

throated Sparrows lingered in *Aransas* until Apr. 20 (CC) and at Calallen until Apr. 27 (GS); this species normally departs the c. coast by early April (*fide* MC). The Golden-crowned Sparrow at Hueco Tanks from the winter season lingered until at least May 2 (m.ob.). A Dark-eyed Junco at Buffalo L., May 14 (KS) was the latest date the species has been recorded in the Panhandle. A flock of 80 Bobolinks in *Delta* Apr. 30 (MWh) was an extraordinary inland concentration. A flock of 50 Com. Grackles frequented El Paso in early March (BJ, DE, BN), while Bronzed Cowbirds seemed to be increasing there and at Midland. We had six–seven 3rd-hand reports of Shiny Cowbirds at various U.T.C. locations as well as a report of two captured in cowbird traps at Ft. Hood. To date, however, the only written documentation received was for a single bird Apr. 16 at Port Bolivar (LS *et al.*). There are only 2 currently accepted records of this species in Texas and observers are requested to thoroughly document any record. Amazing was a Hooded Oriole at Palo Duro Canyon May 18 (KS), far north of its normal Texas range.

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# Idaho/ Western Montana Region

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The mild winter was followed by a mild spring, with little weather-related news to mark the transition. The biggest change bird-wise was the widespread influx of "winter finches." Cassin's Finches began showing up at feeders throughout northern Idaho during early March. In northwest Montana, Red Crossbills finally descended to the valleys, and quickly fledged young. Evening Grosbeaks moved into the Coeur d'Alene, Idaho and Libby, Montana areas in large numbers, after being absent all winter.

Several rare species first noted last season remained until spring, and one (Northern Hawk Owl) even nested. Most observers felt migration was early. In the Salmon, Idaho area for example, long-time observer Hadley Roberts obtained record-early arrival dates for no fewer than 17 species!

## Loons to Waterfowl

One of two **Yellow-billed Loons** first noted in January at Harrison, ID was still present Mar. 13 (DS). The Double-crested Cormorant on the Clearwater R. near Lewiston, ID Apr. 22 (C.Bi.) was expected, while singles at St. Maries, ID May 5 (*fide* DS) and on the Salmon R. by North Fork, ID in May (LH) were not. A Great Egret near Salmon Apr. 22 was a latilong 2nd (HR). Four White-faced Ibis were at Lee Metcalf N.W.R., *Ravalli*, MT May 14 (PW), where they are rarely seen.

Greater White-fronted Geese are uncommon and local throughout Idaho, so the flock of 3000 at Fort Boise W.M.A., *Canyon* Mar. 12 (JG), and seven by Harrison Mar 13 (DS) were noteworthy. Six–eight Snow Geese at McArthur L., *Boundary*, ID Apr 12–25 (PC) was unusual. A small, mixed flock of Snow and Ross' geese was at Mann L., *Nez Perce*, ID for the last half of April (KD, MH, m.ob.), where both have been regularly found in recent years. Lewiston's **Brant**, first noted last season, was still present Mar. 5 (ph. DH).



Idaho's fourth American Black Duck, a male paired with a ♀ Mallard near Burley, was present through April (R&JL, †CT). A Blue-winged Teal was at Harrison Apr. 24 (C.A.S.), while two Blue-winged x Cinnamon teal hybrids were near Townsend, MT May 29 (CJ, ST). Eurasian Wigeons were widely reported from the n. half of the Region, but were absent from s. Idaho. Several were seen throughout the spring at Lee Metcalf N.W.R. (CB). One-two males were on L. Helena, *Lewis and Clark*, MT Mar. 13-19 (D&RP), where they are rare and irregular. Two males were also seen s. of Rose L., ID Mar. 27 (DS), where the species is rare but an-

**A lingerer from winter was this rare Brant (which had furnished a seventh state record) at Lewiston, Idaho, March 5, 1994. Photograph/David Holick.**

nual. In n.w. Montana's Flathead Valley, Eur. Wigeon are fairly common, representing up to 2% of migrating wigeon (DC). Among the birds present there this year were three Am. x Eur. wigeon hybrids (DC).

A Harlequin Duck was on Hayden Cr. near Lemhi, ID Apr. 22 (*fide*HR), for a latilong first. Three Harlequin pairs were on the Lochsa R., Idaho, ID May 11 (LP, W&JF), and 2 pair were on the upper St. Joe R., Shoshone, ID in mid-May. The latter 2 locations are traditional nesting areas. Perhaps the season's most bizarre sighting was of a Harlequin Duck pair chasing earthworms on the hwy s. of Emida, ID May 18 (*fide*DS). The birds, providing the first record for the St. Maries R. Basin, had apparently become downed or disoriented by heavy rain, and had to be "shooed" away by a motorist! Barrow's Goldeneye were more numerous and widespread in n. Idaho than usual, raising hopes that breeding might finally be documented there (JR, CT). A flock of 500 Ruddy Ducks was on L. Helena Apr. 16 (LM).

### Hawks to Owls

A Ferruginous Hawk was n. of Moscow May 11, where rarely found (DG). Sharp-tailed Grouse populations in w. Montana are very

precarious, so the discovery of a new lek in *Powell* was welcome news (RG).

For the 3rd straight year, Black-necked Stilts were recorded in the Helena area, where three were seen at L. Helena Apr. 23-May 24 (GH). The Am. Avocet at Thompson L. near Harrison, ID May 8 (JN) was very unusual, while the 7-19 at Mann L., Apr. 15-25 were more expected (KD, WH).

Two Solitary Sandpiper were near Caldwell, ID May 1 (JG) and one was s. of Cottonwood, ID Apr. 23 (WH). A locally rare Long-billed Curlew was seen on the Rathdrum Prairie near Coeur d'Alene, ID in March (*fide*SS), while 37 were seen in the Council, ID area Apr. 3 (JH, MH), where expected. Two Marbled Godwit were at Tolo L. near Fenn, ID Apr. 23 (WH) for a latilong first, and one was at Mann L. 2 days later (WH).

A Franklin's Gull was at Lee Metcalf N.W.R., May 14 (PW) and another in *Lemhi*, ID during May (LH). *Eighteen* Bonaparte's Gull were at Mann L., Apr. 25 (WH), with one remaining until Apr. 30 (MK). A first winter Thayer's and two imm. Glaucous gulls near Harrison in late March were unusual away from area landfills (DS). A Western Gull present at Market Lake W.M.A. near Roberts, ID since Apr. 8 (†BH, m.ob.), provided Idaho's 3rd record. A single Arctic Tern was seen outside Roberts May 23 (SP, CT) for Idaho's 7th record. A Black Tern was at Hells Gate S.P. near Lewiston, ID May 25 (G&LL), where the species is rare.

The most exciting news of the period was the April discovery of Montana's first breeding Northern Hawk Owl. The nest was found near Polebridge, in the area where a hawk owl had been regular since last fall (DC). At least five young were fledged. This is thought to represent the southernmost breeding in the w. United States. Boreal Owls near Whitefish, MT provided the latilong's first confirmed breeding (JJ).

### Swifts to Finches

Black Swifts were frequently seen at Lee Metcalf N.W.R. through May (CB, DHo), suggesting new breeding in the Bitterroot Mts. A Broad-tailed Hummingbird at a Moscow, ID feeder May 17-20 was unusual (DG). Burk recaptured a Rufous Hummingbird this spring near Troy, MT that was at least 8-years-old. An Eastern Phoebe May 21 at Swan Lake N.W.R., Lake, MT provided the state's 6th record, and the first west of the divide (†DC, m.ob.).

A Blue Jay visited a Moscow feeder in late April (DG), and may have been one of the birds present nearby all winter. An albino Com. Raven was seen May 21 near Coeur d'Alene (SW).

A nocturnal Bewick's Wren made a brief appearance at Dumroese's Moscow area home Apr. 28, when it flushed onto a garage lamp, remaining until the light was extin-



guished. Another Bewick's was in Kamiah, ID Mar. 7 (WH, LP). Northern Mockingbirds were relatively numerous this spring, with singles seen in *Ada*, ID Apr. 25 (JG, EH), near Cataldo, ID May 26 (CT), and in Helena May 27 (CJ, ST). This species is an erratic visitor and occasional breeder throughout the Region. The *Ada*, ID bird may have been the same individual present in Boise for much of the winter. Montana's Bitterroot Valley had a locally rare Sage Thrasher May 14–18 (PW). Two Am. Tree Sparrows were near Nez Perce, ID Mar. 7 (LP, WH). As noted in last season's report, White-throated Sparrows were more numerous than usual, with some birds attempting to overwinter. The species was again relatively prominent. J. Hirth had a White-throated and a Golden-Crowned sparrow in his Viola, ID yard Apr. 22. The White-throated Sparrow first noted in Casey's Somers, MT yard during November was still present Apr. 10. Another was singing near Polebridge May 17 (DM). An overwintering Harris' Sparrow continued to come to a Culdesac, ID feeder until Apr. 20 (WH).

The relentless Great-tailed Grackle expansion is apparently accelerating toward this Region. Idaho's fourth–sixth **Great-tailed Grackles** were found: at Caldwell in early April (JG, AF, EH), near Burley May 18 (CT), and near Am. Falls Res. in mid-May (DB).

Lesser Goldfinch were again nesting 10 mi s. of Pocatello ID, where annual breeding has been documented since the late 1980's (CT). The **Brambling**, first noted in the Kalispell area in mid-December, provided Montana's first overwintering record by staying until at least Mar. 30 (DC).

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# Mountain West Region

## HUGH E. KINGERY

A mild and dry spring made for a mild spring migration. Contributors offered short reports and mostly meager information.

Las Vegas claimed a lack of birds of prey, nil shorebirds, and a non-existent warbler migration. Denver reported 145 species on Denver Field Ornithologists trips, compared with an nine-year average of 156. The spring added three new species, and failed to find three seen in every previous years; the latter list now numbers 94 species. At Fort Collins, Colorado, shorebirds stayed longer, but passerines were largely absent.

Abbreviations: C.F.O. (*Colorado Field Ornithologists*); D.M.N.H. (*Denver Museum of Natural History*); D.F.O. (*Denver Field Ornithologists field trips, compiled by Phil Hayes*); L.L.B.L. (*Longmont/Lyons/Berthoud/Loveland area, CO, using Foothills Audubon Club records, compiled by Ann Means*); R.E. (*Regional Editor*); 1st Lat (*first latilong record [a latilong is outlined by one degree each of latitude and longitude, and measures about 50 by 70 mi—2/3 the size of Connecticut]*); ‡ (*written description on file with, and subject to approval of, state or local records committee*).

## Loons to Ibises

Utah recorded migrating Com. Loons in April in 2 new latilongs: Fourteen stopped at Huntington and two–three stopped at Ferron and Castle Dale (NB). Seven broods of Pied-billed Grebes at Moab confirmed breeding for the first time in that latilong. A Red-necked Grebe spent May 7–26 at Ordway, CO (1st Lat, BP, ‡MJ). The Region noted fewer W. Grebes during migration: L.L.B.L. reported 222 cf. 694 last year, and Rawhide Res., Denver, and Eagle, CO had low numbers. In contrast West-erns seemed widespread in the San Luis Valley in s.c. Colorado (RAR).

Observers tallied nine Am. Bitterns at 4 locations. Among Great Egrets reports, one sat on a nest in the San Luis Valley May 24–25 (RAR). Snowy Egrets peaked at 277 at Fish Springs N.W.R., UT May 9; by May 24 the count dropped to 218. The C.F.O. will review a description of a Little Blue Heron at Rocky Ford Apr. 24 (‡MJ); observers did not document 2 other Colorado

reports. Cattle Egrets have appeared now in 13 of Wyoming's 28 latilongs, including one May 14 at Green R. (SS). Green Herons nested for the 2nd year at Ft. Collins—with 2 nests found by May 21, providing the first "colonial" nesting site in the Region (DL). The C.F.O. will review 2 reports of **Glossy Ibis** in Colorado, May 21 at Greeley (‡DE) and San Luis Valley (‡RAR).

## Waterfowl

Soda L. at Casper, an oil company treatment pond, has become Wyoming's premier site for water and shore birds. This spring ducks peaked at 6682 Mar. 25, topped by 2000 Com. Goldeneyes, 1500 Am. Wigeons, and 1500 Lesser Scaup (J&VH). Canvasbacks peaked at 500 Mar 22. Fish Springs N.W.R. had a peak of 4841 ducks Apr. 12, topped by 1234 Cinnamon Teal (JB).

Las Vegas, NV had a **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** for the 2nd spring, seen Apr. 11+ (MC). A surprising 31 Ross' Geese in Colorado included 20 at Nee Noshe Res. (near Lamar) Mar. 16 (DL, DE). Others appeared at Eagle, Rifle, Hasty, Ft. Collins, and Greeley. Wood Ducks have become regular throughout the Region, though the one–three seen on 16 days at Devils Tower, WY came from a new location (G&MS). Colorado had two Eur. Wigeons, at Denver and Pueblo, in March. The Herolds described a **Tufted Duck** at Casper Mar. 16; if accepted by the Records Committee, it will become the Region's first record. Greater Scaups stopped in Colorado, with seven at Grand Jct., Mar. 10–11 (RL, CD), Rocky Ford, Boulder, and Ft. Collins. Two Oldsquaws lingered Mar. 27–Apr. 24 at Rawhide Res., observers found two others at Sheridan, WY (‡HD) and Ft. Collins. Colorado recorded all 3 scoter species, all rare in spring: a ♀ Black at Rawhide May 2, where one spent the winter (DL); two Surfs at Longmont and *Weld*; and a White-winged, no details reported, at Rifle May 11 (KP). At Denver, D.F.O. recorded its lowest-ever total of Com. Mergansers, a minimal 28 (PH).

## Raptors

The Denver Hogback Hawkwatch recorded 2698 raptors this year (seven per hour), about half the 1993 total and well below the 4-year average of 3323, though if the unusually high year of 1993 was omitted, the count was about average. The 1993 total (12.6 birds/hour) probably resulted from advantageous weather conditions plus more hours of observation. Top 5 species remained the same 676 Red-tailed Hawks, 560 Turkey