

# mountain west region



**VAN A. TRUAN**  
and **BRANDON K. PERCIVAL**

The Region was wetter in the western areas and dry in the eastern portions into late April, and was cooler than normal all season. These conditions allowed a longer mulberry fruit and flowering olive and mesquite season in southern Nevada (e.g., Corn Creek), which appears to account for a long list of unusual birds. In late April a low pressure area developed and stayed over Nevada and Utah, bringing lots of moisture into the Rockies and southeastern plains of Colorado. Areas from the New Mexico line north to the Monument Divide had 9–12 inches of rain in three days, causing flooding of numerous tributaries to and from the Arkansas River. Record-high water levels were set on most southeast Colorado irrigation reservoirs.

**Abbreviations:** Corn Creek (*Corn Creek oasis at the Desert Nat'l Wildlife Range, Clark Co., Nevada*); H.B.V.P. (*Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve, Clark Co., Nevada*); M.B.R. (*Migratory Bird Refuge*). Because the majority of reports received in the Region come from Colorado, to save space, we are using site and county names only for Colorado; other sightings list the state.

## LOONS THROUGH IBISES

Rare in spring, a Red-throated Loon was reported from Big Johnson Res., *El Paso*, 23 Apr (JJ et al.) and a Pacific Loon was at Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, 23–25 Apr (JBH, JK). The wintering Yellow-billed Loon at Pueblo Res., *Pueblo*, stayed to 18 Mar (BKP). Up to ten W. Grebes stayed at 8790 ft. in *Summit* 1–31 May (SBo). The surprise of the Region was an imm. **Magni-**

**ficent Frigatebird** at Minersville Res., *Beaver*, 26 May into June, providing the first record for Utah (m.ob.). Two Least Bitterns were at the w. end of John Martin Res., *Bent*, 3–29 May (TD, TM, BKP, m.ob.). Three ad. Little Blue Herons were found in Colorado, with one in *Boulder* 25 Apr (PG), one in *Larimer* 20–21 May (WPL, DAL, m.ob.), and one in *Kiowa* 22 May (JK). Two Tricolored Herons were in *Otero* 16–17 May (MJ, BKP, DSm). Two ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were reported in Colorado, one in *Boulder* 22 May (CBr, TL, m.ob.) and one in *Prowers* 26 May (DSi). A Black-crowned Night-Heron in a fruiting mulberry tree at Corn Creek 15 May had a Cedar Waxwing in its bill that it swallowed whole (RS). Wyoming's first **Glossy Ibis**, an adult, was found at Jackson 4 May (TMc). Six ad. Glossy Ibises were reported in Colorado, with one in *Arapahoe* 26–28 Apr (LAB, BBn, m.ob.), one in *Bent* 9 May (TJ) and 16–21 May (DSm, BBH), one in *Larimer* 12–13 May (NK), two in *Weld* 14–17 May (DW, BP, m.ob.), and another in *Bent* 16 May (TJ).

## WATERFOWL

Approximately 1400 Snow Geese were at Minersville Res, *Beaver*, UT, 4 Mar (SH); one was at Las Vegas, *Clark*, NV, 13 Mar, along with two Ross's Geese (CT). North of normal haunts, a **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** photographed at H.B.V.P. 18 May into June (PGa, MAP) was Nevada's 4th. Three male Eur. Wigeon were found in Colorado. The wintering bird in *Larimer* stayed to 22 Mar (TD), and singles were in *Weld* 9 Mar (JHi, DM) and *Yuma* 8 May (GPa). Also, a male was seen near Morgan, UT, 20 Mar (Wasatch Audubon). An Am. Black Duck was found in *Weld* 27 May (NK). Up to five Blue-winged Teal at H.B.V.P. 23 Apr to end of period (m.ob.) may indicate local breeding. Somewhat late were two Greater Scaups in *Crowley* 3 May (TD, TM). A female White-winged Scoter was reported from Big Johnson Res., *El Paso*, 5 May (DEI).

## RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

A pair of Osprey nested at Minersville Res., UT, 7 Apr–31 May (SH, m.ob.), and in s. Nevada singles were at Corn Creek 17 Apr



**Nevada's fourth Mississippi Kite, at Corn Creek 31 May 1999. This species is rare anywhere in the West away from its limited breeding range in southern Arizona and New Mexico. Photograph/Richard P. Saval**

(RS) and in Glendale, *Clark*, 24 Apr (CT). A **Mississippi Kite** at Corn Creek 31 May (DCR, ph. RPS) provided the 4th Nevada record. An ad. N. Goshawk was noted in *Baca* 7 Apr (TD) and a juvenile was in *Weld* 24 Apr (DAL). **Common Black-Hawks** were found at Beaver Dam Wash (Lytle Ranch), *Washington*, 10 Apr (FH,KG) and 1 May (JKr,LWi), the site of all Utah records. Two juv. Red-shouldered Hawks were reported, one in *Boulder* 17 May (TD) and one in *Prowers* 30 May (JPr). Broad-winged Hawks passed through Colorado, with 26 at various locations on the e. plains 24 Apr–21 May (v.ob.) and a high count of 27 at the Dinosaur Ridge Hawkwatch, *Jefferson*, 17–27 Apr (JLi). A late Rough-legged Hawk was reported in *Crowley* 3 May (TD, TM), and a late Merlin was in *Jefferson* 11 May (JK, SS).

A **Black Rail** was reported from Lower Latham Res., *Weld*, 31 May (RO, DQ). A Black-bellied Plover was at H.B.V.P. 8 May (RPS). One or two Am. Golden-Plovers were in *Bent* 17–22 May (TL, PAG, JK). A Piping Plover was found n.w. of usual in *Larimer* 29 Apr (SJD). A high count of six Semipalmated Plover was at H.B.V.P. 23 Apr (RPS). At least 38 Whimbrel passed through e. Colorado 24 Apr–24 May (v.ob.) and one was at H.B.V.P. 8 May (RPS). More Hudsonian Godwits were recorded than usual in e. Colorado, including one in *Weld* 21–22 Apr (JHi, SJD, m.ob.), two in *Pueblo*

**SA** We had more reports of hybrids than usual. Many were ducks, with a Green-winged × Blue-winged Teal in *Larimer* 12 Apr (SJD); Blue-winged × Cinnamon Teals in *Teller* (JJ) and in *Larimer* (NK), both 1 May; a Gadwall × N. Shoveler in *Weld* (TL, MJ, BKP, m.ob.); an Eur. × Am. Wigeon in *Larimer* 12 Apr–21 May (SJD); and a Com. Goldeneye × Bufflehead in Morgan, UT, 6–21 Mar (LS et al.). In addition, a Townsend's × Hermit Warbler was in *Bent* 8 May (MJ, m.ob.) and a Green-tailed × Spotted Towhee was in *El Paso* 20 May (JWe). At this point we have no idea how to use this information, but we will keep including hybrid reports in hopes that someday it may prove useful. We appreciate these types of reports, and perhaps someone may be able to use these data to track range extensions, population and geographical changes, gene flow, etc.

2 May (ph. PHu), two in *Kiowa* 7 May (MJ, BKP, m.ob.), and two in *Weld* 14 May (DW). Uncommon in the Lahontan Valley were six Ruddy Turnstone at Carson L., *Churchill*, NV, 10–15 May (LN, DSe et al.); three were also found in *Kiowa* 6 May (VZ, m.ob.). Fifteen Red Knots at Carson L. 8–15 May provided the 4th record for the Lahontan Valley (GC, m.ob.).

Unusual in spring, a basic-plumaged Sanderling was at H.B.V.P. 23 Apr (RPS, JHe); seven at L. Estes, *Larimer*, 30 Apr (SR) provided a rare sighting in the mountains. Three White-rumped Sandpipers were found at Pelican L. and Ouray N.W.R. 28–30 May (CD). At H.B.V.P. were a Pectoral Sandpiper 17 Apr and a Stilt Sandpiper 21 May (RPS). A Short-billed Dowitcher was in *Adams* 8–9 May (DSc, PGe); one of the subspecies *caurinus* was at Union Res., *Weld*, 13 May (BP), while a *hendersoni* was near Kersey, *Weld*, 20–21 May (WPL, DAL, m.ob.). An **American Woodcock** was observed at Lamar, *Prowers*, 11 May (BGo).

#### GULLS THROUGH NIGHTJARS

A Franklin's Gull at Carson L. 17 Apr (MM) was among the early records for this species in the Lahontan Valley, and 20 were at H.B.V.P. 15 May with some staying into June (m.ob.). Becoming more regular in Colorado, an ad. Laughing Gull was found in *Baca* 9 May (TL, DSv). A high count of 20 Bonaparte's Gulls was at Minersville Res,

UT, 7 Apr (SH). The 2nd-basic Mew Gull at Jim Hamm Pond, *Boulder*, and nearby Union Res., *Weld*, lingered to 31 Mar (JLD). A first-basic imm. **Iceland Gull** at Pueblo Res. 17 Apr (ph. VAS, KE, JP, JB, JRe) provided the 2nd record for Colorado. Utah had two Glaucous-winged Gulls, one first-basic at Bear River M.B.R. 11 Mar and an adult at Willard Bay S.P. 20 Mar (VAS, KE, JRe). Two or three imm. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported from *Larimer* 3–29 Apr (NK, SJD). A **Yellow-footed Gull** at L. Powell 21–23 Apr (C. LaRue et al.) was Utah's first (see the Arizona Region). Hold-overs from the winter invasion of Glaucous Gulls to Colorado continued with at least six in *Weld* and *Larimer* to 19 Apr (SJD, m.ob.) and another in *Boulder* 19 Apr (BS). The ad. Great Black-backed Gull found during the winter in *Kiowa* stayed to 7 Mar (DSi, DJ) and an immature in 2nd-basic plumage was in *Arapahoe* 2 Mar (BBn). Single Caspian Terns were found at 5 locations in Colorado. An unexpected **Least Tern** was documented at Lida, *Esmeralda*, NV, 30 May (JTi, M&ST); rare in the foothills, one was at Colorado City, *Pueblo*, 11 May (DSi).

Eurasian Collared-Doves spread w. into *Pueblo*, with two at a Vineland feeder in late May (JWi), and n. to Sterling, *Logan*, 22 May (SM). Three White-winged Doves were reported from Colorado this season in Springfield, *Baca*, 9 Apr (G&JH), Lamar 3 May (G&JH, BKP, m.ob.), and the San Luis Valley 15 May (JJR). A Black-billed Cuckoo was reported in *Bent* 23 May (TH). Rarely reported in s. Nevada, three Com. Nighthawks were at Corn Creek 27 May (RPS). Colorado had four Lesser Nighthawks this year, including three females in *Prowers* 9 May (RO, MJ, BKP et al.), a female in *Crowley* 15–16 May (BKP, m.ob.), and a male in *Baca* 30 May (JPr). A rare migrant, a female **Whip-poor-will** was flushed several times at Lamar 2 May (BKP, RO et al.).

#### SWIFTS THROUGH SWALLOWS

An extraordinary sighting of a **Black Swift** came from the extreme s.e. Colorado plains at Springfield, *Baca*, 6 May (DSv). A possible **Vaux's Swift** was carefully studied in *Boulder* 23 May (DQ, RO); if accepted it would represent a first Colorado record. Also, one–two Vaux's were seen in *Clark*, NV, 29 Apr–1 May (m.ob.). An ad. male **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was at Lamar 30 Apr–1 May (BKP, PAG, m.ob.). A migrating Rufous Hummingbird was observed at Corn Creek 1 May (CT, *vide RS*). Up to seven Acorn Woodpeckers continue to subsist in Durango, *La Plata*, 11

Apr+ (PAG, LM). Rare on the plains in e. Colorado, single Red-naped Sapsuckers were reported at Ft. Collins 16 Apr (DAL), at Barr L. 21–24 Apr (NG, m.ob.), and at Ft. Lyon, *Bent*, 7–8 May (MJ, m.ob.). About 20 **Gilded Flickers** were found at Searchlight, *Clark*, NV, all period (JKr).

A singing E. Wood-Pewee was found in *Bent* 1 May (MJ, m.ob.). An extremely early *Empidonax* flycatcher at Lamar 16 Apr (BKP) gave the impression of an **Acadian Flycatcher**, a species that has not been recorded in Colorado. A calling Alder Flycatcher was found in *Yuma* 18 May (BKP). Three Willow Flycatchers, possibly of the endangered *extimus* subspecies, were at St. George, Washington, UT, 22 May (SH, VJH). Single Gray Flycatchers were in Ft. Collins 18 Apr (DAL) and *Bent* 8 May (BKP et al.). A male Vermilion Flycatcher showed in *El Paso* 2 May (SCr) and another was at Chatfield Res. 15 May (JK). Rare in s. Utah, an E. Kingbird was at Minersville Res. 31 May (SDS). In *Baca*, a male Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was found 4 May (G&JH, DSi, BBe et al.) and another 14 May (VZ).

White-eyed Vireo reports from e. Colorado included a female in *Bent* 3–12 May (BKP, m.ob.), a singing male in *Bent* 16–18 May (DSm, BBH, m.ob.), a male in *Yuma* 16–19 May (RO, DQ, m.ob.), and a singing male in *Baca* 30 May (JPr). Single Blue-headed Vireos were reported from *Prowers* 25 Apr (DSi), *Pueblo* 11 May (DSi), and the San Luis Valley 13 May (JJR). Four Cassin's Vireos were reported from e. Colorado 4–14 May (v.ob.). More Yellow-throated Vireos were reported in Colorado than usual, with singles in *Prowers* 9–12 May (LR, JJR, BKP, m.ob.), *Boulder* 12–13 May (GW, GG, PGe), *Jefferson* 12 May (KSc), *Crowley* 15 May (BD), *El Paso* 15 May (AV), and *Kiowa* 16 May (TJ). A female Purple Martin was at Springfield 9 May (DSv).

#### WRENS THROUGH WARBLERS

A Winter Wren was reported from Paragonah, *Iron*, UT, 24 Mar (SH, BBo). A Sedge Wren was in *Pueblo* 23 Mar and 4 Apr (BKP). A late Ruby-crowned Kinglet was at Corn Creek 29 May (m.ob.). Ten Veeries 1–23 May (v.o.) and an amazing nine Gray-cheeked Thrushes 2–23 May (v.ob.) were found in e. Colorado this spring. Wood Thrushes were reported in *Bent* 20 Apr (TD) and *Baca* 10 May (TL), and a singing male was in *Larimer* 16–21 May (DAL, m.ob.). A Varied Thrush was at Corn Creek 12 May (RPS). East of normal, a Curve-billed Thrasher was in Holly, *Prowers*, 17 May (TL, PAG). Ten to twelve Bohemian

Waxwings wandered S into the San Luis Valley, where rare, 15 Mar (CBe). An ad. Phainopepla was at S-Line Res., *Churchill*, NV, 15 May (LN, m.ob.), providing the first Lahontan Valley record since 1943.

Colorado birders recorded a total of 40 species of warblers this spring, including 21 Tennessees (25 Apr–21 May), 14 Nashvilles (28 Apr–15 May), 22 N. Parulas (13 Apr–26 May), 18 Chestnut-sideds (29 Apr–25 May), 10 Magnolias (8–24 May), five Black-throated Blues (9–28 May), seven Black-throated Grays on the plains (24 Apr–14 May), eight Townsend's (7–17 May), 10 Black-throated Greens (1–18 May), 33 Black-and-whites (16 Apr–23 May), 34 Am. Redstarts (1–23 May), 10 Worm-eatings—a high count—(20 Apr–15 May), 13 Ovenbirds (30 Apr–22 May), and 33 (low) N. Waterthrushes (1–24 May).

A Blue-winged Warbler was in *Larimer* 9 May (SR), with another in *Boulder* 12 May (PHa). The only Golden-winged Warbler was a male in *Boulder* 20 May (PG, JV). A N. Parula was at Corn Creek in May (RPS). A female Cape May Warbler was at L. Henry, *Crowley*, 24 May (BKP, MJ, BD, JRo). Rare in Nevada, a male Magnolia Warbler was at Corn Creek 26 May (RPS, CT). Two ad. male Hermit Warblers were found in Colorado, one in *Bent* 24–25 Apr (MJ, BKP, VZ) and one in *Boulder* 17 May (DWK, PGe, DSc, TD, NEI). Three male Blackburnian Warblers were found in Colorado. Three Yellow-throated Warblers were noted in Colorado, with a male in *Prowers* 1–7 May (BKP, m.ob.), one in *Larimer* 11 May (SBa), and a singing male in *Jefferson* 16–17 May (JKe, m.ob.). A singing male Pine Warbler was at L. Henry 21 May (JK) and a singing male Prairie Warbler was in *Prowers* 8 May (BD, BBH, BKP, MJ, m.ob.). Only two Palm and only 19 Blackpolls warblers were found in e. Colorado. An alternate-adult plumaged male Blackpoll Warbler was at Lytle Ranch, *Washington*, UT, 15 May (C&TN), and another was at Lucin, UT, 21 May (KE).

An ad. male **Cerulean Warbler** at Two Buttes Res., *Baca*, 4 May (TD, BKP, VZ, TMi) provided the 4th Colorado record. At Corn Creek, there was a Black-and-white Warbler 26 May and three different Am. Redstarts 16–31 May (RPS). Single male Prothonotary Warblers were reported from Corn Creek 22 May (CT) and in *El Paso* 15 May (LSi). An Ovenbird was at Corn Creek 16 May (RPS, CT). Extremely rare, a **Louisiana Waterthrush** was found in *Washington* 8 May (IS). A N. Waterthrush was at Lucin, UT, 20 May (KE, DG, VAS), and one

was at Corn Creek 31 May (RPS). A female Kentucky Warbler was noted at L. Henry 7 May (BKP, MJ, RO, DQ et al.). Four male Mourning Warblers graced e. Colorado, with singles in *Prowers* 9–15 May (RO, MJ, BKP, DQ, m.ob.), in *Washington* 14 May (JK, NE, DSc, JR, BS), banded in *Boulder* 16 May (JHa), and at L. Henry 17–21 May (TL, PAG, DSm, MJ, JKe). Seventeen Hooded Warblers were reported from e. Colorado 23 Apr–26 May, possibly a seasonal high count for that area. A male **Canada Warbler** made it to *Rio Blanco* 27 May (DH) for one of the few w. slope records.

#### TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

A Scarlet Tanager was in *Prowers* 9–10 May (BKP, RK, VZ). An E. Towhee was found at Bonny Res. 15 May (RO, DQ). Rufous-crowned Sparrow continued to be seen in Cañon City, *Fremont*, 27 May (RW, JWa). Sixteen Field Sparrows were seen in e. Colorado 16 Apr–18 May. Two Sage Sparrows were found in n. Colorado, at Chatfield Res. 3 Apr (GPs, RO) and in *Boulder* 3–4 Apr (PGe, LKe). A Song Sparrow at Corn Creek 8 May was either of the *fallax* or *saltonis* subspecies (RPS). Rarely reported from w. Colorado, a Golden-crowned Sparrow was found in *Montezuma* 22 Apr (MA). A late male Lapland Longspur was found in *Baca* 5 May (DSv).

Possibly the first area record, a female N. Cardinal was observed s. of Crestone, *Alamosa*, 28 Apr (MHu). A male **Pyrrhuloxia** was photographed in Durango 2–3 May (*vide* KSt), providing Colorado's 3rd record. Nevada had two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks this year, a female at Corn Creek 29 May (RPS) and a male at Lida, *Esmeralda*, 29 May (GS). A male Painted Bunting was photographed at a feeder at Barr L. 21–27 Apr (MC, TL, ph. DQ) and a male was in Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca*, in late May (F&JD, M&SP, m.ob.). Up to six pair of Com. Grackles built nests at Lucin, UT, in May, but they abandoned the site by June (VAS). At Pebble Cr. Ranch, *Summit*, late rosy-finches included up to 12 Gray-crowneds 1–8 May, two Hepburn's Gray-crowneds 2 May, up to four Blacks 1–8 May, and up to 75 Brown-capped 1–17 May (SBo, TL). A female Purple Finch was photographed in *Jefferson* 11 Apr (GE).

#### Observers (state coordinators in boldface):

Mymm Ackley, Doug Allen, George Armbrust, Scott Bailey (SBA), Bob Beirling (BBe), Chuck Bell (CBe), John Bellmon, Dave Bolton, Becky Bonebrake (BBo), Sue Bonfield (SBo), Bob Brandle, Alex Brown,

Bob Brown (BBn), Lea Ann Brown (LAB), Cliff Bruning (CBr), Tamie Bulow, Mike Carter, Sherry Chapman, Graham Chisholm, Cade L. Coldren, Ann Cooper, Susan Craig (SCr), Donna Crail-Rugotzke (DCR), Alex Cruz, Sr., Ray Davis, Coen Dexter, Bob Dickson, Todd Dilley, Stephen J Dinsmore, Jon L. Dunn, David Elwonger (DEI), Gary Emerson, Norm Erthal, Keith Evans, Peter A. Gaede, Pat Gaffey (PGa), Nelda Gamble, Peter Gent (PGe), Beverly Gholson (BGh), Gregg Goodrich, Bob Goycoolea (BGo), K. Grandison, Darrell Greenfield, Glenn & Jeane Hageman (G&JH), B.B. Hahn (BBH), Paula Hansley (PHa), Joe Harrison (JHa), J.B. Hayes (JBH), Jim Healy (JHe), Steve Hedges, VJ Hedges (VJH), Dona Hickey, Joe Himmel (JHi), F. Howe, Paul Hurtado (PHu), Maggie Huston (MHu), Mark Janos (MJ), Dave Johnson, Jeff Jones, Tina Jones, Joe Kahl (JKa), Joey Kellner (JKe), Laurent Kergoat (LKg), D.W. King, Rachel Kolokoff, Nick Komar, J. Kreitzer (JKr), Liz Krieder (LK), David A. Leatherman, Tony Leukering, Jerry Liguori (JLi), William P. Lisowsky (WPL), Dick Maxwell (DMa), Terry McEneaney (TMc), Steve Messick (SM), Martin Meyers, Tim Mitzen (TMi), Larry Neel, Colby and Tom Neuman (C&TN), Ric Olson, Gary Park (GPa), Greg Pasquariello (GP), Michael A. Patten, Brandon K. Percival, Jim Peters (JPe), Myron & Suzi Plooster (M&SP), Bill Prather, John Prather (JPr), David Quesenberry, Scott Rashid, John J. Rawinski, Lisa Rawinski, Jack Rensel (JRe), Joe Roller (JR), Ira Sanders, **Richard P. Saval**, Rita Schlageter, Dick Schottler (DSc), Karleen Schofield (KSc), Greg Scyphers, Dennis Serdeheley (DSe), David Silverman (DSi), Lisa Sinke (LSi), Linda Smith (LSm), **V. Arnold Smith**, Bob Spencer, Steve Stachowiak, Kip Stransky (KSt), **Steve D. Summers**, Dan Svingen (DSv), Paul Sweet, John Tiffany (JT1), Michael and Stephanie Tiffany (M&ST), Carolyn Titus, Alan Versaw, Glenn Walbek, David Waltman, Jim Watts (JWa), Rosie Watts, Jeff Webster (JWe), L. Wilkerson (LWi), Joan Williams (JWi), Vic Zerbi (VZ)

**Van A. Truan**, 1901 Court Street, Pueblo, CO 81003 (Van.A.Truan@spa02.usace.army.mil) and **Brandon K. Percival**, 835 Harmony Drive, Pueblo West, CO 81007

