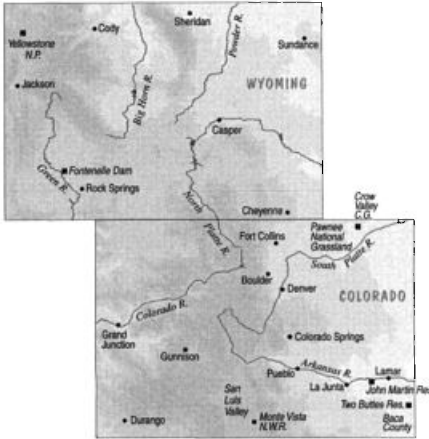


Colorado & Wyoming



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The Region experienced a warm summer, with both states rated above normal in June. July blistered both states, with Colorado's overall temperature much above normal (the 6th warmest in 113 years), and Wyoming tallying its record warmest July in 113 years of record. Fortunately, precipitation did not necessarily correlate inversely with temperature in the Region during the hot summer. While both states received below-normal precipitation in June, Colorado got near-normal precipitation in July, and Wyoming had above-normal precipitation for the month. Drought conditions remained fairly constant throughout the summer, with most of eastern Colorado remaining free of drought categorization and western parts of the state only experiencing abnormally dry or moderate drought intensities. Southwestern Wyoming was still the Region's most drought-afflicted area, with severe and extreme drought conditions persisting there. Much of the rest of Wyoming saw moderate drought or abnormally dry conditions, with only the northeastern part of the state clear of drought categorization.

Water managers in Colorado were able to fill and maintain full pools in many reservoirs, particularly in the northeastern part of the state, the most accessible shorebirding habitat for many Front Range birders. While easing water supply worries for much of the state, southbound shorebirds and their attendant scope-toting groupies found very little mud to meet their needs, resulting in a lackluster shorebirding season. Still, enough birds made the listserv headlines to engage armchair birders and active chasers alike this season, including Wood Stork, Common Black-Hawk, Harris's Hawk, Red Phalarope, Long-

tailed Jaeger, Magnificent Hummingbird, and most substantially, Colorado's first Lawrence's Goldfinch.

Abbreviations: C.C. Riverwalk (Cañon City Riverwalk, *Fremont*); Crow Valley (Crow Valley Campground, Pawnee National Grasslands, *Weld*). 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.

GEESE THROUGH JAEGERS

A Greater White-fronted Goose at Williams Creek Res., *Hinsdale* 26-30 Jun (P. Derven, JBy) was quite rare for the season, particularly in such a high-mountain location, and a Wood Duck at Craig, *Moffat* 8 Jun (LS) was locally rare. A male Eurasian Wigeon was a rare summer find 2-10 Jun in *Sedgwick* (H. Armknecht). A Mexican Duck was photographed s. of Lake City, *Mineral* 20 Jul (BKP, MP) and added another datum to the confusing occurrence pattern of this subspecies of Mallard in Colorado. Four male Harlequin Ducks graced the Snake R. near Astoria, *Teton*, WY 12 Jun (*vide* DF), a site at which the species has not previously been reported. Rare summer Colorado reports of Common Goldeneye were obtained from *Chaffee*, *El Paso*, and *Fremont*, but Barrow's Goldeneye went unreported away from breeding areas. At least 4 Common Loons, slightly more than typical, spent part or all of the summer on larger water bodies in *Arapahoe*, *Bent*, and *El Paso*.

All but one of the seven reports of Green Heron came from typical nesting areas, with the outlier, a heard-only bird n. of Craig near the Wyoming border 9 Jun (TL), providing a first *Moffat* record. A Wood Stork was reported briefly from a pond near Windsor, *Weld* 9 Jun (†M. De Weit) and would, if accepted, provide the first Colorado record since 1934. An ad. Mississippi Kite along Fountain Cr., *El Paso* 8 Jun (CW, SR) was a bit out of range, while one at Alamosa 20 Jul (MP et al.) provided a first *Alamosa* record. A Common Black-Hawk (age unreported) was

reported from Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca* 12 Jun (D. Payne, D. Williams).

To round out the rare raptor show, a molting first-cycle Harris's Hawk was in a Pueblo West yard 30 Jun-1 Jul (ph. BKP) and would provide a first *Pueblo* and 4th Colorado record. An ad. Broad-winged Hawk at Rye, *Pueblo* 10 Jun-21 Jul (DS) acted agitated on occasion during its stay and was suspected of breeding locally. A juv. seen there in Aug would seem to provide added support for that possibility; there is only one breeding record for the species in Colorado.

Up to 4 singing Black Rails continued from the spring into Jul at Nepesta, *Pueblo* (MP, BKP, LS). Only one ad. Sandhill Crane was



This potential fourth-state-record Harris's Hawk loitered about a residential neighborhood in Pueblo West, Pueblo County, Colorado 30 June through 1 July (here) 2007. Photograph by Brandon K. Percival.

seen sporadically this summer in the area of the recent *Weld* nesting site, possibly suggesting that the species did not nest locally this year. A Black-necked Stilt 2 Jun near Craig (FL) was the first in "several years" in the area, and 3 on 8 Jun at Rio Blanco S.W.A., Rio Blanco (DF) were not that far away and also locally rare. An Upland Sandpiper in *Cheyenne* 28 Jun (VAT) was somewhat s. of

SA An ad. Common Black-Hawk was seen well at the Mackenzie Bridge, Cañon City, *Fremont* 1-2 Jul and 29 Sep-2 Oct (RM, m.ob.) and is presumed to be the same individual that was present at this site in the fall of 2004 and 2005 (likely but unconfirmed sightings) and 2-28 Sep 2006. While habitat along this stretch of the Arkansas R. certainly seems suitable for the species, the fact that it has only been seen in late summer and fall is suggestive of post-breeding dispersal. The species breeds not all that far away in ne. New Mexico (Canadian R.), but it would be nice to know where this bird is breeding.



Most Red Phalaropes that wander to Colorado are juveniles or basic adults, so having a bright alternate-plumaged female grace a small wet playa in Weld county for a week was a treat for the birders who braved the prairie winds to see it. From 2-9 (here 3) June 2007, it subsisted on Tadpole Shrimp, a crustacean denizen of such ephemeral ponds. Photograph by Bill Schmoker.

typical breeding areas, though the county is, at best, poorly birded and poorly known. A Stilt Sandpiper was a bit late 2 Jun near Lower Latham Res., Weld (BK) and was the "best" that Colorado mud-birders could turn up this year. The shorebird highlight of the season was provided by the ad. female Red Phalarope 2-9 Jun that enlivened a pond in back-country Weld (†BK, ph. BS); the species is Regionally very rare as a spring migrant.

A second-cycle Bonaparte's Gull at Hinman Res., Grand 7 Jun (ph. LS) was very late or summering and may have accounted for the record of a second-cycle bird at Walden Res. 16-20 Jul (ph. LS) in neighboring Jackson. An ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull at Pueblo Res. 26 Jul (PH) provided one of few (all recent) summer Colorado records and the first such for well-birded Pueblo. The fall Black Tern flight kicked off in Colorado on 28 Jul, with the species seen at multiple sites in the northeast and with 41 at Jackson Res., Morgan (TL et al.). An ad. Long-tailed Jaeger was quite a surprise at Cherry Creek Res., Arapahoe 22 Jul (ph. J. Connell); all previous Colorado summer jaeger reports have proven to be of Pomarine Jaeger.

DOVES THROUGH VIREOS

Most of Colorado's 14 reports of White-winged Dove have come from the se. part of the state, with the most far-flung being of a singing bird in Dinosaur N.M., Moffat 10 Jun (T. Litteral). With w. Yellow-billed Cuckoo populations suffering, it is good to see tenacity by the species at Paonia and Hotchkiss, both Delta (J. Beason, A. Robinsong). Three nests of Black Swift in the Wet Mts. w. of Pueblo (PH) probably accounted for individuals seen a bit farther afield at Colorado City in Jun and Jul (DS). A female Magnificent Hummingbird was an on-again, off-again visitor to feeders in the town of Crystal, Gunni-

son from Jun through at least 26 Jul (ph. T. Coles); it provided a rare summer record. An ad. male Ruby-throated Hummingbird popped in at the Stulp residence, Prowers 13 Jul (ph. J. Stulp), the 2nd of this review species at the location and one of seven species of hummingbird recorded there! An imm. male Black-chinned Hummingbird was a bit out of range to the n. at the Paulsen residence n. of Lamar, Prowers 19-21 Jul (LP), and another male

Black-chinned was well out of range to the n. at Bobcat Ridge, Larimer 16-18 Jul (S. Miller, ph. R. Hopper). The fall migration of Calliope Hummingbird in Colorado started a few days early, with individuals 21 Jun at Arapaho N.W.R., Jackson (D. Dillman) and 25 Jun at Leadville, Lake (T. Kalmbach).

The 2000 Hayman Burn has been providing habitat for large numbers of American Three-toed Woodpeckers since 2001. This summer, Lewis's and Red-headed Woodpeckers were both found in the burn 26 Jun, with the former near Sixmile Hill and the latter nw. of Cheeseman Res., both Jefferson (C. Blakeslee). A Red-headed Woodpecker was a rare find at Pacific Creek, Teton, WY 3 Jun (J. Heerman). A pair of Red-bellied Woodpeckers continued through the summer at Lamar (DAL). As the species is quite rare and local in nw. Colorado due to the lack of Ponderosa Pine, Williamson's Sapsuckers feeding young 27 Jul near Pearl Lake Campground, Routt (FL) were of interest. A Red-naped Sapsucker was at an odd low-elevation location 8 Jun at the Inverness Golf Course, Arapahoe (S. Stachowiak). An apparent Yellow-shafted Flicker was well w. of normal, particularly for summer, at California Park, Routt 24 Jun (AS).

Rare in Colorado, no fewer than 3 Eastern Wood-Pewees were reported: singles along Boulder Creek, Boulder 3-9 Jun (EZ), at Fountain Creek Regional Park, El Paso 8-16 Jun (CW, SR), and at Bobcat Ridge Natural Area 22 Jun (E. Baker). Alder Flycatcher is a rare, but apparently regular, late-spring mi-

grant through e. Colorado, with this spring's bird at Crow Valley 1 Jun (AS et al.). Late for the low-elevation location was the Willow Flycatcher at Pueblo West 7 Jun (BKP). Least Flycatcher, although a relatively common migrant across e. Colorado, was historically very rare in the mts. and unknown there in summer. Summer reports, including nesting records, have been mounting in those areas during the past decade, and this summer saw a pair again nesting at Neversink Park, Gunnison 1 Jun-4 Jul (CD, B. Wright). Additional pairs were near Wuanita Hot Springs and w. of Gunnison, both Gunnison 14 Jun (LS, M Lockwood), while up to 4 were at Loudy-Simpson Park in Craig, where seen throughout the period (FL). Late and westerly was the Eastern Phoebe at Crow Valley 1 Jun (m.ob.). Only one Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was reported, that being from near Colorado Springs, El Paso 16 Jun (T. Bulow).

Bell's Vireos are restricted as breeders in Colorado to the ne. corner of the state, so noteworthy were the singing males at Oxbow S.W.A., Otero 20 Jun (J. Drummond) and at Flagler S.W.A., Kit Carson 28 Jun (BK). Gray Vireo is a regular nester in pinyon-juniper woodlands in w. Colorado but is infrequently observed on the e. side of the Continental Divide; the individual in rural e. Las Animas 16 Jun (BKP, MPe) was in an area of previous oc-



Another indication of the species' expanding breeding range in the state, this male Black-chinned Hummingbird was observed over a short span in mid-July 2007 (here on the 18th) in Larimer County, Colorado. Photograph by Rachel Hopper.

currence. The status of Red-eyed Vireo in summer in e. Colorado is a bit enigmatic. Singing birds are sporadically found, although evidence of actual nesting is nearly non-existent, and it appears that many of those birds establish territories but do not attract mates. No fewer than 7 were detected this summer (through 17 Jun) from Adams, Boulder, Douglas, and Fremont. Wyoming hosted a westerly bird as well, with one at Grand Teton N.P., Teton 17 Jun (S. Wolf).

RAVENS THROUGH FINCHES

Establishing one of exceedingly few good records for the West Slope, 2 Chihuahuan Ravens were seen in rural *Montezuma* 27 Jul (DAL). Low in elevation and out of habitat, a male Purple Martin was photographed in Craig 29 Jun (D. Barnes). Quite unusual was the presence of a group of Bushtits in a spruce-fir complex at 3060 m in the Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Area, *Routt* 11 Jul (N. Korte). A harbinger of things to come in fall, a *nelsoni* White-breasted Nuthatch was low in elevation at Chico Basin Ranch, *Pueblo* 26 Jul (B. Maynard). Three Carolina Wrens were in e. Colorado: one present most of the period at the C.C. Riverwalk (RM, SM), one at Cottonwood Canyon, *Las Animas* 3 Jul (CW, SR), and one in Denver, *Denver* 16-24 Jun (fide J. Takamine). Establishing the 2nd record for the county, a Sedge Wren briefly set up territory near Lagerman Res., *Boulder* 6-12 Jun (ph. S. Rashid). As in the previous



This singing male Sedge Wren defended its territory against rival House Wrens in rural Boulder County, Colorado at least 2 through 12 (here) June 2007. Photograph by Bill Schmoker.

summer's report, continued effort to map locations of breeding Veery found the species at a "new" site, along Navajo Cr., *Archuleta* 3 Jun (J. Beatty).

After a poor spring showing, e. warblers put on a good show this summer in Colorado. A female Golden-winged was at Crow Valley 1 Jun (m.ob.). Single singing Northern Parulas were at the Bear Creek Nature Center, *El Paso* 20-23 Jun (VAT, m.ob.) and along the C.C. Riverwalk 24 Jun (RM). Up to 4 male Chestnut-sided Warblers were seen, including one very westerly one at Grand Junction, *Mesa* 8-12 Jul (C. Brysky). Unexpected was the male Magnolia Warbler photographed at 3030 m near Brainard L., *Boulder* 3 Jun (ph. W. Szeliga). A male Black-throated Gray Warbler along Cache Cr., *Teton* 8 Jun (E. & J. Good) was out of range and habitat for Wyoming. Grace's Warblers are localized, sporadic breeders in the se. mts. of Colorado.

Two singing males were present through the period near Wetmore, *Custer* (SM, BSt), and successful nesting was observed. Up to 7 males were in rural w. *Las Animas* through the period as well (TL, AS). A singing Prairie Warbler was in n. *Larimer* 11 Jun (A. Panjabi), and a singing Blackpoll Warbler was at the Carson Nature Center, *Arapahoe* 22 Jun (JK, B. Kellner). A singing Ovenbird was in *Jefferson* 11 Jul at a previously unknown location, and another was at the Teton Science School, *Teton*, WY 16 Jun (B. Bedrosian). Quite exciting was the male Kentucky Warbler found in sw. Colorado in Dolores, *Montezuma* 6 Jun (S. Allerton et. al); there are only two prior West Slope records. For the 2nd year in a row, a pair of Hooded Warblers nested and raised young (4 this year) along the C.C. Riverwalk (RM).

With more effort expended on the search, more and more locations are found in se. Colorado that support breeding (or at least territorial) Hepatic Tanagers. In addition to 3 located in spring, a singing male was n. of Kim, *Las Animas* 16 Jun (MP, BKP); the 3 on the Bader Ranch found in spring were still present 3 Jul (CW, SR). Attractive was the blazing male Scarlet Tanager that set up territory in Gregory Canyon, *Boulder* through the season (J. Harlan, K. M. Dunning, m.ob.). The status of Brewer's Sparrow, typically an inhabitant of arid sagebrush lowlands, in high montane areas of Colorado is puzzling. Discussion continues on the possibility that some of these alpine-breeding birds might be referable to the Timberline subspecies known to breed as far s. as s. Montana. Rare for the location and habitat, a Lark Sparrow was in Jackson, *Teton* in early Jun (M. Melton). A tardy Harris's Sparrow lingered through 1 Jun near Lamar (LP).

Westerly was the male Northern Cardinal at Chatfield S.P., *Jefferson* 22 Jul (JK, GW), and somewhat unusual was the singing male Rose-breasted Grosbeak near Manitou Springs, *El Paso* in early Jun (BSt). Rare for w. Wyoming, a male Indigo Bunting set up territory in early Jun in Pinedale, *Sublette* (Phlugof family). Painted Buntings continue to be regular in summer in Cottonwood Canyon,



Backed up all the way to the western edge of Colorado's Eastern Plains and far west of the species' typical range in the state, this male Northern Cardinal brightened the woods of Chatfield State Park, Jefferson County on 22 July 2007. Photograph by Joey Kellner.

Baca/Las Animas, with at least one male observed there through a good portion of the season (BKP, MP, CW, SR). Dickcissels pushed farther w. than usual in Colorado, some even to the foothills, with sightings coming from *Las Animas*, *Custer*, *Fremont*, *Huerfano*, and *Boulder*. Eastern Meadowlarks were found again in Colorado, with one singing Lilian's in rural *Huerfano* 21 Jun-1 Jul (TL), and up to 3 Easterns at Poncha Springs, *Chaffee* 22 Jul (MP, BSt, BKP). Great-tailed Grackles continue to spread northwestward in Colorado; a male photographed at Rio Blanco S.W.A., *Rio Blanco* in early Jun (DF et al.) established a first county record. A few Baltimore Orioles pushed w. of normal in Colorado, with 2 in *Boulder* (EZ) and a pair in w. *Weld* (M. Maeda) during the period.

The avian summer sensation in Wyoming was the discovery of a pair of Black Rosy-Finches in the Snowy Range, *Albany*, very near the Colorado border, where the birds were seen 21-30 Jul (B. Waitkus, C. Benkman); the species is known to breed in Wyoming only in the Big Horns and mts. of the nw. part of the state. Brown-capped Rosy-Finches regularly breed in the Snowies, and to

SA Colorado's first Lawrence's Goldfinch, an ad. male first found 23 May, continued through 24 Jul in a Grand Junction yard (LA, m.ob.). During the early part of the bird's stay, it was seen to be associated with a female Lesser Goldfinch, exhibiting both "following flight" and "billing" behaviors that are indicative of pair formation among goldfinch species. This raised speculations about local breeding and hybridization. During 3-8 Jul, the male was seen with oddly plumaged (grayish rather than olive) juv. goldfinches visiting the yard's feeders, and was observed on several occasions to feed begging juvs., but the specific identity of these youngsters was never solidly confirmed.

our knowledge, this may represent the first documented occurrence of the two species occupying the same location during the breeding season. Irregular during any season, 2 White-winged Crossbills were in *Routt* in late Jun (AS). A Lesser Goldfinch in *Skyline, Teton*, on 7 Jun (BR) was well north and out of habitat for Wyoming.

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Idaho & Western Montana



David Trochlell

The warm and dry weather trend of late spring continued throughout the summer period but intensified beyond all expectations. After June, it was unbelievably hot; in fact, both states experienced the warmest July ever recorded in 107 years of weather data. A strong and persistent high-pressure ridge over the Rockies allowed heat to build and prevented storms or cooler Pacific marine air from penetrating inland. At most locations, records were shattered for numbers of days above 90° F and for highest temperatures. The average daily high for Missoula, Montana in July was an incredible 96.6°, which was higher than every city east of the Rocky Mountains—including those in Texas! Hot, dry conditions and irrigation drawdowns greatly diminished streams and reservoirs, if not completely depleting them. It is assumed that countless nesting waterfowl were left high and dry and that significant nest abandonment occurred, but as usual, few specific data were reported. The drought impacted nesting land birds too, as evidenced by re-

ports of scarce sagebrush-associated birds in Idaho and high mortality among Tree Swallow and Mountain Bluebird broods in Montana.

Abbreviations: Camas (Camas N.W.R., Jefferson, ID); latilong (area encompassed by a one degree latitude and one degree longitude used in mapping bird distribution in both Idaho and Montana).

DUCKS THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

A Hooded Merganser with young near Challis 4 Jun (BW) provided a rare Idaho breeding record and a first for Latilong 13. Even more spectacular was a Horned Grebe family seen in *Boundary* 11 Jul (HK) that furnished Idaho's first verified nesting record. Great Egrets are unusual in w. Montana, so singles in *Beaverhead* (NK) and *Madison* (EH) 3 Jun were noteworthy. A Snowy Plover discovered near Somers 19-21 Jun (ph. DC) was Montana's 7th. Amazingly, w. Montana's 4th Red Phalarope was at that same location 18-19 Jun (ph. DC). If accepted, a Long-tailed Jaeger at C. J. Strike Res., *Owyhee* 6 Jul (BH) would be Idaho's 11th. Always rare in the n. portion of the Region, a Franklin's Gull was near Somers, MT 20 Jul (DC). A Little Gull that stopped near Preston, ID 16 Jul (AB) will bring in Idaho's 8th report, if accepted. Bonaparte's Gulls are unusual in midsummer, so 2-7 near Somers, MT 17 Jun-31 Jul (DC) were notable. One of the highlights of the season was a Least Tern discovered near Stevensville 10 Jun (BD, ph. WT), which provided a first record for w. Montana. Eurasian Collared-Doves were recorded at new n. Idaho locations, including Bonners Ferry 23 Jun (GS) and Kamiah, Lewis 28 Jun (MH). An observation of Long-eared Owl fledglings at Craters of the Moon N.M., *Butte* 24-28 Jun (MM) confirmed breeding in Idaho's Latilong 20. In

Black Swift news, a pair seen near Powell, ID 25 Jun (MH) provided a first for Latilong 6, and in Montana, a nest site discovered in *Ravalli* 5 Jul (RP) will be the Treasure State's 4th known breeding location, if verified. The species is a rare and very local breeder in the Region, with a poorly understood life history. If accepted, an Anna's Hummingbird in *Kootenai*, ID 20-23 Jul (ph., †DW), will represent a first for the county and Latilong 2. Single vocal Alder Flycatchers were reported in *Coolin*, ID 14 Jun (RB) and *Glacier N.P.*, MT 26 Jun (PS); although increasingly reported, nesting has not been documented in the Region.

JAYS THROUGH FINCHES

Documentation of Steller's Jay fledglings near Ola, *Gem*, ID (FZ) confirmed breeding in Latilong 11. A spectacular find was a Purple Martin s. of Rexburg 29-30 May (DCI, †CW), which provided Idaho's 15th report. The only Bewick's Wren was in *Gem*, ID 30 Jul (MW), the species is rare but increasingly reported. The Wood Thrush at Camas since 19 May was last observed 14 Jun (JC). A Varied Thrush seen near Ennis L., MT 1 Jun (NK) represented a first for Latilong 38. Northern Mockingbirds made a very good showing in Idaho, with singles in *Bonneville* 2 Jun (TM), *Camas* 22 Jun (BDv), *Nez Perce* 28 Jun (TG), and *Freemont* 4 Jun-3 Jul (CW). Far less expected were those in Montana, where one was near Elliston 16 Jun (DS) and another near Gardner 30 Jun-23 Jul (EHe, JP) provided a first record in Latilong 39. A Sage Thrasher was well out of range in *Latah*, ID 2 Jun (ph. TG). Single Idaho Brown Thrashers, rare but nearly annual, were at Camas 1-3 Jun (JC) and in *Butte* 13-19 Jun (†JCI). If accepted, a Curve-billed Thrasher in *Ada* 28 Jul (†HK) will represent Idaho's 2nd record. Always rare in Mon-