

bour (DAr), John Arvin, Helen Baines, Lynn Barber (LBA), Peter Barnes (PBA), Patty Beasley (PBe), David Benn, Steve Bentsen (SBe), Brandon Best (BBe), Laura Biddle (LBI), Gavin Bieber, Lorie Black (LBI), Colin Bludau, Sally Breed (SBr), Kathy Brodhead (KaB), Bill Broyles (BBr), Winnie Burkett, Eric Carpenter, Ron Chenault, Sheridan Coffey (SCo), Scarlet Colley (ScC), Tom Collins, Greg Cook, Mel Cooksey (South Texas: 16 Townhouse Lane, Corpus Christi, TX 78412; email: ssi@stx.rr.com), Debra Corpora, Cameron Cox, Elisa Dale, David Dauphin, Sue Davison, Mike Dillon (MDi), Bob Doe, Michele Dudas (MDu), Curtis Dykstra, Marc & Maryann Eastman, Jan Elston, Ted Eubanks, Ed Fair, Tim Fennell (TFe), Mark Flippo (MFL), Connie Fordham, Michael Francis (MFr), Bobbye Frazier (BoF), Brush Freeman (BFR), Bert Frenz (BeF) (East Texas: 221 Rainbow Dr., #12190, Livingston, TX 77399-2021; email: bert2@bafrenz.com), Dixie Fueurbacher, Terry Fuller, Brian Gibbons, Kathryn Green, Steve Gross, Jim Hailey (JHa), Irene Hamel, Peggy Harding (PHa), Audrey Harvey (AHa), Eric Haskell, Kiyomi

Haskell (KHa), Mitch Heindel, Anthony Hewetson (AHe) (Northwest Texas: 4407 36th St., Lubbock TX 79414; email: terverts@yahoo.com), Aveline Hewetson (AvH), Derek Hill (North-central Texas: 1508 Linden Drive, Denton, TX 76201; email: kinglet32@yahoo.com), Jim Hines (JiH), Jim Hinson (JHi), Kelly Holligan (KHo), Jan Hrbaczewski, Ingrid Huskey, Hugh Jameson, Simone Jenion, Bill Johnson, Dan Jones, Richard Kaskan (RKa), Paula Kennedy, Keith Kingdon, Greg Lasley (GL), Greg Lavaty (GLa), Dan Leavitt, Cin-Ty Lee, Rob Lee (RLe), Paul Lehman, Jason Leifester, Michael Lindsey (MLi), Leslie Linehan, Greg Liscian-dro (GLi), Mark Lockwood (ML), Paul Mason, Ray Matlack, Don McCall, Jon McIntyre (JMc), Brad McKinney (BMc), Don & Joann Merritt, Angel Montoya, Betty Moore (BMo), John Muldrow (BMu), Dan Naber, Brooke Nicotra, Dennis Palafox, Marco Paredes, Jim Paton (JPa) (Trans-Pecos: 4325 Boy Scout Lane, El Paso, TX 79922; email: patonjn@net-zero.net), Jimmy Paz (JiP), Barrett Pierce, Randy Pinkston (RPi), Jane Poss (JPo), Ross Rassmussen, Martin Reid, Thomas Riecke,

Gloria Rognlie, John Rosford, Homer Rushing, Isaac Sanchez, Laura Sare, Susan Schaezler, Willie Sekula (Central Texas: 7063 Co Rd. 228, Falls City, TX 78113-2627; email: wsekula@ev1.net), Ken Seyffert, Marsha Seyffert, Bruce Sherman (BSH), Al Shultz, (ASH), David Sierra (DSi), Joel Simon (JSi), David Smith (DSm), Jeff Smith (JSm), Aletha Snowden (ASn), Tom SoRelle, John Sproul (JSp), Jim Stevenson (JSt), Cliff Stogner, Paul Sunby, Tom Taylor, Peggy Trosper, Darrell Vollert (DVo), Adrian Webb, Ron Weeks (Upper Texas Coast: 110 Indian Warrior, Lake Jackson, TX 77566; email: empidonax@sbc-global.net), Matt White, John Whittle (JWh), Stephen Williams (SWi), Jennifer Wilson (JWi), Stu Wilson (StW), Jack Windsor (JaW), Jan Wobbenhorst (JWo), David Wolf, Adam Wood, Hope Woodward, Phyllis Yochem, Barry Zimmer. ☺

Mark W. Lockwood, 402 East Harriet Avenue, Alpine, Texas 79830, (mark.lockwood@tpwd.state.tx.us); **Eric Carpenter**, 10610 Morado Circle #2325, Austin, Texas 78759, (ecarpe@gmail.com); **Willie Sekula**, 7063 County Road 228, Falls City, Texas 78113, (wsekula@ev1.net)

Idaho & Western Montana



David Trochlell

For most of the Region, the autumn of 2005 began with unusually warm and dry weather in August but shifted to nearly normal temperatures and increasing precipitation in the ensuing months. A major exception occurred in a large portion of south-central Montana, where an unusually wet season prevailed. But the Region's reinvigorated precipitation status was not the only good news for the period. In portions of

northern Idaho and west-central Montana, it was also a banner year for shorebird numbers and variety. Perhaps best of all was the relative bounty of rare birds discovered, as evidenced by 15 that warranted boldface type.

Abbreviations: A.FR. (American Falls Res., Bingham and Power, ID); Camas (Camas N.W.R., Jefferson, ID); I.P.R. (Island Park Res., Fremont, ID); L.M. (Lee Metcalf N.W.R. near Stevensville, MT); L.P. (Idaho Bird Observatory's banding station at Lucky Peak near Boise).

GEESE THROUGH GULLS

A Greater White-fronted Goose, rare in w. Montana, stopped at Warm Springs 30 Aug (NK, GS). Cackling Geese (of subspecies *minima*) were noted in both states, with one in Boise, ID 5-30 Nov+ (JC) and 6 in Polson, MT 11 Nov (BR). The only Eurasian Wigeon reports were in Lewiston, ID 9 Oct-10 Nov (TG) and Flathead, MT 16 Oct (BR). The season's tally of 19 Surf Scoters and 2 White-winged Scoters was the lowest in five years. With only nine previous Black Scoter records in Montana, one at Ennis L., Madison 28 Oct (†JP) and 2 at L.M. 3 Nov (*fide* WT) were surprising. Long-tailed Ducks were scarcer than usual, with only

2 recorded in Idaho. Both states discovered rare Red-throated Loons. One provided Montana's 14th record at Ennis L., Madison 11-13 Nov (†EH, JP), and another stopped at I.P.R. 20 Nov (CW). Only 6 Pacific Loons were discovered, about half the usual fall total. A peak count of over 200 Common Loons was made at Montana's Ennis L. 1 Nov (JP). One of the headline



With its mild climate, lush meadows, and extensive wetlands, Montana's Bitterroot Valley attracts a good array of water birds each autumn. This immature Little Blue Heron was spotted near Hamilton 30 October 2005 (here); it was last seen 5 November and marks Montana's 6th record. Photograph by Wayne Tree.

birds of the season was an imm. Little Blue Heron near Hamilton 30 Oct-5 Nov (ph. WT), Montana's 6th record. The near-record tally of 27 Broad-winged Hawks at L.P. 8 Sep-6 Oct (JC) was notable, but far less expected was one in Bozeman, MT 20 Sep (DC, m.ob.). Three



Literally a case of "what the cat dragged in," this American Woodcock was retrieved by a house cat 29 (here 30) November 2005 at Dillon, Montana. The bird was subsequently rehabilitated and released three days later. It represented the state's fifth record of the species. Photograph by Jack Kirkley.

Gyrfalcons in Montana 24 Oct–30 Nov represented an above-average fall total.

Six American Golden-Plover reports were about average. Rare Hudsonian Godwits made an unusually good showing, with singles near Missoula, MT 17 Aug (TT), at A.F.R. 31 Aug (†BC), and at Warm Springs, MT 11–16 Sep (NK, GS). A Ruddy Turnstone was found at A.F.R. 10 Sep (CT), where most reports originate.

Red Knots made a remarkable showing in w. Montana, with one at Warm Springs 5 & 11 Sep (NK, GS) and 2 in Lake 6 Sep (BR). An outstanding find was Idaho's 2nd Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at I.P.R. 2–5 Oct (ph., †CW). A Curlew Sandpiper near Missoula 8–12 Oct (DB, LW, ph. RW) was Montana's 2nd. Stilt Sandpipers, usually uncommon, showed up in near-record numbers, with 30 in Idaho and 110 in Montana. Two Bull-breasted Sandpipers that staged in Lake, MT 21 Aug (TT) represented w. Montana's 9th record. Well above the norm was the Regionwide total of 5 Short-billed Dowitchers 21 Aug–8 Sep. An American Woodcock in Dillon, MT 29 Nov–1 Dec (JHi, ph. JK) provided Montana's 5th record. It was the best season ever for Long-tailed Jaegers. An unprecedented flock of 13 (5 ads., 8 imms.) came through Sandpoint, ID 8 Aug (†EC), and singles were near Deer Lodge, MT 23 Aug (NK, GS) and at L.P. 10 Sep (ph., †EHL). An imm. Little Gull at I.P.R. 1–10 Sep (ph., †CW) was Idaho's 7th. Only 2 Mew Gulls and 4 Thayer's Gulls were noted, representing the poorest showing of rare Pacific Coast larids in years. Sabine's Gulls exceeded last year's excellent count, with a total of 23 reported.

PIGEONS THROUGH FINCHES
A Band-tailed Pigeon was especially unusual at L.P. 23 Oct (JC); these casual visitors are

seldom found outside of spring. Four Snowy Owls reported in Flathead, MT 20–30 Nov (JH, m.ob.) appeared to be the vanguard for a winter irruption. A Black Swift colony discovered in Bonner 10 Aug (BM, JS) was only the 2nd known nesting location in Idaho. Three Anna's Hummingbirds discovered at feeders in s. Idaho 19 Sep–1 Dec (*fide* SP) represented a very good season total. Single Blue-headed Vireos documented at L.P. 13 Sep and Camas 23 Sep (†JC) may provide Idaho's 5th and 6th records. The fall season tally of at least 180 Blue Jays represented an unusually strong flight, but was only 40 percent of last year's record irruption. A Bewick's Wren seen in Bozeman 1–2 Nov (†EH, RI) brought in Montana's 5th record. Idaho Northern Mockingbirds were noted near Soda Springs 21 Oct (ZW) and in Blaine 19 Sep–30 Nov+ (KC, PWP). A rare Brown Thrasher at Camas since 27 Jul was last reported 28 Aug (JC).

Arguably the most unexpected bird of the season was the Region's first Lawrence's Warbler in Boise, ID 21–24 Oct (ph. MC, †CF); this backcross has been recorded very few times in the West. Idaho had a fairly average fall season for e. vagrant warblers, with five species reported. This included a Tennessee Warbler captured at Camas 6 Oct (JC) that remained for three days. Also netted was a Chestnut-sided Warbler at L.P. 3–7 Sep (JC), and 2 others were at Camas 4 & 10 Sep (JC, CF). Magnolia Warblers were found at Camas 25 Aug (SB) and I.P.R. 10 Sep (CW). Single Blackpoll Warblers came through Camas 28 Aug and 15 Sep (JC, DCI, CF), and another was in Kootenai 5 Sep (MH). Three Black-and-white Warblers were also at Camas 13 Aug–22 Sep (JC), and one visited Blackfoot (BC). Idaho's 5th Blackburnian Warbler was captured at L.P. 7 Sep (ph., †JC). Single imm. Connecticut Warblers captured at Camas 30 Aug and 14 Sep (†JC, ph. CF) provided Idaho's first and 2nd records.

A Swamp Sparrow discovered at L.M. 25 Oct–2 Nov (DB) was Montana's 13th. It was a lackluster season for rare *Zonotrichia* sparrows, with only 7 White-throated Sparrows, 3 Golden-crowned Sparrows, and a Harris's Sparrow reported. On the other hand, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks showed

well in Idaho, with 4 reported 28 Aug–4 Sep. A singing Indigo Bunting discovered in Boundary 3 Aug (†KB) represented only the 2nd record for n. Idaho. Three rare Rusty



No doubt Montana's most studied shorebird of the season was the juvenile Curlew Sandpiper discovered near Missoula 8 (here 9) October 2005 by Dave Beaudette and Larry Weeks. Fortunately, it lingered for four more days, furnishing Montana's second record of the species. Photograph by Robin Wolcott.

Blackbirds were reported in w. Montana 6–12 Nov, which was more than typical. Common Grackle numbers were unusually numerous: at least 50 came through Rexburg, ID 18 Sep (DCI), one was in Elmore, ID 30 Oct (JC, CF), and over 100 stopped in Red Lodge, MT 13 Sep (BJ). The only Great-tailed Grackles noted were 2 in Owyhee, ID 30 Oct (JC, CF). Although Purple Finches are not annual in Idaho, 2 were at I.P.R. 22 Sep (CW) and one visited L.P. 23 Oct (JC).

Contributors: (subregional editors in bold-face): IDAHO: Kris Buchler, Steve Butterworth, Kathleen Cameron, Jay Carlisle, Brian



As a rule, inland Long-tailed Jaeger reports involve single juveniles seen over large bodies of water. Autumn 2005 broke that rule, with remarkable reports including a southbound flock of 13 adults and juveniles at Lake Pend Oreille, Idaho, and a juvenile chasing grasshoppers on a paved road near Deer Lodge, Montana. On 10 September, Eric Hallingstad and fellow Idaho Bird Observatory banders were huddled in a raptor-trapping blind atop Lucky Peak (elevation 1771 m) near Boise, when they spotted a falcon-like bird make a pass at their trussed live decoy birds. Eventually succumbing to the temptation of a House Sparrow bait, the strange non-raptor was netted, photographed, and eventually identified as a juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger.

Photograph by Evonne Schroeder.

Carrigan, Earl Chapin, Darren Clark (DCI), Mark Collie, Kas Dumroese, Craig Fosdick, Terry Gray, Mike Haldeman, Eric Hallingstad (EHI), Barb McCall, Stacy Peterson, Hadley Roberts, Jennifer Soules, Shirley Sturts,

Chuck Trost, Zeke Watkins, Cliff Weisse, Poo Wright-Pulliam. MONTANA: Dave Beaudette, Dan Casey, Ed Harper, James Hicks (JHi), John Hughes, Radd Icenoggle, Barb Jaquith, Jack Kirkley. Nate Kohler, John Parker, Bob

Rost, Don Skaar, Gary Swant, Terry Toppins Wayne Tree, Larry Weeks, Robin Wolcott. ☪

David Trochlell, 2409 East N Avenue, La Grande, Oregon 97850, (dtrochlell@earthlink.net)

Colorado & Wyoming



Tony Leukering • Bill Schmoker
Christopher L. Wood

While the weather for the period was unremarkably mild, birders in the Region had a remarkable fall season. Two arduous hiking trips located Ruffed Grouse, a breeding bird not recorded in Colorado for 14 years, and hopefully a good prelude to the upcoming Breeding Bird Atlas work in the state. Juxtaposed against the two essentially Mexican vagrants from the summer season (White-eared Hummingbird and Tropical Parula) was the Region's second Arctic Loon, a photographed bird in alternate plumage. Charadriiform news included a second state record Curlew Sandpiper, unprecedented numbers of Red Phalaropes, all three jaeger species, an invasion of Laughing Gulls, and a grounded Ancient Murrelet. As with many other bird groups, warblers ran hot and cold, with relatively low numbers and diversity. However, an outrageous 11 Pine Warblers and the first Painted Redstart in nearly 20 years made up for some of the deficiencies.

Abbreviations: Barr (Barr L., Adams); Bonny (Bonny Res., Yuma); Chatfield (Chatfield S.P., Jefferson/Douglas); Cherry Creek (Cherry Creek Res., Arapahoe); Chico (Chico Basin Ranch, Pueblo/El Paso); Crow Valley (Crow

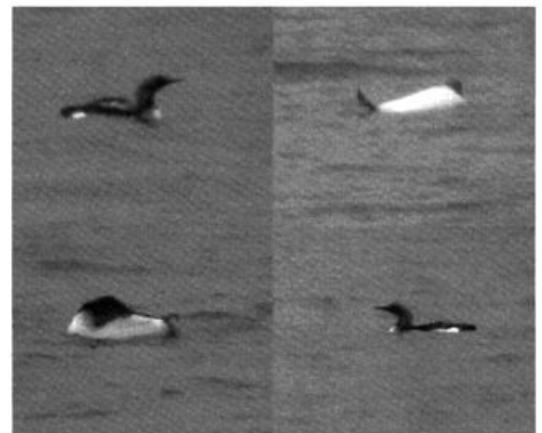
Valley Campground, Pawnee National Grasslands, Weld); E.K.W. (Edness Kimball Wilkins S.P., Natrona, WY); Fossil Creek (Fossil Creek Res., Larimer); Goldeneye (Goldeneye Res., Natrona, WY); Hereford Ranch (Wyoming Hereford Ranch, Laramie, WY); John Martin (John Martin Res., Bent); Jumbo (Jumbo Res., Logan/Sedgwick); Neenoshe (Neenoshe Res., Kiowa); Prewitt (Prewitt Res., Washington). "West Slope" denotes locations west of the Rockies. Due to reporting biases, all locations can be assumed to be in Colorado except that each Wyoming location is noted as such the first time it appears in the text. Generally, only the observers initially finding and identifying each bird are noted.

WATERFOWL

The highlight of the goose migration was a juv. **Atlantic Brant** at Fossil Creek 20 Nov (ph. CW, NK). As there are fewer than five previous Colorado records of this taxon, it was unfortunate that the bird was a one-day wonder. A Black Brant visited College L. in Ft. Collins, Larimer 16 Nov (†NK, †AS et al.) along with 2 Trumpeter Swans and 3 Tundra Swans (†AS). In Wyoming, 2 Nov seemed to be a big swan migration day, with at least 142 Tundras found at two sites in Fremont (T. Axtelhelm). In Colorado, where both swans are much rarer, both were recorded in higher-than-usual numbers. Some imm. swans are understandably causing confusion for the Region's birders; the identity of an imm. with the apparently returning group of Trumpeters in the Loveland area, Larimer after 14 Nov (CW, m.ob.) is still not agreed upon, despite a number of reasonable photographs (ph. NK). One imm. Tundra was consorting with 2 ad. and one imm. Trumpeters at L. Hasty, Bent 30 Nov–25 Jan (DN, m.ob.).

Overall, duck migration through e. Colorado seemed quite sparse, perhaps due to the mild fall. In fact, Blue-winged Teal lingered longer than usual, with a few low double-dig-

it counts on the e. plains in mid-Oct (TL) Scoter reports from atypical sites included first county records of Surf near Buena Vista, Chaffee 12–21 Oct (ph. R. Hancock) and at DeWeese Res., Custer 24 Oct (RM); a single Surf at Vallecito Res., La Plata 15 Nov (P. Der-ven, S. Allerton); 2 White-wingeds at L. Avery, Rio Blanco 19 Nov (D. Hilkey, FL); and one



Arriving in Colorado in handsome alternate plumage, the state's second Arctic Loon loitered for a few hours at Chatfield Reservoir, Douglas and Jefferson Counties, on 28 September 2005. Photographs by Glenn Walbek

Black on a pond well nw. of Craig, Moffat 14 Nov (ph. DD). Oddly, one of the miserable fall total of 3 Long-tailed Ducks visited Jerry Creek Res., Mesa 21–25 Nov (LA, R. Levad) on the West Slope, where fairly rare.

LOONS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

The three reports of Red-throated Loon (single juvs. from Pueblo, Larimer, and Las Animas [the latter a first for that county]) were greatly overshadowed by an ad. loon appearing to be an alternate-plumaged Arctic Loon. The bird was found at Chatfield early in the morning of 28 Sep (AS) and stayed long enough for a few other lucky souls to get there (ph. GW). By late morning, the bird could not be found. Though some with experience with the species question the identification, the bird's habit of holding its head above the horizontal, the nape being concolorous with the crown, the distinct white flank