

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).

**Observers cited (Subregional editors in boldface):** Clifton Barry, Kay Burk, Dave Burrup, Canyon Birders (C.Bi.), **Dan Casey**, Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society (C.A.S.), Pat Cole, Kas Dumroese, Aubrey Fautheree, Willie & Judy Frink (W&JF), John Gatchet, Dale Goble, Robert Greene, Lucinda Haggas, Evelyn Hainey, Brad Hammond, Winnie Hepburn, John Hirth, Marty Hirth, Dave Holick (DH), Denver Holt (DHo), **George Holton**, Jane Ingebretson, Cedron Jones, **Dean Jones**, **Merlene Koliner**, George & Louise La Voié (G&LL), Ron & Jason Lynch (R&JL), Lawrence McEvoy, Don Miller, John Nigh, Susan Patia, Lou Potter, Dorothy & Randy Poulsen (D&RP), Jimmy Reynolds, **Hadley Roberts**, **Shirley Sturts**, Dan Svingen, Sara Toubman, **Charles Trost**, Susan Weller, **Philip Wright**. —*Dan Svingen, P.O. Box 273, St. Maries, ID 83861; Thomas H. Rogers, 10820 E. Maxwell, Spokane, WA 99206-4894.*

# 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

Vultures, 559 Am. Kestrels, 343 Cooper's Hawks, and 152 Sharp-shinned Hawks (FH, D.M.N.H., C.B.O.).

A White-tailed Kite stayed at Las Vegas Mar. 14–Apr. 2 (†MC). Bald Eagles peaked at 47 at Longmont Mar. 6 (DB). Pueblo's Red-shouldered Hawk stayed until Mar. 6, and Las Vegas had one each Mar. 9 & 12. Nevada recorded three Broad-winged Hawks: two at Las Vegas Apr. 14 and one at Lida May 25.

### Shorebirds

A night excursion May 7 in the Arkansas Valley, CO produced a remarkable six Black Rails calling at 3 different locations, including their consistent site at Las Animas (‡BP, VT, LL). Mesa had 3 pairs of Sandhill Cranes breeding this spring—up from one last year (CD, RL). Migratory flocks included 100 at Morgan, UT and 23 at Rifle.

A typical contingent of Black-bellied Plovers migrated through the Region: one each at Las Vegas, NV; Sheridan, Casper, and Cheyenne, WY; 14 at Ordway, and one—six at 6 other Colorado sites—including one near Jefferson at 9600 feet (KS). Snowy Plovers strayed to Morgan, UT and Rawhide, CO. Black-necked Stilts peaked at 450 May 9 at Fish Springs N.W.R., UT, where they breed. Other peaks included 50 at Casper's Soda L., WY (where they also breed), and 42 at Greeley, CO Apr. 17. American Avocets peaked at 382 at Fish Springs May 24, and Casper had 138 May 11, down to 128 by May 29. There was a report of 703 at L.L.B.L., cf. 206 last year. Impressive numbers of Whimbrels visited the Region. Las Vegas, NV had one May 7; Casper, WY reported six May 4, and Cheyenne, WY had one May 2. In Colorado, Rawhide had 31 May 5—some of which stayed through May 23—and Ordway had ten May 7. Five other sites reported one—two Whimbrels. Hudsonian Godwits stopped at Ordway May 13 (‡MJ) and Greeley May 24–25 (JH, no details). At Grand Jct., CO, 60–80 Marbled Godwits stayed Apr. 15–28, but Fish Springs, UT had only 25 at its peak Apr. 25, and L.L.B.L. had only 17 (41 last year). Four Dunlins stopped at Las Vegas and one in Cheraw, CO.

### Gulls to Hummingbirds

A Laughing Gull stayed at Nee Noshe Res., May 22–28 (‡MJ). Spring observations of Franklin's Gulls seem erratic; this year they arrived early, but L.L.B.L. tallied only 127 cf. 235 last year. California Gulls arrived in force at Casper: 2000 by Apr. 5, 3000 by Apr. 10. Caspian Terns peaked at 30 in Casper May 18, but Colorado had only 2

reports, from Loveland and Ft. Collins.

Three Flammulated Owls called in the Whale Hill Atlas block, near Villa Grove, CO May 21. At Ft. Lyon, CO May 7, observers heard calls of both W. and E. screech-owls (BP, VT, LL); no details were submitted. Colorado N. Pygmy-Owls nested at Vail and in a town park at the edge of the plains in Lyons—a low-elevation breeding record for the state—where they fledged three young (RD, DWK). One spent April and May at Dutch John, UT (EF). Bureau of Land Management field workers found Spotted Owls at 2 new sites near Kanab, UT. Around Rifle, Potter found 28 N. Saw-whet Owls in 8 Atlas blocks; Grand Jct. recorded over 20 during the spring, and Dutch John had three May 28 (EF, RS). An injured saw-whet fledgling found May 29 confirmed breeding for the first time in the Moab, UT latilong (NB). A *Chaetura* swift flew over Jackson, WY May 21; the overall dark coloring of the bird led the observer to call it a Chimney Swift, not a Vaux's (†BR). Two Vaux's flew over Corn Cr. field station near Las Vegas May 3 (MC).

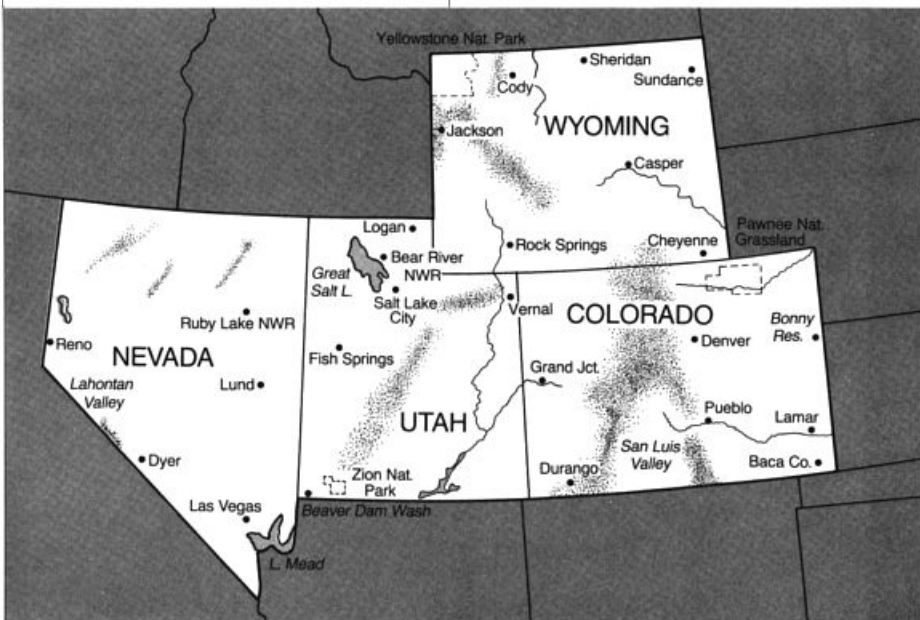
Springdale, UT feeders host massive numbers of hummingbirds—Gifford typically puts up 25 feeders in her yard. This year hummingbird numbers, especially Black-chinned, dropped dramatically; she had only 50 at the mid-April peak, and fewer than 100 May 31, both half the usual numbers. Other feeders in Springdale reported a similar dearth. Each year Anna's Hummingbirds become more common at Las Vegas, NV; this year observers found one Anna's on 5 days be-

tween Mar. 13–May 24. A Springdale feeder did host a Costa's Hummingbird Mar. 1+, and had two May 12 (CM).

### Flycatchers to Crows

After a "Southwestern" Willow Flycatcher workshop in Grand Jct. (the motel marquee read, "Welcome SW Willow Flycatcher"), field workers found 14 Willow Flycatchers May 24 at 2 sites near Delta, CO. Two others sang along the Dolores R. near Paradox, CO May 22 (CD). Workshop conferees discussed whether the "southwest" form sings distinctively enough to separate it in the field from other races. Teams of researchers will search s. Colorado and Utah for Willows during the summer. A fallout of passerines at Las Vegas May 7 included 40 Gray Flycatchers and 125 W. Kingbirds (PL). From 500 feet above the Purgatoire R. observers could hear a singing E. Phoebe May 30 in the Painted Canyon Atlas block near Branson, CO, 25 mi w. of the previous southwesternmost breeding site (HK). A Black Phoebe appeared at Rifle May 12 (‡KP, JRG). A pair of Black Phoebes nested last year at Uravan, CO; this year 2–3 pairs appeared by May 21–22 (CD, BW). Colorado recorded its 2nd Vermilion Flycatcher nesting record with a pair building a nest May 12 at Hasty (CW). High winds blew the nest out of the tree (\*D.M.N.H.). The female disappeared but the male, singing vigorously, stayed through May 25 (MJ *et al.*). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers strayed N from their normal breeding sites 80 mi to Las Animas, CO May 24 and far W 400 mi to Slick Rock, CO May 30 (CD, BW).

Black-billed Magpies may be declining;



D.F.O. reported 327 (tallies for the previous 9 years ranged from 358–475) and L.L.B.L. had 284 *cf.* 320 last year. Statistics from the Breeding Bird Survey routes in Colorado also indicate a decline. The flock of 350 Am. Crows at Rifle Mar. 31 and many flocks of 20–150 around Denver suggest that crows do not share this decline.

### Chickadees to Starling

At Ft. Collins a Mt. Chickadee spent the winter with a Black-capped, and then used a nest box to raise seven hybrid nestlings (SM). Chickadee sightings fell into the mid-range at L.L.B.L. (163 Black-cappeds and 51 Mountains, *cf.* 223 and 95 last year) and Denver (127 *vs.* 76–200 in the past 9 years; D.F.O.). In the Devils Tower backyard, Black-cappeds appeared daily, but White-breasted and Red-breasted nuthatches appeared only one-third of the days (G&MS). The Carolina Wren at Beulah, CO remained through Apr. 13 (PF). A Winter Wren skulked in Red Rock Canyon near Las Vegas Apr. 10 (MC). Marsh Wrens peaked at 200 at Fish Springs, UT May 9. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers have increased along the Colorado Front Range; reports this spring ranged from Cheyenne south to Ordway; Castlewood Canyon had 5–6 pairs May 15–22 and L.L.B.L. counted 10 May 7.

Eastern Bluebirds continued their range expansion. Wyoming observers reported them at Casper, Esterbrook, and Rawhide. Coloradans found them at 3 sites near Colorado Springs. Only one observer claimed to identify a Gray-cheeked Thrush, at Ordway May 14 (‡MJ). Swainson's Thrushes thronged the Colorado plains in late May; they probably numbered in the 10,000s. One hundred flocked around the Crow Valley Campground May 21 in Pawnee Nat'l Grassland while almost every shelter belt in n.e. Colorado had a few. Yet a Gray-Cheeked at Corn Cr. in Las Vegas was deemed a rare record (PL). The Varied Thrush at Story, WY stayed through Mar. 28 (‡HD). Northern Mockingbirds exploded in number in Utah this spring: Observers reported major increases from Cedar City to Wayne to Salt Lake City (SH, AS, ES). In contrast, Phainopeplas disappeared from Springdale this year (JG), and at Las Vegas the number of Phainopepla pairs dropped from two–three from last years' eight–ten. Another increasing bird: L.L.B.L. reported 4456 Eur. Starlings, *cf.* 2035 last spring.

### Vireos to Warblers

Its distinctive voice and plumage identified a White-eyed Vireo at Ordway May 8 (‡MJ). Las Vegas found only one Bell's Vireo, Apr. 22 at Corn Cr. Numbers of Gray Vireos seemed low at Las Vegas, only three–four on territory. Green R. reported a Red-eyed Vireo May 21 (RS).

This year's cast of more common than usual uncommon warblers included: 11 Tennessees (three in Nevada, two Wyoming, six Colorado), nine Chestnut-sideds (three in Wyoming including one at Devils Tower May 17 for a 1st Lat., G&MS), and six Magnolias (one Nevada, two Wyoming—one mist-netted at Seedskaadee N.W.R., AH, and one at Fontanelle, JL). Rare warblers included: N. Parulas at Desert N.W.R., NV (JC, JW); Torrington, WY (J&GL); Yellow-throated at Fountain, CO May 7–8 (TL, ‡BP, ‡MJ); Prairies at Hasty May 7 (BP, VT, LL) and at a shelterbelt 5 mi from Bonny Res. May 18–19—perhaps the first Prairie Warbler ever seen on the prairie (‡HK, UK, CW); Nevada's first spring Palm Warbler May 10 at Tonopah (JB); a Prothonotary singing in an alley at Colorado Springs May 21–25 (JR, CW BP); and four Worm-eatings in Colorado. Colorado had its sixth Swainson's Warbler, which sat very still for a 30-minute observation (‡MJ, BP). Banders twice netted a ♀ Hooded Warbler at Colorado Springs which had a developing brood patch—Colorado has no breeding records (SB); observers found two other Hoodeds in s.e. Colorado. Colorado reported 36 warbler species for the spring; additional species included two Blue-wingeds, two Golden-wingeds, two Black-throated Blues, two Black-throated Greens, two Blackburnians, and one Bay-breasted.

### Tanagers to Grosbeaks

A spate of Summer Tanagers included birds at Casper and Cheyenne plus seven in e. Colorado. A N. Cardinal strayed to Carrizo Canyon, Baca, CO Mar. 17 (DL, DE). Colorado's 12th Painted Bunting, found by a Pennsylvania birder, stayed on territory in Carrizo Canyon May 28+ (‡MJ, 1st Lat). Unusual Sage Sparrows visited Cheyenne May 1–14 (J&ME); Dillon, CO Mar. 24 (HK); and Ft. Collins May 16 (JB). Unusual in spring, Swamp Sparrows stopped at Las Vegas Apr. 3 and May 7–9 (JC, PL). Golden-crowned Sparrows, rare in the Region, stopped in Springdale Apr. 20 (*vide* JG), Monte Vista N.W.R. (‡TT), and Barr L. near Denver Apr. 16 (D.F.O.).

Bobolinks returned to such usual breeding sites as Morgan, UT; Sheridan, WY; and Boulder and Castlewood Canyon, CO. They also stopped at some unusual places like Fish Springs, Cheyenne, and Walsenburg, CO in May. A stray N. "Baltimore" Oriole stayed in Las Vegas May 11–31, the 3rd area record (‡PG). At Sheridan Com. Redpolls stayed through Apr. 1 (RR, HD). Utah reported good numbers of Pine Siskins—200–300 in Springdale and Cedar City all spring. At Morgan siskins had 3 nests in one yard, the first completed Mar. 20. Young fledged by Apr. 16. A Lawrence's Goldfinch stopped at Las Vegas Apr. 24 (‡MC). Evening Grosbeaks appeared in large flocks in Cedar City and Rifle, but not elsewhere.

### Undocumented Rarities

This column omits the following rarities because the observers did not provide details of the observations: Tricolored Heron, Parasitic Jaeger, Lesser Black-backed Gull, LeConte's Sparrow, and E Meadowlark in Colorado; Magnolia Warbler in Utah; Short-billed Dowitcher and Wood Thrush in Wyoming; and Least Flycatchers in Nevada.

**Compilers (with number of observers who contributed to their compilation)**  
Marian Cressman (14), Coen Dexter (5), May Hanesworth (16), Phil Hayes (16), Jim & Gloria Lawrence (12), Bill Lisowsky (15), Ann Means (25), Jack Merchant (6), Brandon Percival (34), Robert Rothe (26), Rick Steenberg (6).

**Contributors:** Jay Banta, Nelson Boschen, Helen Downing, Mark Janos, Paul Lehman, Kim Potter, George & Melodie San Miguel, Alan Schmeirer, V. A. Smith, Alan Versaw.

**Cited observers:** S. Blackshaw, D. Bolton, J. Brack, Colo. Bird Observatory, J. Cressman, R. Davis, J. & M. Eastman, D. Ely, E. Finklestein, P. Flynn, P. Gaffey, A. Halverson, J. Himmel, D. W. King, J. Larson, D. Leatherman, T. Light, L. Lilly, S. Martin, C. McCollum, J. & D. Parker, B. Raynes, J. Romero, K. Schofield, S. Soppio, V. Truan, T. Tucey, J. Walters, C. Wood, B., Wright, B. Zimmer.  
—Hugh E. Kingery, 869 Milwaukee Street, Denver, CO 80206.