

Mountain West Region

HUGH E. KINGERY

I approach this, my last column for the Mountain West Region, with nostalgia, relief, and concern — the latter for the inclination of *National Audubon Society Field Notes* observers to seek rare birds but to ignore common ones. It's hard to get excited over common species, and we all thrill when we find a rarity. On our family picture wall hangs a portrait of Colorado's second Long-billed Thrasher, which thrilled us when we found it on a January ski tour near Denver. But we also feature portraits of an American Dipper and a clutch of four baby Hammond's Flycatchers — more relevant to my theme.

My first Regional column covered Spring 1971. In the ensuing 25 years birders have multiplied. But our greater numbers don't direct great enough enthusiasm so that 25 years from now people may share the birdlife we value today.

One contributor's comment — he doesn't think that common birds are important, at least to readers of *Audubon Field Notes* — probably represents a lot of *Audubon Field Notes* readers. I disagree. Those common birds *are* vital. They constitute essential components of our environment.

In my two-and-a-half decades (wow!), Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons recovered from their nadirs; but many neotropical migrants, Lark Buntings and Mountain Plovers, and even magpies, have declined — some drastically. *Half* the species endemic to short-grass prairies show significant declines.

It's hard to divine how today's numbers compare with historic populations. In fact, it's hard even to figure out *how* to derive any meaningful comparisons.

Year-round counts, like those spearheaded in the Indian Peaks west of Boulder, Colorado by Dave Hallock, help us to monitor common birds. So do Breeding Bird Surveys, Breeding and Winter Bird Censuses, Breeding Bird Atlases, banding, and point counts.

Some Mountain West contributors report on the frequency and numbers of the birds they see. These furnish rough comparisons of year-to-year trends. The best practitioners are Phil Hayes who, for



Taken a decade ago but just recently brought to light, this photo documents the first known nesting of Bewick's Wren in Idaho. The site was Lawyer's Canyon near Kamiah, and the date was June 5, 1986. Photograph/Dan Davis.

Aug. 26 (VV). As usual, White-throated Sparrows were scattered throughout the Region. Sightings included an early bird Sept. 11 at Mann L. (DNS) and four at Kootenai N.W.R., Sept. 15 (RDC). Single Harris' Sparrows were in Bozeman, MT Oct. 13–15 (EL), Kalispell Nov. 14 (JRo), and at Bruneau Dunes S.P., Nov. 20 (DNS, IS).

A single Lapland Longspur near Kalispell in late October (*fide* DC) provided the only report. A flock of 14 Snow Buntings was along Cascade Res., Nov. 19 (DNS, IS), while 11 were near Cataldo Nov. 9 (SW). Single Snow Buntings were at Minidoka N.W.R., Blaine, ID Nov. 21 (DNS, IS) and at Bonners Ferry Oct. 26 (RDC). About 1000 Snow Buntings were near Pablo, MT Nov. 11 (DH), one of the few places in the Region where the species can be expected in good numbers.

Great-tailed Grackles continue to explore s. Idaho. Three females and a male were by Marsing Nov. 12–19 (CS, AS), and the Burley, ID flock returned there Sept. 12 (R&JL). A Pine Grosbeak at Thompson L., Aug. 15 (JWN) was unusual for early fall. A ♂ White-winged Crossbill was at Winchester S.P., Lewis Oct. 4 (WH), and several small flocks were seen in the Lemhi Mts. of Butte and Custer, ID from *mid-August* to the end of November (m.ob). The species was particularly abundant this fall near Sandpoint (EC), and in Glacier N.P. (JE). Common Redpolls were

abundant in n.w. Montana, with flocks numbering 120 near Condon Nov. 22 (JE) and 130 in Glacier N.P. Nov. 26 (JE).

Observers cited (subregional editors in boldface): IDAHO: Linda Beitleman, Joan Bergstrom, Francis Cassirer, Earl Chapin, Raymond Clark, Bert Cleaveland, Gorden Comrie, Pam Comrie (PAC), Laurie Crenshaw, Dan Davis, Rich Del Carla, **Kas Dumroese**, John Gatcher (JG), Dale Goble (DGB), Lucinda Haggas, Gail Hast, Winnie Hepburn, John Hirth, Marty Hirth, Don Johnson, **Dean Jones** (DJe), Ron Jurcevich, **Merlene Koliner**, Al Larson, Hilda Larson, Mark Luper, Ron and Jason Lynch (R&JL), Jack McNeel, Dale Miller, John Nigh, Tom Radandt, Matt Radford, Jimmy Reynolds (JRe), Sharon Ritter, **Hadley Roberts**, Ken Rodenick, Alan Sanford, Dan Simpkins (DS), Marie Smith (MeS), Marilyn Smith (MS), **Shirley Sturts** (SHS), DeeAnn Spencer (DSp), Dan Svingen (DNS), Ila Svingen, Colleen Sweeney, **Charles Trost**, Helen Ulmschneider, Carol Vande Voorde, Jennifer Welch, Susan Weller, Jeff Wisman (JWi), Steve Woltmann (SWo), Roger Young. MONTANA: **Dan Casey**, Joseph Engler, Deb Goslin (DG), George Halaby (GHa), Dev and Liz Hill (D&LH), Denver Holt, George Holton, Elly Jones, Eric Lichtwardt, Lawrence McEvoy, Karen Nichols, Jean Robocker (JRo), **Don Skaar** (DSk), Mike Schwitters (MSc), Jeff Van Tine, Madeleine Von Laue, Virginia Vincent, **Philip Wright**, Hugh Zackheim.

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eleven years, has constructed seasonal comparisons of the field trips of the Denver Field Ornithologists; Ann Means, current compiler of a 20-year-running summary of all birds seen by members of Foothills Audubon Club; and George and Melodie San Miguel, tracking yard birds near Devils Tower, Wyoming.

I wish good birders devoted more effort to structured surveys and censuses, and that we could figure out how to give those who conduct them the "glory" of names and initials in *Audubon Field Notes* and regional and local publications. Birders like to keep lists; maybe we can devise a "List" for common birds.

Urling and I thoroughly enjoy "constructive" bird watching. We reveled in exploring Atlas blocks in New York and Colorado. We enjoy surveying the new Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Area, and joining observers at the local hawk watch.

Declines detected by Breeding Bird Survey trends, banding studies, hawk watch statistics, and Atlas maps signal environmental degradation. To reverse environmental problems, we need to help — to participate in surveys and in action programs like Audubon's Important Bird Areas initiative. Get involved! If we don't, future birders may observe no common birds — there may be *only* rare birds.

Finally, my thanks to the hundreds who have contributed to this column. All your reports, available to anybody by mail, reside in the Archives at the Denver Museum of Natural History — where perhaps someone can use them to detect changing trends to our birdlife.

The season

Mild fall weather had no striking impact on the land bird migration, although it kept bodies of water open to entice wetlands birds to linger. Nevada and Wyoming each added a new landbird species to their state lists.

Wetland conditions improved so much in Lahontan Valley, Nevada, that its complex of refuges hosted two breeding species which hadn't nested since 1986: two-five pairs of Franklin's Gulls and several Black Terns, according to Neel and Chisholm. Other nesting wetlands species increased — Neel reported these nest counts: 314 Eared and 70 Western and Clark's grebes; 72 Great, 286 Snowy, and 33 Cattle egrets; 200–225 Black-crowned Night-Herons; an encouraging 2477 White-faced Ibis (plus 650 elsewhere in northwest Nevada), and 90–100 Forster's Terns. He counted 2960 Ring-billed and California gulls in two nesting colonies, with an

uncertain number of nests and species composition.

In Yellowstone Lake, Wyoming, 422 nests of American White Pelicans fledged 265 young, and 139 Double-crested Cormorant nests fledged 298 young; cormorants had better success combating high water conditions because they nest on the higher parts of the islands. California Gulls produced 220 young, and Caspian Terns 14 young. In Yellowstone Park, Common Loons attempted 113 nests and fledged six chicks. Falling trees, unstable from the 1988 wildfires, caused drops (compared with last year, but contrary to long-term trends) of fledged Ospreys and Bald Eagles: This year Ospreys produced 101 fledglings and the eagles had 15, according to McEneaney.

Abbreviations: D.F.O. (*Denver Field Ornithologists field trips, compiled by Phil Hayes*); G.S.L. (*Great Salt Lake*); L.L.B.L. (*Longmont/Lyons/Berthoud/Loveland area, CO, using Foothills Audubon Club records*); 1st Lat (*first latilong record [a latilong is outlined by one degree each of latitude and longitude, and measures about 50 by 70 mi]*); ‡ (*written description on file with, and subject to approval of, state or local records committee*); # (*no written description submitted, or photograph not seen by Regional Editor*).

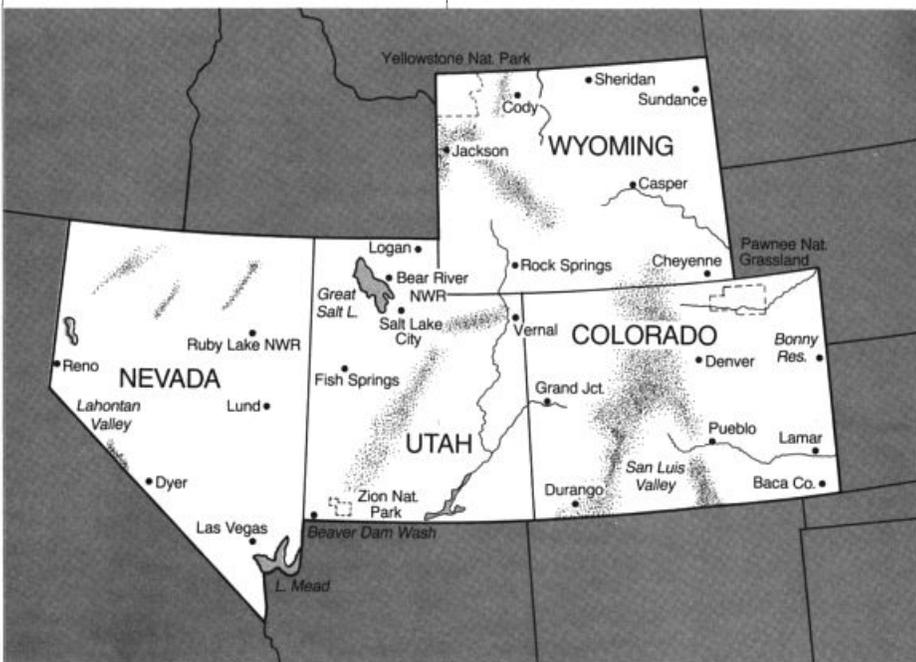
Loons to Ibises

Pacific Loons came to all 4 states, starting Oct. 15 at Rocky Ford, CO and continuing through the end of the period; about 20 counted in all, including a 1st Lat at Rock Springs, WY (‡RS). A Pied-billed

Grebe nest held hatching eggs at Carson L., NV Sept. 1 (LN), and at Rifle, CO a grebe nest had young Sept. 4 (KP). A Red-necked Grebe stayed at Longmont, CO Nov. 7–24. From Oct. 31–Nov. 18 Smith could count 3000 Eared Grebes visible from the causeway over G.S.L. — the lake had thousands more out of view. Buffalo, WY reported 1231 Sept. 8 (HD). A count in n.e. Colorado tallied 1150 Am. White Pelicans Sept. 23–24, and L.L.B.L. chalked up 721 in September (445 last year). The Brown Pelican which arrived at Delta, CO last summer (*NASFN* Vol. 49, No. 5: 955) stayed through Oct. 2. At Cody, WY, cormorants had 45 young in nests Aug. 15 (UK). Carson L. observers saw three Least Bitterns during the summer, and one visited Las Vegas Aug. 27 (SS). At Fish Springs N.W.R., UT, Snowies peaked at 292 Aug. 2 (JB). A Cattle Egret strayed into the mountains at Estes Park, CO Sept. 27 (SR). At Lahontan Valley 60 White-faced Ibis remained Nov. 28 (LN).

Waterfowl

An early flock of 69 Greater White-fronted Geese stopped at Carson L., NV Sept. 13 (BH). Snow Geese migrated in high numbers close to the Colorado Front Range cities: 7000 at Pueblo Nov. 11 (and 800 Ross' Geese; MJ), 1000 at Berthoud Nov. 11–30 (BC), and 500 at Fort Collins Nov. 1 (DL). Carson L. reported 9000 Nov. 3 (GC). Single Ross' Geese visited Boulder City, NV, Quichapa L., UT, and Kemmerer, WY (‡RS, 1st Lat). A late brood of five N. Pintails Aug. 28 at Carson L. suggested some nesting there. Also late, perhaps typically, Ring-necked Ducks



squired fledglings near the Flat Tops Wilderness n. of Glenwood Springs, CO Sept. 15 (JM). Among 15 Oldsquaws were two first-winter females remarkably early at Yellowstone Aug. 18 (†EH) and four near Eads, CO Nov. 25 (BP, MJ, 2nd Lat). Nevada's 8th **Black Scoter** stayed at Las Vegas Nov. 19–20 (‡RSc, J&MC). Another arrived at Denver Nov. 17+ (TJ, m.ob.). The Region attracted 14 Surf and six White-winged scoters, including two Surfs and two White-wingeds Nov. 11 at Kemmerer, WY (‡RS, both 1st Lat). Stillwater W.M.A., NV reported a molting Surf Scoter Aug. 14 and an ad. female Aug. 21 (BH). The summer Com. Goldeneye at Morgan, UT (*NAAFN* Vol. 49, No. 5: 955) stayed the entire fall (VAS).

Raptors

A hawk watch on Mt. Washburne in Yellowstone counted 822 raptors of 16 species Sept. 5–Oct. 10. Hawks peaked Sept. 29 at 41/hr.; total counts were 315 Am. Kestrels, 150 Red-tailed Hawks, 87 Sharp-shinned Hawks, and 70 Golden Eagles (TM). A pair of Com. Black-Hawks at Beaver Dam Wash, UT stayed all summer and acted agitated around a possible nest into August, but observers couldn't confirm nesting (SS, ph.). A wild and wary **Harris' Hawk** in fresh plumage, without jesses or bands, stayed briefly at Manzanola, CO Oct. 14–15 (‡MJ, BP), the 3rd Colorado observation since December 1994. Ferruginous Hawks posted a high count of 26 between Denver and Longmont Nov. 18.

Grouse to Shorebirds

Listers found Himalayan Snowcocks in the Ruby Mts., NV Aug. 25 and Sept. 10. Birders at Indian Springs ignored a bird described by 10-year-old Ryan Terrill as "a cross between a duck and a Brewer's Blackbird" until it flew into the thick foliage of a mesquite; they discovered Nevada's 6th **Purple Gallinule** (†MP ph.). Sandhill Cranes flew through in healthy numbers, including 3580 Oct. 9–28 at Devils Tower (1800 one day; G&MS) and hundreds in e. Colorado; 24 even crossed 12,000 ft Guanella Pass near Georgetown, CO Oct. 28 (TL). Two Whooping Cranes summered in Yellowstone.

The Lahontan Valley shorebird count, reflecting the greatly improved wetlands, tallied its highest count since 1990: 40,328 birds topped by 14,908 Am. Avocets, 13,083 Long-billed Dowitchers, 5788 Black-necked Stilts, and 2849 Wilson's and 1578 Red-necked phalaropes. Conditions at other sites varied: Unusually good habitat at Quichapa L. hosted 22

shorebird species; exposed mud flats at Fort Collins enticed several species to linger into November; high water obscured habitat at Barr L. near Denver. All 4 states reported Black-bellied Plovers, the last at Pueblo Nov. 3 (BP). Of the 19 Am. Golden-Plovers reported, documentation supports only the three Sept. 29 and six Oct. 9 at Julesburg, CO (†WL *et al.*). Snowy Plovers peaked at 57 Aug. 9 at Fish Springs. The 1125 Am. Avocet nests at Carson L. presaged excellent production of young (LN).

November shorebirds included avocets Nov. 1–5 at Windsor, Rawhide, and Colorado Springs; Greater Yellowlegs at Fish Springs, Fort Collins, and Longmont; 22 Marbled Godwits at Stillwater W.M.A. and one at Quichapa L.; Sanderlings at Colorado Springs Nov. 4–5 and Longmont Nov. 10; Dunlins (now regular in November) at Grand Junction, Longmont, and Windsor, CO; Long-billed Dowitchers at Lahontan Valley Nov. 3–6 and Windsor, CO Nov. 4; and a very late Wilson's Phalarope Nov. 12 at the Buffalo, WY, sewage lagoons (RR). At Pueblo, 24 Upland Sandpipers, a high number, passed through Aug. 6–Sept. 17 (A.V.A.S.). Unusual fall Whimbrels visited Casper Aug. 17 (J&VH) and Carson L., Oct. 5 (LN). A surprising **Hudsonian Godwit** — Utah's 5th — stayed on the G.S.L. Antelope I. causeway Oct. 29–Nov. 5 (‡KE ph.,

‡VAS). Observers reported a **Ruddy Turnstone** from Fish Springs Aug. 9–21 (†EG) and a 2nd one seen to Aug. 28 (‡JB, TS), one at Las Vegas Aug. 11 (‡RSc), and one at Colorado Springs Sept. 9–10 (†AV, †MJ). Western Sandpipers peaked Aug. 9 at Fish Springs with 716. Nearby at Wendover, UT Aug. 27, 125 fed in a shallow pool 200 ft in diameter (VAS); do other ephemeral ponds across the Great Basin save migrating peeps from perishing? An excellent description supports Colorado's 2nd **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** near Greeley Aug. 5 (‡WL, JP). The good flight of Red-necked Phalaropes included 200 Sept. 3 at Fallon, NV, 200 Sept. 10 at Quichapa, 134 at Fish Springs Aug. 23, and one at Torrey, UT Aug. 31 (AS, 1st Lat). A **Red Phalarope**, the first in Lahontan Valley, was at Carson L., Sept. 7 (†GC, LN).

Jaegers to Woodpeckers

Observers described Parasitic Jaegers from Pyramid L., NV Sept. 4 (‡GC) and Pueblo, CO Oct. 20–22 (†MJ, BP). A long-tailed ad. **Long-tailed Jaeger**, Colorado's 6th, at Platteville Sept. 4–6 moved to Barr L., Sept. 10–15 (‡RO, ‡TL, †HEK). Colorado added two Little Gulls to its inventory, with one Sept. 12–15 at Clifton (†RL, CD ph.), and another at Longmont Sept. 24 (†DL, JM). Nevada's 5th **Heerman's Gull** stayed but a day at L. Mead Oct. 28 (†J&MC, ph.).



Hudsonian Godwit (in fading juvenal plumage) at Antelope Island Causeway, Great Salt Lake, Utah, October 29, 1995. Fifth state record. Photograph/Keith E. Evans.



Adult Heermann's Gull at Boulder Beach, Lake Mead, Nevada, October 28, 1995. Fifth Nevada record. Photograph/Marian Cressman.

SA A Great Black-backed Gull showed up at Pueblo Nov. 16 for the 4th winter; each year the gull has displayed progressively older plumage, from first winter to adult. Local birders assume that the same bird has returned. Two months before, an ad. dark-backed gull appeared near Denver (G&JH, †MJ, †SF, SL ph.). From Sept. 16–Nov. 8, legions of birders tried to peg its identity: Western or Great Black-backed? Opinion now favors Great Black-backed. If the same bird returned to Pueblo each year, and if it did not stop this fall at Denver, then Colorado now has 8 records. In Reno Nov. 26, a dark-backed gull was identified as a W. Gull, but not distinguished from the Great Black-backed (†BS). According to Lehman, "Western simply does not wander inland much at all. It is casual even in inland California." What about w. Nevada?



Present for more than seven weeks in autumn 1995 at Cherry Creek Reservoir, south of Denver, Colorado, this gull caused some controversy. Many suggested it was a Western Gull, but final opinions favored Great Black-backed Gull. Photograph/David Leatherman.

Observers spotted Sabine's Gulls in all 4 states, a total of ≥ 30 . Good descriptions support the Sabine's Gulls at Quichapa L. (†SS, ph.) and L. Powell (†AB), the first for s. Utah.

SA Three Ancient Murrelets showed up in the Denver/Boulder area in a month! First, in early November, someone picked up a murrelet on a slick, shiny Boulder county road and took it to a veterinarian (PP); the vet gave it to rehabilitator Sigrid Ueblacker, who arranged to airlift it, amid TV publicity, to San Francisco (JH), where it ultimately expired at another rehab center. On Nov. 9 Bridges discovered a dead murrelet on the shoreline of an Aurora, CO city park (*D.M.N.H.). Finally, Dec. 5, J. Kellner discovered a healthy, live, actively feeding and flying murrelet on Chatfield Res., gone the next day (†JK, HEK *et al.*).

Band-tailed Pigeons flocked around Cedar City, UT grain elevators, with a peak of 115 Sept. 15 (SS). A flock of 100–200 was at Montrose, CO Sept. 12 (RL). A White-winged Dove visited a Pueblo backyard Oct. 21–Nov. 7 (NC, †DS). The bird which distracted the Indian Springs gallinule watchers, an ad. ♂ Ruddy Ground-Dove, turned out to have two companions Sept. 23 (†MP, ST ph.); one remained to Sept. 27. Then one appeared at Desert N.W.R. near Las Vegas Nov. 18–19 (RSc, MC ph.). Nevada now has 5 records. Short-eared Owls had 2 broods with fledglings July 3 at Carson L. (LN). A Lesser Nighthawk described from Fort Collins Sept. 10 would push that elusive bird's range northeasterly by 200 mi (‡DL, DE). Black Swifts nest quite late; at Ouray, CO they had nests with young Sept. 10 (KP, RL). On Aug. 7, 8–12 swifts cruised by a climber at 11,800 ft on Kit Carson Peak near Crestone, CO (AV), and near Eagle, CO Aug. 30 six–ten zipped over a reservoir (KP). The last record came from the plains — 15 Sept. 16 at Pueblo (BD). Single Vaux's Swifts flew over Dyer and Indian Springs, NV Sept. 16 & 27 (JLD). The Wyoming Records Committee will consider, for a first state record, a Ruby-throated Hummingbird identified by plumage and behavior at a feeder Sept. 7–8 at Devils Tower (‡GS). The Acorn Woodpeckers at Durango remained to at least Aug. 13 (DB), and probably nested this summer — Colorado's first breeding record if confirmed (*vide* RSY). Colorado's 3rd Acorn Woodpecker — discovered by the same observer who found the Durango

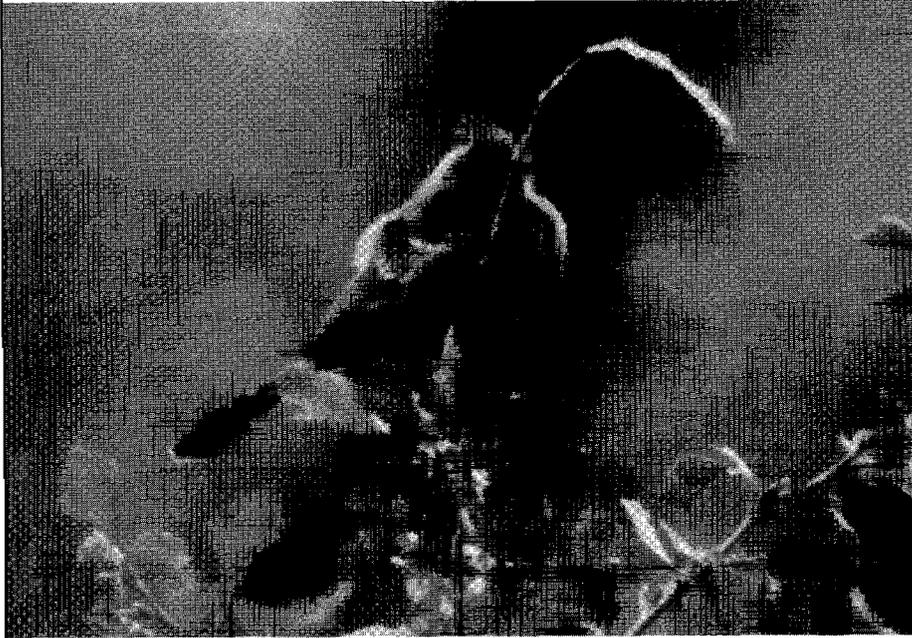
birds — stayed Sept. 27–Oct. 2 at Loveland (‡CH, DL ph.). A likely ♀ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker moved through a Tonopah, NV campground Sept. 8 (‡DT). Northern Flickers showed low counts — 57 at L.L.B.L. (123 last year) and 139 on D.F.O. trips (range 112–199).



Adult female Acorn Woodpecker near Loveland, Colorado, September 30, 1995. Third state record. Photograph/David Leatherman.

Flycatchers to Phainopepla

At Barr L. near Denver Aug. 31 banders caught 5 species of *Empidonax* flycatchers, including one imm. Gray Flycatcher (n. of its range by 100 mi); the Denver Fall Count found another Gray at Rocky Mt. Arsenal Sept. 10 (†HEK). A Black Phoebe stayed at Canon City Oct. 14+ (SM, DP). A Brown-crested Flycatcher visited Desert N.W.R., NV Sept. 16 (J&MC). At Ridgeway, CO 10,000 swallows swarmed like mosquitoes Sept. 10 (KP), and Carson L. had 3000 Sept. 13 (BH). A few Steller's and Scrub jays dropped into feeders at Glenwood Springs and Eagle, and a few Scrubs spread out to the plains, from Pueblo e. to Manzanola and Ordway. L.L.B.L. had only 19 Scrubs (54 last year) and D.F.O. trips found 50 (*cf.* 15–65 the previous 11 Years). Black-billed Magpies continued their skid: D.F.O.'s lowest count in 11 years, 276 (*cf.* 316–709) and 163 at L.L.B.L. (196 last fall). A mass of 2070 Am. Crows cawed at Las Animas, CO Nov. 19 (MJ). The L.L.B.L. reported 548 (*cf.* 416). Mountain Chickadees descended from their conifer haunts to lowland sites from Fish Springs to Dayton, WY (JK), and 100 mi e. of the mountains in the S. Platte and Arkansas Valleys, CO. Plain Titmice echoed this flight, with one at Fish Springs Sept. 21 (JB), a peak of 11 at Eagle Oct. 16, two at Pueblo Oct. 7+, and one at Rye, CO Nov. 25. Red-breasted Nuthatches also skidded down to the



Female Phainopepla at Grand Junction, Colorado, September 29-30, 1995. Sixth state record. Photograph/Coen Dexter.

plains: Seen 18 days at Devils Tower, in backyards in Casper, Cheyenne, Eagle, Pueblo, Denver, and Fort Collins; at outposts like Pine Bluffs, WY, Crow Valley campground, CO, n.e. Colorado to Ovid, and easterly along the Arkansas to Ordway and s.e. to *Baca*. Even a few Pygmy Nuthatches joined the crowd — two at Fort Collins Oct. 4–6 and one at Pueblo Sept. 23. Winter Wrens slipped S to Ruby Lake N.W.R., NV Oct. 1 (†), Las Vegas Nov. 20 (MC), and *Wayne*, UT Sept. 10 (†AS). A stray Am. Dipper fed in Carpenter Canyon near Las Vegas Aug. 10 (CT). Observers reported more than the usual Golden-crowned Kinglets; Potter saw 103 July 5–Oct. 25 in various c. Colorado national forests. They strayed through Torrey, UT; Yellowstone, Pueblo, Denver, and out on the plains to Torrington, WY, and Crow Valley, CO. A flock of >100 Townsend's Solitaires thronged a rest stop at Pine Bluffs, in far s.e. Wyoming, and C.F.O. counted 18 Sept. 23–24 in *Sedgwick*, in far n.e. Colorado. Front Range cities had only a few, however. A Varied Thrush stopped at Desert N.W.R., Oct. 20 (KW). Brown Thrashers included singles at Gypsum, CO Sept. 18 (†JM, 1st Lat), Tonopah Sept. 10–21 (DT, MC ph.), and Desert N.W.R., Oct. 31 (DT). Bohemian Waxwings made their usual forays to n.e. Wyoming (Devils Tower, Sheridan, and Buffalo, but not Cody or Yellowstone); one flock penetrated s. all the way to Grand Junction Nov. 22 (CD). Excellent photos document the ♀ *Phainopepla*, Colorado's 6th, which remained

Sept. 29–30 at Grand Junction (CD, RL).

Vireos to Warblers

A White-eyed Vireo foraged low in willows at Colorado City on the late date of Oct. 30 (†DS, 1st Lat). Ten Bell's Vireos Aug. 4 at Beaver Dam Wash, UT included some young (SS). The Nevada Records Committee accepted an extraordinary **Yellow-green Vireo** feeding in mesquite trees in a heavily-used picnic area near Las Vegas Oct. 1 (†RSc). Observers saw yellowish Solitary Vireos attributed to the Cassin's race in Great Basin N.P., Baker, NV Sept. 26 (†RP), and Barr L., CO, where workers banded three Sept. 5–22 (TL, SH), plus one attributed to the "eastern" race Sept. 23–24 in *Sedgwick* (C.F.O.). Good details describe Nevada's 6th **Philadelphia Vireo** from Indian Springs Sept. 23 (†MP) and one at Pueblo Sept. 7–8 (†MJ).

Observers saw almost none of the regular warblers after Sept. 30 and — except for a Tennessee Sept. 11 and an Am. Redstart Sept. 2, both at Torrey, UT (†AS) — saw almost all the rarer ones after Sept. 9. Denver's Fall Count tallied a bland mix of 130 warblers of 9 regularly seen species.

At Denver Yellow Warblers stayed much later than usual; D.F.O. counted 52 to Sept. 10. Banders at Barr L. found most adults still in heavy molt in late August, when this usually early migrant is already scarce. Theory: A breeding season delayed by wet spring weather delayed the molt and migration (TL). Flocks of Yellow-rumpeds ranged from 10–50 with the lat-

est at Cortez, CO Nov. 2 (LB) and Pueblo Nov. 5. Townsend's seemed relatively scarce throughout the Region, though one straggled e. to Devils Tower Sept. 4 (†GS). Also scarce, Wilson's peaked at only 29 at Casper; banders tagged 66 at Lyons (24–102 the last 5 years; VD). The last Am. Redstart was at Pueblo Oct. 31; N Waterthrushes moved from Aug. 17–Sept. 16 — recent records have advanced their fall arrival from mid-September to mid-August (TL, HEK);

Nevada rarities included a Tennessee at Las Vegas (†MP) and a Black-throated Blue at Indian Springs Sept. 23 (†MP), a Chestnut-sided at Tonopah Sept. 27 (JE) — the 10th record since 1984, and another Black-throated Blue at Las Vegas Nov. 8 (one block off the Strip; BCr). The state had six Am. Redstarts and two N Waterthrushes in September. A Kentucky Warbler — the 10th in 12 years in Nevada — hopped and fed on the water's edge at Washoe Lake S.P. (†DT).

An exception to early departures by summer breeders, a Com. Yellowthroat passed by Devils Tower Oct. 9 (GS).

Colorado reported these semi-rarities four Tennessees Sept. 19–Oct. 8; three Nashvilles Sept. 9–Oct. 1; five Magnolias Sept. 9–22; six Black-throated Blues Aug. 31–Nov. 4; three Palms Sept. 21–Oct. 30, only one Blackpoll, banded at Lyons Sept. 8 (VD); five Black-and-whites Aug. 24–Sept. 24.

Colorado's rarities included a ♀ N Parula Oct. 28–31 at Pueblo (A.V.A.S.), the latest date for this species; a Blackburnian Sept. 16 at Platteville (RO); Pine Warblers at Longmont Aug. 31 (†DWK) and *Logan* Oct. 15 (†DL, DE); a Worm-eating Warbler at Lyons Oct. 13 (†DWK), a ♀ Prairie at Pueblo pumping its tail as it moved through exotic tamarisk and Russian olive bushes Nov. 3–4 (†BP); an Ovenbird lurking in trees and bushes and foraging in a fallow flower garden in the mountain town of Kremmling, CO Oct. 29–Nov. 5 (†NB).

Tanagers to Siskins

Summer Tanagers remained at Cedar City Sept. 2–24 (SS ph.), and one stopped Sept. 22 at Denver (BSp). The D.F.O. found a N. Cardinal at Carrizo/Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca*, Sept. 3 (1st Lat). A Green-tailed Towhee paired with a Rufous-sided Towhee at Dinosaur N.M., CO; both carried food to a nest with two young June 11 (KP #ph.). In n.e. Colorado, C.F.O. counted five eastern race Rufous-sided Towhees Sept. 23–24. The Clay-colored Sparrow which strayed to Amargosa Valley, NV (†MP, ST) added

the 8th Nevada record in 12 years. Four Swamp Sparrows reported included one at Devils Tower Sept. 30 (†GS). First Lapp-land Longspurs filtered in Oct. 15 at Julesburg, CO. Yellowstone reported 20 Lap-lands Oct. 15 (TM) and four Snow Buntings Oct. 30–31 (TH). Casper reported only one Snow Bunting, Oct. 28. Rusty Blackbirds came to Reno for the 2nd year Oct. 30 (EM), Fort Collins Nov. 4, and Winter Park, CO Nov. 17 (†GH). With the mild fall, rosy-finches tended to stay high in the mountains, although all 3 species (?) visited a feeder in Eagle, CO Nov. 20+. Searchers for snowcocks in the Ruby Mts. saw Black Rosy-Finches Aug. 27 and Sept. 9 (VAS, A&VH). Purple Finches were detected at Devils Tower, Fort Collins, Pueblo, and Fort Lyon (†MJ, 1st Lat). At Devils Tower 37 Red Crossbills cruised by Sept. 2+, and a feeder near Golden, CO recorded \leq four on 20 days (J&DW). The four-five White-winged Crossbills on Grand Mesa, *Mesa*, CO Sept. 5 included three-four juveniles — suggestive of local nesting (†RL). Yellowstone reported 12 Sept. 7 (*vide* TM). Common Redpolls drifted only to opposite corners of n. Wyoming — two at Cody and two at Devils Tower. Estes Park had 400 Pine Siskins Sept. 7, some of which remained into November (SW) and 3 Fort Collins feeders had 200 in November.

Undocumented rarities

This report omits 4 undocumented rarities: Black Scoter, Red Phalarope, and Pomarine Jaeger from Colorado, and a Bay-breasted Warbler from Wyoming.

Corrigenda

Summers points out corrections to 2 observations from the Spring report (*AFN* 49(3):283): the Lucy's Warbler and Summer Tanagers occurred at Beaver Dam Wash, not Cedar City. Percival submitted documentation for several species mentioned in *AFN* 39(3) as undocumented.

Compilers (with number of observers who contributed to their compilations):

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Southwest Region

Arizona

GARY H. ROSENBERG AND CHRIS D. BENESH

We begin this report with the sad news that our friend Walter Spofford passed away in early December. Dr. Spofford will always be remembered for his endless hospitality toward birders visiting his Portal residence. He will be greatly missed.

This fall was characterized by unusually warm temperatures, which resulted in a surprising number of lingering migrants in the state. Evidence came from the unusually high number of Cassin's Kingbirds remaining in southern Arizona into December. Other indicators included extremely late records of Whip-poor-will and Poor-will, as well as late records of many hummingbirds, warbler species, and other insectivores.

Finally, a few species invaded the lowlands in small numbers, including numerous reports of Red-breasted Nuthatch, along with a scattering of Mountain Chickadees, Golden-crowned Kinglets, and Lewis' Woodpeckers.

Abbreviations: A.B.C. (*Arizona Bird Committee*); L.C.R.V. (*Lower Colorado R. Valley*); G.F.P. (*Gila Farms Pond*); M.F.L. (*Many Farms Lake*); N.I.R. (*Navajo Indian Reservation*); P.A.P. (*Pinal Air Park*); P.R.D. (*Painted Rock Dam*); S.P.R. (*San Pedro R.*); S.T.P. (*Sewage Treatment Plant*); S.W.R.S. (*Southwestern Research Station*); and V.O.C. (*Village of Oak Cr.*).

Loons to Ducks

A Pacific Loon on upper L. Mary near Flagstaff Nov. 11–13 (J. Hildebrand, F. Brant) was an exciting find as this species is casual in fall and winter away from the L.C.R.V. In recent years reports of Com. Loon from lakes in n. Arizona have been scarce, therefore a report of six on lower L. Mary Nov. 3 (CL) was noteworthy. No fewer than 17 W. Grebes were found at scattered locations throughout s.e. Arizona between mid-October and the end of November. At P.R.D., greater than usual numbers of Clark's Grebes remained into