of December 2008. David Silverman has accepted the vacant CBRC position. David's first term will end in December 2011. The Committee expresses its gratitude for Coen's service and contributions to the Committee and wishes him success in whatever endeavor he may choose to conduct next. Thanks, Coen!

Report Format

The organization and style of this report follow those of Leukering and Semo (2003), with some alterations. 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 ten-year period preceding the submission. The latter number is of importance, as it is one of the criteria for a species' continuance on or removal from the statewide Main Review List (Semo et al. 2002).

The records in this report are arranged taxonomically following the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) Checklist of North American Birds (AOU 1998) through the 49th Supplement (AOU 2008). 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; initials of those who submitted videotape are indicated by a lower-case, italicized "v" (v); and those who submitted sonograms or recordings are indicated by a lower-case, italicized "s" (s). Thus, the parenthetical expression "(JD v, RA†, TL, JV, CW; 2001-36; 4-3, 6-1)" 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 two rounds of voting, the first-round vote was four "accept" votes and three "do not accept" votes, and the second-round vote was 6-1 in favor of accepting the report. 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. 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. The CBRC encourages observers to document the final date on which a rare species was seen, as that provides historical evidence of the true extent of its stay.

For this report, the following abbreviations are used : CG: Campground; CBR: Chico Basin Ranch; CR: County Road; Res.: Reservoir; SP: State Park.

RECORDS ACCEPTED

Eurasian Wigeon – *Anas penelope* (34/15). A male at Pastorius Res., *La Plata*, on 6 Apr 2007 was the first for the county and only the fifth for the West Slope (HM †; 2007-17; 7-0). Another male discovered at a playa near CRs 100 and 23 near Sedgwick, *Sedgwick*, on 9 Jun 2007 was the first for that county (AS †, HA; 2007-87; 7-0). The June date marks the latest spring date for the species in Colorado, the previous being 30 Apr.

Long-tailed Duck – *Clangula hyemalis*. A basic-plumaged female-type bird at Coryell Ranch ponds near Carbondale, *Garfield*, on 10 Feb 2007 represents a rare record for that location (TM, LW; 2007-8; 7-0). Representing a very rare plumage type in Colorado, an alternate-plumaged male was at Fossil Creek Res., *Larimer*, on 28 Apr 2007 (LS †; 2007-79; 7-0).

Red-throated Loon – *Gavia stellata* (34/11). A basic-plumaged adult was at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, on 10 Nov 2007 (BKP †; 2007-93; 6-1). This is the sixth record for *Pueblo* and the fifth for Pueblo Res.

Yellow-billed Loon – *Gavia adamsii* (19/7). Three additional Yellow-billed Loon records were recently accepted. A basic-plumaged bird was at Spinney Mountain Res. on 22

Oct 2006 (AS, JK, NKsr; 2006-182; 6-1), establishing the first record for *Park*. A juvenile met its demise at Erie Res. in *Boulder*, where present between at least 22 and 24 Nov 2006 (WS †, PGe, BM †, BSc†, 2006-162; 7-0); this establishes the first record of the species for that county. Discussions on COBirds indicated that the bird succumbed during an attempt by wildlife officers to rescue it when the lake froze over. *Jackson* received its first record of Yellow-billed Loon in the form of a basic-plumaged bird at MacFarlane Res. on 3 Nov 2007 (AS; 2007-90; 7-0). The species has now been confirmed from ten Colorado counties, with the newly accepted records from *Park* and *Jackson* representing the westernmost locations.

Common Black-Hawk – *Buteo gallus anthracinus* (7/5). Establishing only the seventh record for the state and the first for *Mesa*, an adult was



Yellow-billed Loon, Erie Reservoir, Boulder County, 22 November 2006. Photo by Bill Schmoker

seen at Connected Lakes SP on 25 May 2007 (RLi; 2007-113; 7-0). The bird may have been present prior to the acceptance date; however, the Committee received no details of any earlier sighting.

Harris's Hawk – *Parabuteo unicinctus* (4/1). A second-cycle Harris's Hawk spent a brief period in a subdivision in Pueblo West, Pueblo, between 30 Jun and 1 Jul 2007 (BKP †, DF, BM †, LS †, AS †; 2007-44; 6-1). Although there was no question as to the specific identity of the bird, the Committee deliberated on its origin, as Harris's Hawks are a common bird in falconry, and the possibility of an escape or release needed to be investigated. The feather and bill/talon condition of the Pueblo bird did not suggest that the bird had been held in captivity, but the Committee could not rely on that information alone in its deliberations. Falconers take excellent care of their birds, and the plumage and morphology of falconers' birds are often not readily separable from those of wild individuals, except in a few cases where evidence of intense feather wear or lengthened mandibles or talons indicate that a bird has been confined or has been unable to wear its talons or bill naturally.

Per § 24-4-103 of the Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS), wild-caught Harris's Hawks used for falconry in Colorado must be affixed by Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) staff with a black, non-reusable cable



Harris's Hawk, Pueblo West, Pueblo County, 1 Jul 2007. Photo by Larry Semo

band on the tarsus. Photographic and observer examination of the bird clearly indicated that no black cable band was present on either of the bird's tarsi. Furthermore, no evidence of remnants of a jess was present on the subject bird.

In the event that a falconer's bird escapes, the owner of the hawk must contact the CDOW within five days of losing the bird. Investigations with CDOW and the Colorado Falconry Organization indicated that no falconer had reported a missing Harris's Hawk and that all were accounted for. Even if a bird had somehow managed to remove the cable band marker after escaping, there still should have been a confirmed report of an escape from a falconer, as the birds are of high value to those hobbyists, and their birds and facilities are periodically inspected by law enforcement. Failure to report a missing bird could result in termination of a falconer's permit and/or financial penalties; thus, the Commit-

tee deemed it likely that the Pueblo West bird was of wild origin.

Red Knot – *Calidris canutus* (25/10). Two were recently accepted. A juvenile, the third for *Bent*, was near the outlet of Adobe Creek Res. on 2 Sep 2007 (BM †; 2007-54; 7-0). Providing the first record for *Huerfano*, an adult was at Orlando Res., where present between 9 and 12 Sep 2007 (DS, BKP †; 2007-55; 7-0).

Short-billed Dowitcher – *Limnodromus griseus*. An alternate-plumaged adult, a first for CBR, was at Headquarters Pond in *Pueblo* on 7 May 2007 (BM †; 2007-33; 7-0). Another alternate-plumaged bird was at Pastorius Res., *La Plata*, on 5 May 2007 (JBy; 007-82; 6-1)

Red Phalarope – *Phalaropus fulicaria* (39/19). Four additional records were recently accepted. An alternate-plumaged female headed the list with her appearance at a pond 0.5 miles south of the intersection of CR 122 and CR 45 in rural *Weld*, documented between the period 2 and 7 Jun 2007 (DF, GG, BM †, AS †, BK; 2007-40; 7-0). This represents the second record of the species for *Weld*. *Arapahoe* received its first record with a basic-plumaged bird present at Cherry Creek Res. on 11 Sep 2007 (GW †; 2007-58; 7-0).

The bird apparently remained at that location for a few days longer, though the CBRC received no details on any later date. The first record for *Lake*, generally a county not conducive to harboring shorebirds, was achieved with a basic-plumaged bird observed at Twin Lakes on 20 Oct 2007 (TK; 2007-74; 7-0). Finally, the second record for *Arapahoe* occurred in the same year as the first, when a basic-plumaged individual was again at Cherry Creek Res. on 6 Nov 2007 (BM, GW; 2007-92; 7-0).

Black-legged Kittiwake – *Rissa tridactyla* (33/11). A bird molting from first- to second-cycle was documented from Pueblo Res. on the late date of 8 May 2007, although it was apparently first detected on 3 May (BKP †, RMj; 2007-34; 7-0). This is the fourth for *Pueblo* and furnishes the second latest spring record for the state, the latest being from Chatfield Res., *Douglas*, on 14 May 2001. The fourth for



Red Phalarope, *Weld County*, 3 June 2007. Photo by Bill Maynard

Chatfield, Douglas and Jefferson, a juvenile was present on 21 Nov 2007 (AS; 2007-112; 7-0).

Long-tailed Jaeger – *Stercorarius longicaudus* (13/6). Establishing the first for well-birded Boulder, a juvenile coursed Boulder Res. on 13 Sep 2007 (TH †, BSc; 2007-88; 7-0).

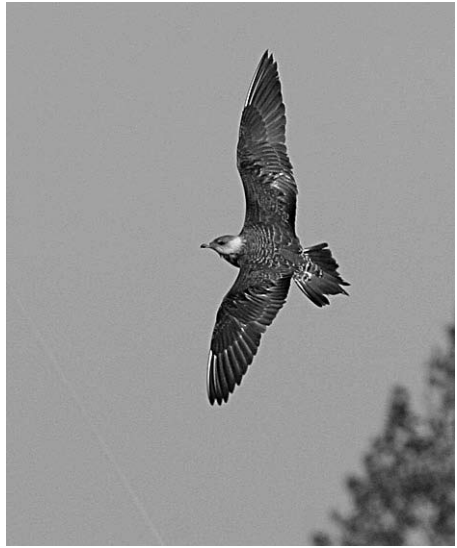
Lesser Nighthawk – *Chordeiles minor* (19/10). Providing the first record for Dolores, a pair of males was at the sewage ponds in Dove Creek on 14 Jul 2006 (AS, CWi, NK Sr., NK Jr.; 2006-108; 6-1). A female was later discovered at this same site on 16 Aug 2007 (JBy; 2006-114; 7-0). Establishing the first record for Montrose, four birds (three juveniles, one female) were at the sewage ponds in Nucla, 2-4 Sep 2006 (AS †, NP, CDe; 2006-119; 7-0).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird – *Archilochus colubris* (10/9). An adult male, the first for Boulder, irregularly visited the feeders at John Vanderpoel's home in Niwot, where it was documented on 19 Aug 2007 (WS, BSc †, IV; 2007-51; 7-0).

Black-chinned Hummingbird – *Archilochus alexandri*. Quite far north was an adult male at Masonville, Larimer, on 18 Jul 2007 (RH †, SMj; 2007-47; 7-0).

Red-naped Sapsucker – *Sphyrapicus nuchalis*. Rare in winter, an adult female was at Holy Cross Abbey in Cañon City, Fremont, between at least 15 Jan and 18 Feb 2007 (BKP †, SMo; 2007-10; 7-0).

Eastern Wood-Pewee – *Contopus virens* (20/7). A singing bird, the



Long-tailed Jaeger, Boulder Reservoir, Boulder County, 13 September 2007. Photo by Thomas Heinrich

third for El Paso, was photographed at CBR, where it was present between at least 13 and 16 Aug 2007 (BM †; 2007-48; 7-0).

Alder Flycatcher – *Empidonax alnorum* (23/13). As Colorado birders are becoming more knowledgeable about separating Alder and Willow (*E. traillii*) Flycatchers visually and by call, records of Alder Flycatcher have increased significantly, and it seems that the species is a rare but regular very late spring and early fall migrant across the Eastern Plains. The Committee recently accepted five additional records of the species. The second for Larimer was excellently described and photographed at Dixon Res., where present between 4 and 5 Jun 2005 (RH †; 2005-62; 5-2, 6-1). Two birds were at CBR, Pueblo, on 29

May 2006 (BM †; 2006-92; 5-2, 6-1). One at Crow Valley CG on 1 June 2007 (AS, RO, GW; 2007-86; 7-0) was the second for *Weld*. A juvenile was excellently documented from the *El Paso* side of CBR on 16 Aug 2007 (BM †; 2007-50; 7-0), and another juvenile was on the *Pueblo* side of the same ranch on 22 Aug 2007 (BM †; 2007-52; 7-0). There are now seven accepted records of Alder Flycatcher for CBR (five from *El Paso*, two from *Pueblo*).

Blue-headed Vireo – *Vireo solitarius* (19/17). *El Paso* received its second record with the female banded at CBR on 19 May 2007 (BG †; 2007-37; 6-1). *Baca* was provided its first record with one present below the dam of Two Buttes Res. on 2 Sep 2007 (PJ, KG; 2007-53; 7-0).

Philadelphia Vireo – *Vireo philadelphicus* (32/15). One, the fourth for *Prowers*, was five miles south of Lamar on 16 Sep 2007 (JS †; 2007-66; 7-0).

Tree Swallow – *Tachycineta bicolor*. Very late for the East Slope, one attempted to forage along frozen Barr Lake, *Adams*, on 16 Dec 2007 (GG †; 2007-106; 7-0). Winter records for the Grand Valley of western Colorado are a bit more frequent.

Sedge Wren – *Cistothorus platensis* (17/3). Providing the second record for *Boulder*, and the first there since 1974, a male established a territory in a wet meadow on a farm near Hygiene, where it was present between at least 6 and 12 Jun 2007 (SR, BSc †; 2007-41; 7-0).

Gray-cheeked Thrush – *Catharus minimus* (46/19). One was banded at CBR, *El Paso*, on 3 May 2007 (BG

†; 2007-30; 7-0). This is the eighth Gray-cheeked Thrush to be banded at the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's banding station at CBR.

Varied Thrush – *Ixoreus naevius* (33/21). The CBRC recently accepted four additional Varied Thrush records. An adult male, the first for *Fremont*, was at Florence on 5 Jan 2007 (BKP †, SO; 2007-2; 7-0). Another male, *Larimer's* sixth, was in Fort Collins on 29 Jan 2007 (AC †; 2007-6; 7-0). A third male was in Durango, *La Plata*, on 30 Jan 2007 (HM †; 2007-7; 7-0). That bird, the third for *La Plata*, apparently remained at that location until at least 19 Feb, although no details were received for that later date. Finally, the first confirmed record for *Delta* was obtained with a female at Confluence Park in Delta on 24 Dec 2007 (MB; 2007-108; 7-0).

Brown Thrasher – *Toxostoma rufum*. Far west was the one at Horsethief SWA near Fruita, Mesa, seen between 19 and 20 Jan 2008 (CD †; 2008-6; 7-0).

Sprague's Pipit – *Anthus spragueii* (10/6). Three birds were seen at a seemingly predictable fall location near Hale, *Yuma*, where they were documented on 13 Oct 2007 (LS †; 2007-70; 7-0).

Blackburnian Warbler – *Dendroica fusca* (43/17). The first record for *Lincoln* was established with the presence of an alternate-plumaged male at Thompson Ranch near Limon on 6 May 2007 (AS †, JK; 2007-83; 7-0). Percival established the sixth record for *Pueblo* with one he found at Rock Canyon below Pueblo Res. on 9 Sep 2007 (BKP; 2007-56; 7-0).

Yellow-throated Warbler – *Dendroica dominica* (33/14).

Pueblo's fifth was documented from CBR on 5 May 2007 (BM †, BKP †; 2007-32; 7-0).

Louisiana Waterthrush – *Seiurus motacilla* (5/1). The warbler highlight of 2008 was the Louisiana Waterthrush discovered along Lefthand Creek in Longmont, Boulder, where it was seen by many on 25 and 26 Apr (MM, GG †, RH †, BK, TLR, BM †, BKP †, NP s, BSc †, AS †, WS; 2008-33; 7-0). It was the first Louisiana Waterthrush documented in Colorado since 1996.

Kentucky Warbler – *Oporornis formosus* (33/9). A male was wonderfully photographed at the Rocking 7K Ranch near Granada, *Prowers*, on 16 Apr 2008 (NS †; 2008-31; 7-0), establishing the earliest spring record for the state and the second record of the species for *Prowers*.

Painted Redstart – *Myioborus pictus* (5/2). Coming on the heels of one in 2005, Colorado's second Painted Redstart record in a decade came in the form of a bird discovered in Cañon City on 25 Apr 2007 (DF, PGe, RH †, TLe †, BM †, BKP †, NP, AS †, RM; 2007-26; 7-0). Of the five Colorado records of Painted Redstart, three have been documented between the period 25 Apr and 26 May, while the other two have been



Louisiana Waterthrush, Boulder County, 26 April 2008. Photo by Bill Schmoker

between 16 and 18 Nov. No pattern of geographical distribution has been detected, as records have come from *Jefferson*, *Delta*, *Larimer*, *Garfield*, and *Fremont*.

Scarlet Tanager – *Piranga olivacea* (32/16). An alternate-plumaged male established a territory in Gregory Canyon, where it was documented between 30 June and 7 Jul 2007 (BM †, NP, LS †, KMD; 2007-45; 7-0). This is the fourth record of the species for *Boulder*.

Eastern Towhee – *Pipilo erythrophthalmus* (15/12). Providing the third record for *Pueblo*, a female was at CBR on 27 Apr 2007 (BM †; 2007-28; 7-0).

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow – *Ammodramus nelsoni* (3/1). Exciting was the discovery of a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Fox Ranch near Idalia, *Yuma*, on 6 Oct 2007 (BSc, 2007-60; 7-0), which establishes only the third record for the state and the first



Painted Redstart, Cañon City, Fremont County, 25 April 2007. Photo by Tony Leukering

since 1973. The observer's description of an *Ammodramus* displaying a combination of an orange breast with faint streaking, a sharply demarcated white belly contrasting with the orange breast, a characteristic facial pattern, and a gray nape satisfactorily ruled out other species of sparrow.

Fox Sparrow – *Passerella iliaca*. A “Red” Fox Sparrow (*P. i. iliaca/zaboria*) was below the dam of Bonny Res., Yuma, on 13 Oct 2007 (LS †, NE, TSm, 2007-69; 7-0). Unusual away from the mountains, two “Slate-colored” Fox Sparrows (*P. i. schistacea*) were recently accepted from the Eastern Plains. One was at CBR, El Paso, on 1 Apr 2007 (BM †; 2007-21; 7-0) and the other was below Standley Lake, Jefferson, on 6 Oct of that same year (LS †, TSm; 2007-68; 7-0).

Golden-crowned Sparrow – *Zonotrichia atricapilla* (21/13). A first-basic bird in active molt to alternate plum-

age, apparently first found on 2 Feb 2007 at Tunnel Drive in Cañon City, was documented as occurring at that site between 16 Feb and 16 Mar 2007 (DE †, TLe †, BM †, BKP †, RM; 2007-9; 7-0). This represents the first record of the species for Fremont. The first record for Washington was also recently gained with an alternate-plumaged bird present at Last Chance on 6 May 2007 (AS †,

RLe; 2007-84; 7-0). This represents the latest spring date for the species in Colorado.

Snow Bunting – *Plectrophenax nivalis*. One cavorted with Horned Larks (*Eremophila alpestris*) near Wellington, Weld, on 15 Jan 2007 (RH; 2007-77; 7-0).

Eastern Meadowlark – *Sturnella magna* (10/5). One singing on territory at Cattail Pond near Loveland between at least 28 May and 3 Jun 2007 (GG †, AS †s, CWi; 2007-39; 7-0) was the second for Larimer.

Great-tailed Grackle – *Quiscalus mexicanus*. Establishing the first record for Rio Blanco, a male was at Rio Blanco SWA on 8 Jun 2007 (DF †, 2007-42; 7-0).

Scott's Oriole – *Icterus parisorum*. Out-of-range was the alternate-plumaged male at Fairmount Cemetery in Lamar, Prowers, photographed on 17 Apr 2007 (BG †; 2007-24; 7-0).

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

The Committee recognizes that its decisions may upset some observers. We heartily acknowledge that those who make the effort to submit documentation certainly care whether or not their reports are accepted. However, non-accepted records do not necessarily suggest that the birder misidentified or did not see the species. A non-accepted record only indicates that the documentation was not complete or convincing enough to catalogue on the list of confirmed bird records for the state. Non-accepted reports may provide evidence which does not mention certain requisite field marks or which indicates that the conditions of the observation did not permit the proper study of all necessary traits. All non-accepted records are archived at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science and may be reconsidered by the Committee if new information is provided (e.g., photos, documentation from other observers). We summarize below why the following reports were not accepted.

Glossy Ibis – *Plegadis falcinellus*. An adult *Plegadis* ibis at Stagecoach Reservoir, *Routt*, on 19 May 2002 needed two rounds of voting (2002-179; 4-3, 3-4). Members in dissent commented that the written description did not adequately rule out possible hybridization with White-faced Ibis, nor was a hybrid directly ruled out by the observer in the documentation. The bird was described as having “uniform steel gray” legs and a gray bill with a “reddish hint to the middle,” features that some members

suggested did not support its identification as a pure Glossy but may have suggested possible hybridization. Classic adult Glossy Ibis in alternate plumage would show gray legs with red “knees” and a brown bill. However, the Glossy-favorable description of “the facial skin [being] bluish-gray with pale bluish white lines between the bill and the eye that did not connect behind the eye” led other committee members to accept the documentation. Unfortunately, the observer did not report eye color and the submitted photos were not of sufficient quality for that detail, or other salient characteristics, to be clearly discerned.

Wood Stork – *Mycteria americana*. The report of one at a small farm pond near Windsor, *Weld*, on 9 Jun 2007 was intriguing but lacked some key details to be accepted as the state’s third record and the first since 1934 (2007-43; 2-5). Of concern to most members were the bird’s size (noted as similar to Great Egret, which is slightly smaller than Wood Stork) and the lack of any mention of black flight feathers. The observer’s description of a “large, primarily white bird...head and neck were black and featherless” was, nonetheless, enough to garner some support. While this would not have constituted a first state record, the Committee does place more emphasis on the need for complete descriptions of species that don’t occur even once a decade (or in this case in seven decades) in Colorado (see also *Pyrrhuloxia*, below).

Mew Gull – *Larus canus*. An adult in basic plumage at Union Reservoir,

Weld, on 27 Nov 2006 met with mixed Committee opinion (2006-165; 3-4). Committee members in favor of the identification did not provide reasons for their opinions; however, dissenting members considered the “dark” bill and lack of any mention of a tertial crescent in their decisions not to support this documentation. The bird was also vaguely described as having a dark head and neck, being smaller than a Ring-billed Gull, with shorter legs and a back that was “a little darker.” While these marks are suggestive, some members thought that lighting issues may have played a part in the observer’s description of the dark bill, head, neck, and mantle, and that without a clearer description of these body parts, the documentation left too much to the reader’s interpretation.

Whip-poor-will – *Caprimulgus vociferus*. One report from the Soapstone Ranch, *Larimer*, on 22 May 2006 did not convincingly eliminate Common Poorwill in the opinion of the majority of Committee members (2006-80; 1-6). The bird was observed for a total of 30 seconds as it was incidentally flushed by the observer. Committee members were concerned about the subjective description of size—deceptive on a flying bird and without direct comparison to other species—and the vagueness of the description. The observer noted “rufous on the upper wings” and “a lot of white on the end of the tail,” features that could also describe Common Poorwill. The amount and shape of white in the tail, extensive and triangular on Whip-poor-will (with the inner rectrices containing more white than

the outer rectrices), was not mentioned. The habitat of grassy hillside with patches of yucca also favored Common Poorwill, since Whip-poor-will is a species of open woodland.

Lesser Nighthawk – *Chordeiles acutipennis*. Another caprimulgid documented at the Soapstone Ranch, *Larimer*, this one on 11 Jul 2006, received little Committee support (2006-107; 1-6). Weighing on the Committee’s decision was the brief one-minute observation and lack of details regarding key features separating Lesser and Common Nighthawks. One member commented that potential identification pitfalls presented by juvenile Common Nighthawks need more attention by the birding community and should be considered whenever a possible Lesser Nighthawk presents itself.

Chihuahuan Raven – *Corvus cryptoleucus*. Chihuahuan Ravens have been reported with increasing frequency along the northern Front Range over the past several years. Documentation of one near LaSalle, *Weld*, on 17 Apr 2007 is one of few reports submitted to this Committee, however (2007-25; 2-5). Separation of Common and Chihuahuan Ravens can be very difficult even under ideal viewing conditions, and the short duration of observation (one minute) of this flying individual weighed heavily in some members’ decisions not to accept. In addition, several members commented that the description of the bird’s vocalization as a “high-pitched, crow-like croak” and of its overall size as “not much bigger than a crow” as it was harassed by Red-winged Black-

birds suggested that American Crow was not sufficiently ruled out.

Sprague's Pipit – *Anthus spragueii*. The report of a lone bird flushed from the edge of Ramah Reservoir, *El Paso*, on 20 Oct 2007 did not adequately eliminate similar species in the opinions of most Committee members (2007-114; 1-6). The observer's description of a small passerine with short streaks on a light buffy breast was suggestive, but most members felt that longspurs and Vesper Sparrow were viable contenders. Unfortunately, the only species specifically eliminated in the documentation was American Pipit. Without more justification for why this bird was not a longspur or similar-looking species, and since other species were not readily eliminated by the description or other evidence provided, the Committee overall could not support the documentation pertaining to the reported species.

Pyrrhuloxia – *Cardinalis sinuatus*. Committee members were mixed in their decision on the report of an adult female in Broomfield, *Broomfield* (2007-102; 3-4). The bird was observed at close range coming to a residential feeder intermittently from 6-11 Dec 2007. The bird was

described as light gray with orangish/yellowish underparts, a curved dull yellow bill, a pinkish wash under the chin, and slight red edging to the "lower wings", slightly smaller than a Northern Cardinal but shaped like one. Female Pyrrhuloxias show red on the crest, tail, and around the eye—features that should have been seen on a bird observed at close range—and the lack of these features was a cause of concern for some Committee members. While the general description, especially of the curved yellow bill, suggested this species, it was not enough to sway the majority of Committee members to accept this as the state's fourth record.

Purple Finch – *Carpodacus purpureus*. An adult female coming to a residential feeder was reported near Florence, *Fremont*, on 25 Dec 2007 (2007-116; 2-5). The bird associated with Cassin's Finches at the feeder and the observer noted that the bird differed from that species, but provided few specific details. Committee members specifically commented on the lack of information on bill shape or undertail covert pattern, both important characteristics to consider when identifying a suspected Purple Finch in Colorado.

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