

# Mountain West

their best showing ever, with singles near Missoula, MT 13–22 Apr (RN), in Aberdeen, ID 12–13 May (DB), in Helena, MT 18–19 May (RW), in Butte, ID 25–26 May (CO), at Market Lake 27 May (D&EF), and at Camas on 28 May (DM). A singing male **Clay-colored Sparrow** in *Bonner* 27–31 May+ (DD) was Idaho's 9th. The only Golden-crowned Sparrow reported this season was in *Canyon*, ID 26–28 Apr (JA). Especially rare in spring were Lapland Longspurs in *Powell*, MT 3 Mar (BW) and *Elmore*, ID 25 May (JB). Reports of Idaho's Great-tailed Grackles were up from last year, with 5 in *Minidoka* 1–4 Mar (JC, ES) and singles in *Twin Falls* 31 Mar (B&SM), Boise 7 May (BC), *Minidoka* 8–13 May (SB), and *Power* 23 May (CT). Like last year, Common Grackles were seen in seven e. Idaho counties and at least two locations in w. Montana. A rare Purple Finch was an unprecedented find in *Owyhee*, ID 28 Apr (CS). Away from their local Idaho range in Boise and Pocatello, Lesser Goldfinches were reported below A.F.R. dam 1–31 Mar (m. ob.) and in *Salmon* 24 May (CH).

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**S**pring arrived up to two weeks earlier than normal east of the Rockies. Trees were fully leafed out by 1 May. The mountain areas of the Region experienced late heavy snows in April, providing above-normal snow packs in most ranges. With concentrated birding efforts in Colorado and Wyoming in proper habitat during migration, certain eastern species have apparently become regular. It appears that Glossy Ibis, Lesser Nighthawk, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, eastern vireos, Gray-cheeked Thrush, 35+ species of warbler, and other species, once considered quite rare, are findable each year. Future studies of migration and weather in this Region should confirm that eastern species are normal in the context of certain patterns of weather and that in some years many

eastern species are not rare. All sightings are from Colorado, unless otherwise indicated.

**Abbreviations:** B.S.W.M.A. (Bump Sullivan W.M.A., *Goshen*, WY); C.B.R. (Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso/Pueblo*, CO); Chatfield (Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, CO); C.V.C.G (Crow Valley Campground, Pawnee National Grasslands, *Weld*, CO); J.M.R. (John Martin Res., *Bent*, CO); E.K.W.S.P. (Edness Kimbal Wilkens State Park, *Natrona*, WY); F.L.W.E (Fort Lyon Wildlife Easement, *Bent*, CO); L.H.R (L. Hattie Res., *Albany*, WY); T.M.W.M.A. (Table Mountain W.M.A., *Goshen*, WY); W.H.R (Wyoming Hereford Ranch, e. of Cheyenne, *Laramie*, WY).

## LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

A basic-plumaged **Red-throated Loon** was at L.H.R. 24 May (SJD, JBF) and 22 Common Loons there 6 May (SJD). An ad. Neotropical Cormorant was at J.M.R. 8–9 Apr (BKP, MJ, SO). Single Least Bitterns were at Alamosa 11 May (JJR) and at C.B.R. 20 May (CLW et al.). A Great Egret was at Glendo Res., *Platte*, WY 18 May (CEM, JG). An ad. Little Blue Heron was at L. Henry, *Crowley* 29 Apr (VZ) and an ad

Tricolored Heron at J.M.R. 26 Apr–2 May (TL et al.). A subad. white-morph **Reddish Egret** was at J.M.R. 17 May (DN) and at nearby L. Hasty, *Bent* 27 May (DAL, JT); this constitutes the 6th Colorado record. Seven Glossy Ibis were reported from Colorado.

An ad. Trumpeter Swan was found in sw. Colorado at Pagosa Springs, *Archuleta* 27 Mar (DAL). Very rare in Wyoming, single male **Eurasian Wigeon** were at Laramie 10 Mar–14 Apr (ph. DBM, GJ, J&RD) and at Goldeneye Res., *Natrona* 8 Apr (CEM, JG); another male made an appearance at Ft. Collins 2 Mar (AP). The female **Harlequin Duck** that wintered in Durango remained through at least 17 Mar (*fide* M&DH).

### RAPTORS TO HUMMINGBIRDS

Colorado's 3rd and 4th **Common Black-Hawks** were single ads. at Durango 13–14 Apr (PD, M&DH et al.) and Trinidad L., *Las Animas* 20 May (GW, TL et al.). Single Broad-winged Hawks in Wyoming were at E.K.W.S.P. 23 Apr (CEM) & 30 Apr (CEM) and at W.H.R. 25 May (SJD, JBF). A **King Rail** was heard at J.M.R. 22 May (TL et al.). Three American Golden-Plovers were w. of Huntley, *Goshen*, WY 25 May (SJD, JBF), and a Snowy Plover was at Soda L., near Casper, *Natrona* 14 May (JG). In Wyoming, 2 Whimbrels were w. of Huntley, 2 May (SJD), 2 at B.S.W.M.A. 9 May (SJD, JBF), and one at Soda L., WY 24 May (CEM, JG). A Ruddy Turnstone was also at Soda L. 24 May (CEM, JG), and several were noted in e. Colorado. Thirty-seven Sanderlings were at Wheatland Res. #3, *Albany*,



This White-winged Dove in Pueblo, Colorado appeared 28 May and remained through the early summer. The species is now found out of core range throughout the United States, as is true for several other columbid species. *Photograph by Larry Semo.*

**SA** Vermilion Flycatchers invaded e. Colorado this season. We received reports of 12 individuals 5–17 Apr, an astonishing number for a species normally quite rare in Colorado. The reports included a male at Adobe Creek Res., *Bent/Kiowa* 5 Apr (DN); a male at Belmar Park in Lakewood, *Jefferson* 5 Apr (MCh, WF, KS); a female at Chatfield 12–13 Apr (RO); a pair at Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca/Las Animas* 13 Apr (DFi, et al.); one or a pair at Higbee Cemetery, *Otero* 14 Apr–31 May+ (DEL, DAL, m. ob.); a male e. of Ft. Lyon, *Bent* 15 Apr (DEL); and a pair nw. of Campo, *Baca* 17 Apr (TL, BKP). Strong s. winds in early to mid-Apr in e. Colorado, w. Kansas, and w. Oklahoma may have moved birds northwest of normal—or this may be the start of a trend, as the species appears to be expanding its range to the north.

WY 15 May (SJD, JBF). In Wyoming, White-rumped Sandpiper reports included: 5 at T.M.W.M.A. 21 May (SJD); one near Cheyenne 25 May (SJD, JBF); and 84 in *Goshen* 25 May (SJD, JBF); also higher numbers were recorded in Colorado this spring. Pectoral Sandpipers in Wyoming included 2 w. of Huntley 25 May (SJD, JBF) and one at T.M.W.M.A. 25 May (SJD, JBF). A *hendersoni* **Short-billed Dowitcher** was studied and heard at T.M.W.M.A. 15 May (SJD, JBF).

An ad. Mew Gull was at Jim Hamm Pond, *Boulder*, and Union Res., *Weld* 4–28 Mar (JV), and an ad. was at Pastorius Res., *La Plata* 30 Mar–2 Apr (SA, M&DH). Wyoming's first **Great Black-backed Gull** was at Blake's pond near Laramie 14–15 Apr (ph. DBM, GJ, R&JD). Single Glaucous-winged Gulls appeared, with a first-basic bird at Pueblo Res. 3 Mar (DFO), another first-basic individual at Chatfield 7–10 Mar (KS, m. ob.), and a second-basic bird at Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe* 9 Mar (RO). A first-spring Black-legged Kittiwake was Chatfield Res. 11 Apr–31 May+ (JK, m. ob.). Eleven Common Terns were at Greyrocks Res., *Platte* 25 May (SJD, JBF), with one near Cheyenne 25 May (SJD, JBF).

In Wyoming, a **Eurasian Collared-Dove** was at Wheatland City Park, *Platte* 14 Apr (DBM); 2 were at Green River, *Sweetwater* 5–6 May (RS) and another pair at Fort Laramie, *Goshen* 15 &

25 May (SJD, JBF). A pair of White-winged Doves was in Pueblo 28 Apr–31 May+ (VAT, m. ob.). A Long-eared Owl was at E.K.W.S.P. 21 Mar (CEM). A Lesser Nighthawk was noted in Vineland, *Pueblo* 16 Apr (NK, RV). A male **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was at Wray, *Yuma* 12 May (CLW), only the 5th state record for Colorado. Quite unexpected was Colorado's first **Costa's Hummingbird**, an ad. male, at C.V.C.G. 18–19 May (SJD, JBF, ph. RD, ph. RO, m. ob.).

### WOODPECKERS THROUGH VIREOS

Two Lewis's Woodpeckers were in w. *Platte*, WY 15 May (SJD, JBF), and 3 Red-headed Woodpeckers graced Rawhide Wildlife Area, *Goshen* 25 May (SJD, JBF). The Acorn Woodpecker at Ft. Carson, *El Paso*, stayed to 29 May (BM, RB). An Eastern Wood-Pewee sang at Flagler S.W.A., *Kit Carson* 26 May (DFa). Single vocalizing Alder Flycatchers were at Jumbo Res., *Sedgwick* 19 May (JM, DAL, DCE) and at Last Chance, *Washington* 27 May (BKP).

A singing **White-eyed Vireo** was at E.K.W.S.P. 23–24 May (CEM, JG, m. ob.), a 2nd record for Wyoming; Colorado had 4 White-eyed Vireos this spring. A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was at Fontenelle Dam, *Lincoln*, WY 27–28 May (RS, m. ob.), and 6 were in e. Colorado this season. A Blue-headed Vireo was at C.B.R. 19 May (CLW,

VAT). In Wyoming, single Red-eyed Vireos were at W.H.R. 25 May (SJD, JBF) and Fontenelle Dam 27 May (RS).

### THRUSHES THROUGH GRACKLES

At W.H.R., an eastern-race Veery 17 May (SJD, JBF) and a western-race Veery 25 May (SJD, JBF) gave a good indication of this area's potential for showcasing migrants from multiple populations. A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was also there 17 May (JBF, SJD), and at least another 11 Gray-cheekeds were reported from e. Colorado 3–15 May.

Colorado birders found 38 species of warblers. Blue-winged Warblers, always a highlight of Colorado birding, were at F.L.W.E. 22 Apr (MJ, BKP); Chatfield 7 May (RV); Lamar 11 May (JK, AS, m. ob.); Loveland 16 May (KL, EC, JBF); Dixon Res. in w. Ft. Collins also 16 May (DAL, MCo); e. Ft. Collins 18 May (DAL); F.L.W.E. 20 May (LS); and at Rye, *Pueblo* 29 May (DSi). A male Golden-winged at C.B.R. 19 May (VAT, RO, MJ) was the only one reported. A female Cape May was at Burlington Cemetery, *Kit Carson* 13 May (CLW). A male Hermit was at Upper Queens Res., *Kiowa* 6 May (MJ, BKP). Single Blackburnians were enjoyed at Dixon Res. in w. Ft. Collins 18 May (JBF, SJD, ph. DAL, DCE); C.B.R. 19 May (CLW, RO, VAT, MJ); C.V.C.G. 24 May (SMe); Doudy Draw in Boulder 24 May (BE); and at Flagler S.W.A., a female 25 May (DF) and a male 27 May (IS). At L. Holbrook were a male Yellow-throated 11–12 May (JK, AS) and a female Prairie 6–7 May (AS, JK, RO). Other Prairies were a male at Prewitt Res., *Washington* 9 May (SMe) and a female at J.M.R. 22 May (DN). A male Bay-breasted was at C.V.C.G. 16–18 May (BB, ph. RO). Single Prothonotary Warblers were at Lamar 22 Apr (SO); Chatfield 3 May (AS); Colorado City, *Pueblo* 10 May (DSi); Wray 12 May (CLW); Estes Park, *Larimer* 13 May (SR); L. Henry 2–7 May (JBH), with 2 were there 14 May (DN). Single Worm-eating Warblers were at F.L.W.E. 22 Apr (MJ, BKP); Lamar 8 May (GR, BKP); Neenoshe Res. 10 May (VAT); Two Buttes Res. 11 May (AS, JK); C.V.C.G. 16–18 May (SR, JW); and e. of Ft. Lyon 18 May (BKP et al.). Single Kentucky Warblers were e. of Ft. Lyon 14 Apr (SO, DJ, GR, DN); at Neenoshe Res. 11 May (JK, AS); and most unusual, near Uravan, *Montrose* 30 May (CD, BW). A female **Connecticut Warbler** at Last Chance 27 May (CLW) provided the 8th record for Colorado. Mourning Warblers were detected at Barr L., *Adams* 14 May (PG, BA) and at C.B.R. 19–20 May (TL, CLW).

Wyoming warbler rarities included a male Tennessee at Glendo Res., *Platte* 18 May (CEM, JG) and a female at W.H.R. 19 May (CEM, JG).



A Gray-cheeked Thrush banded in Colorado Springs in May was one of a dozen found in the Region this spring. Photograph by David Elwonger.

A male Nashville Warbler was at E.K.W.S.P. 6 May (CEM) and a male Virginia's Warbler w. of Wheatland, *Platte* 15 May (SJD, JBF). A male Northern Parula was at Lions Park, Cheyenne 25 May (JBF, SJD). Three male Chestnut-sided Warblers included one at Lion's Park, Cheyenne 18 May (J&GL), one at W.H.R. 19 May (CEM, JG), and one near Cheyenne, 25 May (JBF, SJD). A male Magnolia was noted at Fontenelle Dam 27 May (RS) and 4 male Black-throated Blues at W.H.R. 19 May (CEM, JG, J&GL). A male **Yellow-throated Warbler**, the 5th for the state, lingered at Laramie 17 May (DBM), while a **Western Palm Warbler** was a rarity at W.H.R. 19 May (JG, GL). At W.H.R., a female **Prairie Warbler**, the 4th for Wyoming, was seen 19 May (CEM, JG) and a female Blackpoll 17 May (JBF, SJD). A **Worm-eating Warbler**, the 6th for the state, was at Greyrocks Res., *Platte* 15 May (SJD, JBF), and an Ovenbird was at Lion's Park in Cheyenne 25 May (JBF, SJD). Single Northern Waterthrushes were at W.H.R. 17 May (JBF, SJD) and at Fontenelle Dam 27 May (RS). Wyoming's 2nd **Mourning Warbler** was at Fontenelle Dam 27 May (RS).

A male **Summer Tanager** visited a Casper, WY yard 30 Apr–7 May (F&LL); a male Scarlet Tanager was scarce visitor at F.L.W.E. 19 May (PH, DFa). Great-tailed Grackles continue to invade Wyoming: single males were at W.H.R. 17 May (SJD, JBF) and Rock L. near Wheatland 28 Apr (DBM), while 10 were seen at T.M.W.M.A. 15 May (SJD, JBF).

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