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*Journal of the*

# *Colorado Field Ornithologists*

The Colorado Field Ornithologists' Quarterly

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

UPCOMING CFO FIELD TRIPS.....	196
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 2000–2001.....	198
<i>Rachel Kolokoff</i>	
RECENT ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE PERTAINING TO COLORADO, No. 9.....	201
<i>Thomas G. Shane</i>	
CFO'S ON-LINE STORE.....	202
CFO PHOTO QUIZ.....	204
MEMBERSHIP UPDATE REQUESTED.....	205
FIELD IDENTIFICATION OF WINTER GOLDFINCHES (AMERICAN VS. LESSER).....	206
<i>Alan Versaw</i>	
AMERICAN ROBINS NESTING SIDE BY SIDE.....	209
<i>Bev Blattspieler</i>	
CFO BOARD MEETING MINUTES: 19 AUGUST 2000.....	210
GREATER SCAUP INVADE BARR LAKE.....	214
<i>Tony Leukering</i>	
ANALYSIS OF COLORADO'S ONLY DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER RECORD.....	217
<i>Bob Righter</i>	
BARBED WIRE FENCE FATAL TO BURROWING OWL.....	220
<i>Scott W. Gillihan</i>	
CODES OF ETHICS ADOPTED BY CFO.....	222
NEWS FROM THE FIELD: SPRING 2000 REPORT (MARCH–MAY).....	228
<i>Tony Leukering</i>	
INDICES FOR VOLUME 34 (2000) OF THE JOURNAL OF THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS.....	248

### COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' MISSION STATEMENT

The Colorado Field Ornithologists exists to: promote the field study, Conservation, and enjoyment of Colorado Birds; review sightings of rare birds through the Colorado Bird Records Committee and maintain the authoritative list of Colorado birds; publish the *Journal of the Colorado Field Ornithologists*; conduct field trips and workshops, and hold annual conventions.

## UPCOMING CFO FIELD TRIPS

Remember your codes. “Lookie Lou” is for easygoing bird watching. “Gotcha’ Birdie” is for intense, fast-paced counting trips. Educational trips don’t need a code, i.e., banding demo’s, habitat research, biological surveys, etc. For the very latest information on trips, visit the CFO web site at:

<http://www.cfo-link.org>

### 21 October 2000 (Saturday)

“Feathers and Fire” (an educational trip – **\*\*not\*\*** a listing trip) (weather permitting). See the Hi Meadow and Buffalo Creek burns, and some prescription burns (time permitting) in ponderosa forests. The trip leader has conducted breeding bird surveys at these sites for 4 years. She will focus on the ecology of birds associated with those burns, including Olive-sided Flycatchers and Three-toed Woodpeckers. Expect ~1-3 miles of walking on flat to somewhat-sloped areas (often by trail) at 6800-7500' elevation. Start point will be the Colorado Trailhead parking lot, ~5 miles south of the town of Buffalo Creek in Pike National Forest. Trip will last ½ day or more, depending on interest and fatigue levels. Led by Cynthia Melcher. Please call her days at 970-226-9258 (ok to call nights—leave name and number for call back) or email her at <birdswords@yahoo.com> for meeting time and instructions. Limited to 20 people. NOTE: Be aware that hunting occurs in the area; you will need to wear BRIGHTLY colored clothing.

### 11 November 2000 (Saturday)

All-day trip for Lookie Lou’s. Lathrop State Park with Pearle Sandstrom-Smith and Clif Smith. Bring lunch, something to drink, and dress for fall in Colorado. Meet at Lathrop State Park 8 a.m. in the visitor center parking lot. Joint trip with Arkansas Valley Audubon Society (AVAS). Walk with the bushtits and other pinyon/juniper species. We’ll see if the resident roadrunner is still checking out bird feeder stations. Waterfowl on two lakes and several ponds. Lathrop is worth seeing. Then we’ll check out other “hot spots” in Huerfano County. For details call: Pearle or Clif at 719-543-6427. Sorry! We have no e-mail.

### 19 November 2000 (Sunday)

Gotcha’ Birdie! Meet at 8 a.m. at Cherry Creek Reservoir at swim beach parking on the east side of the reservoir. To quote Doug Faulkner, your leader, it will be a “bird ‘til you drop” birding day! Bring a lunch and something to drink. Doug will lead you on an exciting day at Cherry Creek Reservoir and Chatfield and wherever the birds take you. For details call Doug at CBO 303-659-4348 or e-mail him at <pomjaeger@AOL.com>

25 November 2000 (Saturday)

Lookie Lou and I kinda' gotcha' with Dave Leatherman. He's back, he's birding, and he's leading a trip to Douglas and Riverside and Pawnee.... Oh! My! Meet at 8 a.m., Carl's Jr. restaurant parking lot in Fort Collins at the intersection of Mulberry and Riverside, just west of the river on the right (north) side of the road. (Off I-25 take exit to Hwy. 14.) Bring a lunch and something to drink. For details call Dave at 970-416-0193.

Another reminder: Please participate in a local, statewide, or international Christmas Bird Count (CBC). They begin December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2000 and end January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2001! CBCs are conducted all over the state and it is a great opportunity to combine fun and gathering scientific data to help protect our feathered friends. Visit the CFO website for more details.

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RUMOR HAS IT YOU ARE....FIELD TRIP LEADER MATERIAL

If you would like to lead a field trip, CFO is interested. You do not need a life list of 700. A previous visit to Attu or Costa Rica is not required. All you need is a little knowledge of your favorite birding spot and a willingness to share. CFO provides the birders, the publicity, the enthusiasm. The only requirement is that you show up, keep a list of the birds you see, and report to the Journal how much fun you all had on your trip! Prospective leaders please contact Pearle Sandstrom-Smith at 719-543-6427.

\*\*\*\*\*

NOTICE TO FIELD TRIP PARTICIPANTS

Please contact the field trip leader at least one week ahead if you plan to participate. Trips often go where participant numbers must be limited or where notice of participant numbers is required. Contacting the leader in advance also helps him/her plan the best possible trip, ensures that you know where/when to meet, what to bring, etc. Please arrive no later than the scheduled meeting time; leaders may not be able to delay departure for late arrivals. Carpool drivers should inform passengers of their schedule prior to departure to avoid scheduling conflicts. Leaders will make every effort to keep the group together, and drivers should make every effort to stay with the group.



## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 2000–2001

Compiled by Rachel Kolokoff

Indian Peaks Winter Bird Count: Dec. 15-Jan. 31

This is a winter census. Counters are allowed a wide range of latitude in doing their blocks because of potential weather problems.

Dave Hallock

eldoradh@peakpeak.com

Pueblo Reservoir CBC: Saturday, Dec. 16

Mark Yaeger

719-543-2724.

Longmont CBC: Saturday, Dec. 16

Ron Harden

970-667-4977

Rocky Mountain National Park CBC: Saturday, Dec. 16

Meet at Park Headquarters at 8 a.m.

Scott Roederer

970-586-8812

osprey@verinet.com

Fort Collins CBC: Saturday, Dec. 16

Cynthia Melcher

970-226-9258

birdswords@yahoo.com

Aiken Audubon Society (C-Springs) CBC: Saturday, Dec. 16

Ben or Sally Sorensen

719-635-1716

Denver CBC: Saturday, Dec. 16

Dick Schottler

303-278-8035

birdschot@uswest.net

Hamilton Reservoir CBC: Sunday, Dec. 17

Dr. Ron Ryder

970-482-8089

ronr@lamar.colostate.edu

Penrose CBC: Sunday, Dec. 17

7:30 a.m. at 518 A Street, Penrose

Potluck dinner at above address for compilation

Rosie Watts

719-372-6679

jr watts@attglobal.net

Boulder CBC: Sunday, Dec. 17

Bill Kaempfer

303-443-3175 (h) and 303-492-6923 (w)

kaempfer@colorado.edu

Grand Junction CBC: Sunday, Dec 17

Rich Levad

970-523-0111

levadgj@juno.com

Rocky Ford CBC: Monday, Dec. 18

Meet at the Loaf 'n Jug in Rocky Ford at 7 a.m.

Mark Janos

719-544-5002

rednot@hotmail.com

Westcliff CBC: Saturday, Dec. 23

Dave Johnson

719-545-5548

Barr Lake CBC: Saturday, Dec. 30

Tony Leukering

303-659-4348

GreatGrayO@aol.com

Douglas County CBC: Saturday, Dec. 30

Call Roxborough State Park/303-973-3959 to sign up by 12/26

Ann Bonnell

abonnell@juno.com

Greeley CBC: Saturday, Dec. 30

Dick Maxfield

970-353-0953

maxfield@home.com

Lake Isabel CBC: Saturday, Dec. 30  
Dave Silverman  
719-489-3565

NEW! Loveland CBC: Sunday, Dec. 31  
Tony Leukering  
303-659-4348  
GreatGrayO@aol.com

Pueblo CBC: Sunday, Dec. 31  
Mike Ketchen  
719-547-9134

Denver Urban CBC: Monday, Jan. 1  
Hugh Kingery  
303-814-2723  
ouzels@juno.com



Evening Grosbeak, by Tony Leukering

**RECENT ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE  
PERTAINING TO COLORADO, No. 9**

Thomas G. Shane, Editor  
1706 Belmont  
Garden City, KS 67846

If the reader is aware of any paper regarding Colorado birds in journals not reviewed regularly in this section, I would appreciate a reprint or a full citation for the paper so that I may include it in this feature.

Fletcher, Robert J. Jr., Shawn T. McKinney, and Carl E. Bock. 1999. Effects of recreational trails on wintering diurnal raptors along riparian corridors in a Colorado grassland. *The Journal of Raptor Research* 33(3):233–239. In eastern Boulder County, trails appear to have a negative affect on wintering raptor populations.

Lutz, R. Scott, and David L. Plumpton. 1999. Philopatry and nest site reuse by Burrowing Owls: implications for productivity. *The Journal of Raptor Research* 33(2):149–153.

At the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, Adams County, 19% of males, 14% of females, and 5% of banded nestlings returned the following year. Reuse rate of nest sites the following year was males 75% and females 63%.

Shackford, John S., David M. Leslie, Jr., and Warren D. Harden. 1999. Range-wide use of cultivated fields by Mountain Plovers during the breeding season. *Journal of Field Ornithology* 70(1):114–120.

In an eight-state study, including Colorado, nest loss was high due to farm machinery; however, significant numbers of chicks were observed in cultivated areas which should play an important role in the conservation of Mountain Plover.

Skagen, Susan K., Thomas R. Stanley, and M. Beth Dillon. 1999. Do mammalian nest predators follow human scent trails in the shortgrass prairie? *The Wilson Bulletin* 111(3):415–420.

Scent trails by human investigators traveling between nests of passerines do not appear to lower nesting success on the shortgrass prairie of Weld County.





## NEW! CFO'S ON-LINE STORE

Rachel Kolokoff  
1721 Cottonwood Pt. Dr.  
Ft. Collins, CO 80524  
970-495-1751

Shade-Grown Coffee, Books, Optics, Gardening, Gifts. All Of Your Purchases Benefit CFO.

CFO has a new on-line store, accessed through our main page at <<http://www.cfo-link.org>>. CFO members and non-members alike can shop and save through our site.

Our on-line store was developed as an affiliate through Birding.com, a web site developed and run by Pete Thayer (Thayer's Birding Software: Birder's Diary and Birds of North America). As an affiliate, CFO can offer thousands of items for sale through our web site at discounted rates and *a portion of all sales go to our organization.*

For ease of shopping, items are organized into categories, a few of which are: astronomy, birds, bird feeders, butterflies, insects & spiders, conservation, gardening, geology, natural history, optics and plants. More on some of these items in the next journal!

### A Focus on Shade-Grown Coffee

One of the great items for sale through our site is Song Bird Shade-grown Coffee from the Thanksgiving Company (<http://www.songbirdcoffee.com>). The Thanksgiving Coffee Company has been a socially- and environmentally-aware coffee producer for over 25 years.

Traditionally and naturally, most coffee has been grown in the shade of rainforests. Sadly, since 1972, farmers have been encouraged to increase crop yields by clear-cutting their farms and switching to new sun-tolerant hybrids. This slow but steady conversion to sun-grown coffee has resulted in massive deforestation that continues to this day. Sun growing coffee has also increased pollution by requiring chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides that are unnecessary for shade growing coffee.

In addition, many birds familiar to North Americans, migrate to the canopies of Latin American rainforests. In fact, 33% of all migratory birds that breed in the

United States spend winter in coffee growing areas of Latin America. In the midst of shrinking rainforest habitat, migratory birds have found sanctuary in shade-grown farms.

Shade coffee farms support over 150 species of birds. This is a far greater number than is found in other agricultural habitats and is only slightly exceeded in undisturbed rainforests.

Thanksgiving Coffee (available through the CFO website) uses verified shade grown coffee. The company's certification includes its plant and processing, a level of inspection beyond that undertaken by most producers. All Thanksgiving's organics are shade-grown as well as certified organic.

Song Bird Coffee is available as ground or whole bean and selections include: Costa Rica Light Roast, Decaffeinated New Orleans Blend, French Roast, Guatemalan Light Roast, Hazelnut Flavored, and Nicaraguan Blend Medium Roast. Available at a list price of \$9.75 per 12 ounce bag, CFO is offering it to you at the discounted rate of \$9.17 through our on-line store.

Enjoy a great cup of coffee, help farmers working to save our environment and support CFO at the same time!

### Shop CFO and Save

Shopping at our on-line store is safe. Visa and Master Card credit cards are accepted through our secure site and your order is shipped directly to you. Returns are always accepted. Damaged or defective items are replaced at no charge.

Customer questions or problems concerning an order will be handled by Birding.com at 800-865-2473 or via e-mail at: [customer\\_service@birding.com](mailto:customer_service@birding.com).

If you would like to order from the store but do not have Internet access, I can help. Give me a call at 970-495-1751 to discuss the options!

Help CFO and save money at the same time! Shop first at our on-line store!

For more information on songbirds and shade-grown coffee, also visit the following websites: <http://www.songbird.org> and <http://www.rainforest-alliance.org>

(Some information reprinted with permission from [songbirdcoffee.com](http://songbirdcoffee.com)).



## CFO PHOTO QUIZ

Christopher L. Wood  
School of Public and Environmental Affairs  
Indiana University, Bloomington  
zeledonia@att.net

It is my pleasure to announce the development of the Colorado Field Ornithologists' bird web photo quiz, available at Colorado Field Ornithologists' Home Page.

This bird quiz will include images of birds that people could see while birding in Colorado. In selecting photos for this page, I hope to mirror some problems birders face in the field. As you would expect, I will include photos of sparrows, flycatchers, gulls, terns and shorebirds. But, there will also be photos of distant birds, photos showing only parts of birds, and photos that are otherwise difficult to identify. The vast majority of quizzes will include birds that are on CFO's Official State Bird List (also available from CFO's homepage). Of course, be prepared for a surprise or two, just as you would be while birding Colorado.

I would really like it if everyone would send their answers to me—even if you think you will be wrong, or know you will be wrong. It is CFO's intention that this be a learning tool for people interested in birds. This quiz is designed for birders of all skill levels. While the birds will often be very difficult to ID, sometimes for some of the nation's best birders, people of all skill levels will be able to learn from these quizzes. By sending me your answers, hopefully, I can explain how one can tell what you thought the bird was, from what it actually is. Indeed, from some responses I have received, some people have considered birds that I would not have thought about. (And they have been very good answers). Since I know that, I will be able to discuss those species in the "photo discussion/answer." For example, if, in the responses I get, everyone who emails me can tell an image is of an Empid, I will probably not address other flycatchers in my discussion. Of course, there probably would have been a lot of people who may have thought the bird was a wood-pewee, since the two can look very similar. However, I would not know that unless you tell me!

I PROMISE that the names of people who did not correctly identify the birds will not be posted, or shared with anyone. I will be the only person who knows who entered the quiz. I do not know of a single birder who has not mis-identified a bird, especially from one still photo. So if you miss a bird, or even

all the birds all the time, I will certainly not think any less of you. Indeed, I will have a great amount of respect for people who try to answer the bird quiz and get it wrong because I will realize they, like myself, are just trying to become better birders!

The quiz can be accessed from CFO's homepage: <http://www.cfo-link.org>

To reach the photo quiz from the main CFO page, check the left-hand frame (you may have to hit your refresh button) and look near the bottom of the list of links for "Photo Quiz." Click there. E-mail answers to Chris Wood ([quizmaster@cfo-link.org](mailto:quizmaster@cfo-link.org)) with your name and, preferably, with some comments of why you identified each photo as the species you did. I will post the answers, along with a fairly detailed discussion of the photos, near the end of each month. I hope to utilize comments I receive from people answering the quiz, so the more detailed the answers the better. People who correctly answer ALL of the photos each month will have their names posted along with the answers.

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## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE REQUESTED

Sending out group e-mails is a quick and cost effective way to share information with a vast majority of our members. A CFO group e-mail list has been established but needs to be updated. ALL CFO members with e-mail addresses are asked to send their current e-mail address (and any other updated information such as a new mailing address or phone number, etc.) to Raymond Davis, Membership Chair at <[Ndavis5332@aol.com](mailto:Ndavis5332@aol.com)>.

This information is ONLY for internal use and will not be shared with any other organization.

Members with e-mail may receive (from time to time) current information about CFO such as; updated field trip dates, information about the website (<http://www.cfo-link.org>), specials at our on-line store, or administrative information relating to CFO and the Colorado Bird Records Committee.

If you do not want your e-mail address on this list, you must request to have it removed. Please send a note to Davis and he will promptly comply.



## FIELD IDENTIFICATION OF WINTER GOLDFINCHES (AMERICAN VS. LESSER)

Alan Versaw  
403 Maplewood Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

As Lesser Goldfinches (*Carduelis psaltria*) expand their range in Colorado and throughout the interior West, we stand to learn much about the species by carefully following the patterns of that expansion. Unfortunately, however, winter goldfinches present a few problems of identification that are poorly addressed, if at all, in the field guides. Even for people who understand that American Goldfinches (*Carduelis tristis*) wear contrasting summer and winter plumages, winter American Goldfinches bear a sufficient resemblance to female (adult and immature) Lesser Goldfinches to elicit misidentifications.

The identification points elaborated in this paper are drawn mostly from winter observations out of my kitchen window in Colorado Springs. On occasion, though, I have had opportunity to “field test” my observations at feeders in other locations during winter. I have found that these points of identification drawn from my backyard are consistent over a broad range. While I cannot affirm with certainty that these differences hold over all areas of the winter range of the two species of goldfinches, I also have no reason to believe that the differences are not consistent throughout North America.

Adult male Lesser Goldfinches present no problems of identification. Adult males wear essentially the same plumage throughout the year and are easily identified. Even immature winter males look enough like the adult males, with a black forecrown, darker back coloration (typically an olive-green color) and distinctly yellowish breast, to forestall any potential confusion with American Goldfinches. All potential problems of misidentification reside in the confusions between winter American Goldfinches (all ages and sexes) and female Lesser Goldfinches of any age. Fortunately, the differences are relatively easy to detect if the observer pays careful attention to a few important discriminators.

Perhaps the most easily seen and reliable discriminator concerns the backs of the two species. Female and immature Lesser Goldfinches invariably have an olive-greenish hue to their napes and backs. Winter American Goldfinches, on the other hand, have a warm brownish-gray (female) or yellowish-brown (male) cast to their napes and backs. Additionally, the backs of Lesser Goldfinches

show thin, longitudinal streaking, whereas the back of a winter American Goldfinch is fairly uniform in color and free of streaking. At the bottom of the back, the uppertail coverts of the American Goldfinch are whitish or grayish and paler than the color of the back. By way of contrast, the uppertail coverts of female and immature Lesser Goldfinches are greenish and only slightly, if at all, lighter than the rest of the back.

The throat and face of a male American Goldfinch typically show some warm yellow coloration during winter, but this tinge of color usually terminates in the upper breast. Female winter American Goldfinches show no yellowish color in either the throat or belly. In both the male and female American Goldfinch, the chest and belly area is “clean” and free of streaking. Coloration ranges from brownish-gray to nearly white. Feathering on the upper portion of the legs is light and similar to the color of the uppertail coverts. Female and immature Lesser Goldfinches, on the other hand, wear a muted greenish-yellow color on their chests and bellies, extending (at least in some individuals) down to the feathering on the legs. Additionally, the chests of female and immature Lesser Goldfinches show a faint, highly diffused, streaking that is visible only at close range. Birds at feeders, however, are often sufficiently close to permit detection of the diffused streaking in the breast of female Lesser Goldfinches.

Edgings of the tail feathers provide a somewhat more difficult point of differentiation. The tail feathers of winter American Goldfinches typically exhibit fairly broad lighter edges, often producing the appearance of a longitudinal streak down the center of the folded tail. The outer edges of the tail feathers of Lesser Goldfinches are also lighter, but they do not produce the same appearance of a longitudinal streak through the tail. This is because the lighter edges of the tail feathers of winter female Lesser Goldfinches are narrower than those on the American Goldfinch and offer less contrast with the central portions of the feathers.

For those intimately familiar with goldfinch vocalizations, the Lesser Goldfinch’s plaintive call notes can be used for winter identification.

Most other differences between the two species revolve around size and the somewhat variable wing and tail patterns. Although American Goldfinches are *invariably* larger than Lesser Goldfinches (most single-dimensional measurements will be 10-20% larger), this size difference is difficult to judge except when individuals of both species perch in close proximity. Similarly, the head of the winter American Goldfinch does appear more evenly rounded than the head of the Lesser Goldfinch, but this also is most easily seen when birds of both species are in view.

It must be further noted, however, that some points of differentiation between the two species that can be used in summer cannot be used in winter. Most important among these is the leg and bill color. While the legs and bills of American Goldfinches (particularly males) change to a pinkish color during breeding season, they change to a color almost as dark as that of the legs and bills of Lesser Goldfinches in winter. Only under the most ideal lighting conditions can leg and bill color be used to distinguish goldfinches in winter. Even then, far better discriminators exist and should be given priority of usage.



**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS:  
RONALD A. RYDER AWARD FOR  
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGY**

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**SELECTION CRITERIA**

1. For distinguished service to the Colorado Field Ornithologists and its goals.
2. For scholarly contributions to the Colorado Field Ornithologists and to Colorado field ornithology.
3. For sharing knowledge of Colorado field ornithology with the people of Colorado.

**NOMINATION & SELECTION PROCESS**

1. The Award will be given every year.
2. Only living persons may be nominated.
3. Nominations may be made by the membership at large.
4. The Board selects and approves an awardee for **announcement at the Annual Colorado Field Ornithologists' Convention.**
5. The Award will be a plaque designed to match the original plaque given to Dr. Ronald A. Ryder.
6. **Nominations should be submitted in writing to the Award Committee Chairperson on or before February 1** to be considered by the Colorado Field Ornithologists' Board of Directors.

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Submit nominations to Award Committee Chair:  
Rich Levad, 2924 Ronda Lee Road, Grand Junction, Colorado 81503  
970/242-3979; levadgj@mesa.k12.co.us



## AMERICAN ROBINS NESTING SIDE BY SIDE

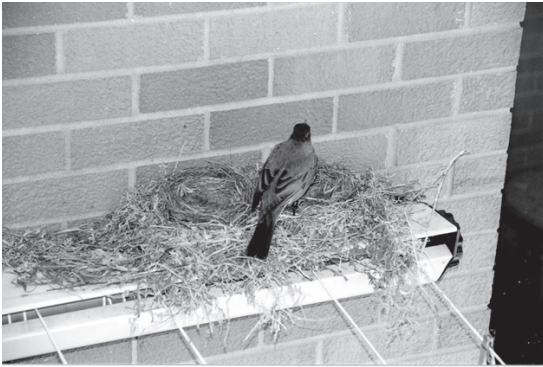
Bev Blattspieler  
3010 Marilyn Road  
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

We have been feeding robins on our windowsill for over 20 years. Every spring a male robin comes in the early part of March and claims our yard as his territory. Often we have had the same male robin for several years in a row. Then a female arrives and they nest.

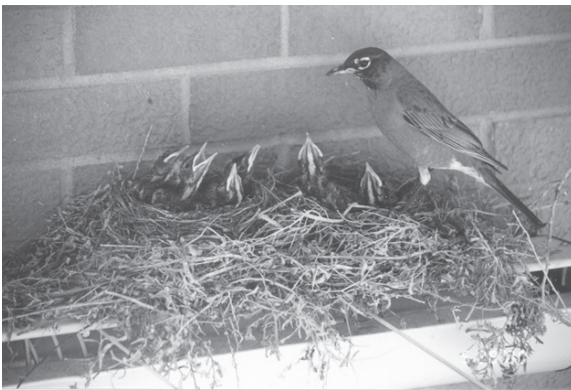
In 1998 a very special female robin adopted us. She was a large, beautiful bird and she loved people. But she was aggressive toward other robins, except her mate. She would almost eat raisins out of hand and would zoom our heads begging for worms. We call her Big Mama. Once she gently pecked my finger as I was adjusting a twig on her nest so I could get a better picture.

This spring (2000) she started a nest in the wood pile and then abandoned it. Within a short time we noticed two nests together on our clothesline attachment. The pictures tell the rest of the story.





Big Mama was a willing subject but the other birds were camera shy. She stayed with the nests all the time and the other birds brought food. We did see three robins on the nests at one time but we were never sure if there was a second male.



As soon as they were able, the nestlings moved back and forth between the two nests. All six nestlings fledged.

## **CFO BOARD MEETING MINUTES: 19 AUGUST 2000**

The regular quarterly meeting of the Colorado Field Ornithologists was held on Saturday, August 19, 2000 at 10:00 a.m. at the office of the Colorado Bird Observatory, Brighton, the President being in the chair and the Secretary present. Board members attending: BB Hahn, Raymond Davis, Scott Gillihan, Tony Leukering, Rachel Kolokoff, Pearle Sandstrom-Smith, Leon Bright, and Bob Spencer. The minutes of the prior meeting were approved as corrected.

### President's Report

Incoming president Mark Janos remarked that, "This is a thrill. I'm happy to be here and do this."

### Treasurer's Report

BB Hahn reported that current net assets are \$24,674.11. A detailed financial report was submitted into the records. She noted that the 2000 Convention in Grand Junction was extremely successful as a fund raising event.

She has not received a bill for the plaque for the home owners association in Ft. Collins which will be presented from CFO. She inquired into the status of the plaque and the billing.

The treasurer submitted a new Indemnification and Corporate Resolution for the board's approval. Leon Bright moved that the resolution be accepted and the president, Mark Janos, and the Secretary, Sherry Chapman be allowed to sign checks or transfer funds from our investments in the event that the treasurer is unable to do so. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### Colorado Bird Records Committee

Submitted records for 1999 are resolved with 86% being accepted. Three additions to the state list resulted—Iceland Gull, Zone-tailed Hawk and Common Ground-Dove. This brings the official State Checklist to a total of 468.

Tony Leukering highlighted the committee report for Bill Lisowsky who has moved to Kentucky but will continue as acting chair through the end of the year. Bill recommended that Tony fill the remainder of his term as chair beginning in 2001, and also serve as chairman for a full three-year term which will expire on December 31, 2005. John Vanderpoel, Dave Ely, and Brandon Percival were recommended to fill upcoming vacancies on the committee. All four recommendations were approved by the board.

### Field Trips

Pearle Sandstrom-Smith reported that the Arizona trip led by Jim Dennis of CDOW was an enormous success and Jim will send a report to Scott Gillihan for the Journal.

She has arranged the following trips for this year and into 2001: Bill and Inez Prather will lead a trip to Jim Jamm Park on October 7, Cynthia Melcher will lead a habitat discovery trip to Buffalo Creek on October 14 or 21, Doug Faulkner will lead a trip in November (date and destination to be announced), and Tony Leukering will conduct a gull identification workshop and lead field trips in the Longmont/ Loveland area on March 9-11, 2001.

### Journal Editor

Scott Gillihan plans to streamline the "Guidelines for Authors" and will publish them in the next Journal edition. He also mentioned that no corporate sponsors for the Journal have been arranged but he plans to make more effort on this in September.

Scott gave each board member a copy of the present CFO membership application and requested that any ideas for the new design be submitted to him with the November board meeting being the deadline. The board requested that the new design and printed brochures be completed by April of 2001.

### Membership

Raymond Davis reported that the current membership stands at 367 members. A list of expired memberships was given to each board member with the request for a personal contact if a board member thinks that anyone simply forgot to renew for 2000.

### Website

Rachel Kolokoff reported that the on-line store is set up. The profit margins are set at approximately 10-35%. She tested the shopping process and feels that it is quite easy and that the merchandise prices are in line with other web sites. Rachel requested that board members shop the CFO website and other sites to compare prices on various items. She will write an article for the upcoming JCFO issue announcing the on-line store and will also advise COBIRDS subscribers of our on-line store.

She also noted that Chris Wood has volunteered to handle the bird identification quiz that will be added to the website.

Ronald A. Ryder Award

The committee has no current nominations for the award. Leon Bright moved that special awards responsibilities be moved from the Funded Projects committee to the Ronald A. Ryder Award committee, and that the name of the committee be changed to Awards Committee. The motion was seconded and passed.

Unfinished Business

2001 Convention: Mark Janos announced that Mark Yaeger has agreed to serve as chairman for the 2001 Convention which will be held in Pueblo. Mark and Pearle are working on finalizing the convention site and locating a speaker. The board approved the dates of May 18-20 with May 25-27 being an acceptable alternative if a speaker is not available for the earlier weekend.

New Business

Funded Projects: Treasurer BB Hahn recommended that the sum of \$1,500 be allocated to the fund this year. Sherry Chapman moved that the recommendation be accepted. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The next quarterly meeting of the board will be held in Pueblo on November 18 at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Sherry P. Chapman, Secretary

CFO WEBSITE

We invite you to browse the Colorado Field Ornithologists' website. If you don't own a computer, check your local library. Visit the site regularly, because new items and changes appear frequently. The Internet address is:

<http://www.cfo-link.org>

## GREATER SCAUP INVADE BARR LAKE

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Andrews and Righter (1992) describe Greater Scaup as a “rare migrant and winter resident in eastern Colorado.” Field work by numerous birders in Colorado subsequent to that publication has noted many more records, but hasn’t substantially changed our understanding of the species’ status in the state. Unfortunately, Andrews and Righter didn’t provide a state maximum for Greater Scaup, but personal experience and conversations with many Colorado birders suggests that that state maximum is on the order of two digits, probably not much exceeding 45 or 50.

In late March 2000, it became apparent that there was a large number of diving ducks on Barr Lake after a migratory build-up in mid-late March. In the late morning of 22 March, Doug Faulkner and I noticed that there was an astounding number of diving ducks on the lake, so we took a break from work and walked up onto the dam with our scopes to sort through them. As I started panning across the water’s surface, I noticed that the birds were mostly scaup and that an unusually-large percentage of the scaup were Greater.

As I usually consider birding more interesting than work, I decided to be thorough about estimating the numbers of the various species of diving ducks on the lake. So, I decided to count the ducks present by ones and specifically identify every 25<sup>th</sup> duck. Since there appeared to be over 1000 ducks present, I figured that the resultant sample size of over 50 would provide a reasonably-scientific estimate of the ratio of duck species present. As it turned out, there was little in the way of variation in duck species on the lake. Every one of the identified sample was either a Greater Scaup, a Lesser Scaup, or an unidentified scaup. Though there were a few Ring-necked Ducks present, there were so few as to avoid being counted in the sample (probably <13). I did not count those ducks that were so far south on the lake as to be unidentifiable to genus or even tribe. Thus, my count was a bare-minimum estimate of the number of birds present on the lake.

After completing my scan in about 20 minutes, my sample sizes were eight unidentified scaup, seven Lesser Scaup, and 32 Greater Scaup. Since my entire count was of 1320 diving ducks, the extrapolation of the sample to the

population produced the following (incredible) numbers: 203 unidentified scaup, 178 Lesser Scaup, and 939 Greater Scaup! I decided to perform further extrapolation, so determined the ratio of identified Lessers to Greater (17:32) and extrapolated that ratio to the total of unidentified scaup. This produced a total count of 228 Lesser Scaup and 1092 Greater Scaup! That total is two orders of magnitude higher than the previous state maximum!

After work that evening, I drove east to Prospect and Horsecreek reservoirs in Weld and Adams/Weld counties, respectively, specifically to see how local this unreal flight of Greater Scaup was. Of the 55-60 scaup I saw on Prospect Reservoir, at least 42 were Greater and 12 or more of the 20-25 scaup on Horsecreek Reservoir were Greater. I posted to the COBIRDS listserv about this phenomenon. I was primarily interested in alerting Colorado birders in order to encourage them to document the extent of this event and to look for Tufted Duck, as the first state record for that species occurred with a substantial grounding of migrant Greater Scaup (Plooster 1997, pers. obs.). Despite numerous birders' efforts, no other large congregation of Greater Scaup was found. On the 28<sup>th</sup>, Karleen Schofield found an adult male Tufted Duck amongst all the scaup when she came to Barr Lake to study scaup identification. On the 29<sup>th</sup>, there were substantially fewer scaup on the lake and by the end of the month, there were fewer than 150 scaup still there.

I surmise that Greater Scaup is probably a regular migrant in numbers through Colorado's airspace, but that they overfly the state most of the time, with only scattered small numbers being found on the state's water bodies. However, occasionally, a flock flying through will encounter weather conditions that make further migration a bad option and the birds descend to local water bodies to await better conditions. I recall that, after an abnormally-balmy day on the 19<sup>th</sup> (high of 63°F; National Weather Service 2000), a cold front passed through the area on the night of the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> producing rain and strong, north winds. The 21<sup>st</sup> saw abnormally-cold temperatures with a high of 35°F and a low of 23°F at the weather station at Denver International Airport (National Weather Service 2000). These are precisely the conditions required to drop actively-migrating waterbirds (R. Wiltraut pers. comm., P. Lehman pers. comm., pers. obs.).

I suspect that a large flock (or flocks) of scaup, inspired by the lovely weather to the south, were heading north and ran into the cold front at or near Barr Lake. The rapidly-deteriorating weather conditions probably convinced the birds to suspend migration and put in at the nearest handy water body. That the vast majority of Greater Scaup found in eastern Colorado in this time period

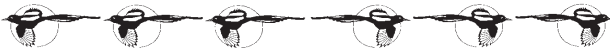
were on Barr Lake with smaller numbers on the nearest neighboring reservoirs indicates that this was a very local phenomenon and, I believe, supports my theory.

### Acknowledgments

Thanks to Doug Faulkner, Bill Maynard, Karleen Schofield, and Chris Wood, among others, for confirming that I wasn't crazy and that there was, indeed, an incredible number of Greater Scaup present on Barr Lake. Thanks also to Karleen for her report on the Tufted Duck which, hopefully, will be published in these pages in the near future. Final thanks to Rick Wiltraut and Paul Lehman for imparting their knowledge about waterbird fallouts to me, recently and many years in the past.

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### JOURNAL SPONSORS WANTED

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## ANALYSIS OF COLORADO'S ONLY DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER RECORD

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Colorado's first and only record to date of the Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) was collected by P. M. Thorne at Fort Lyon, Bent Co., Colorado on 11 May 1883 (Thorne 1889; Bailey and Niedrach 1965). The specimen was sent to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where William Brewster identified it as a Dusky-capped Flycatcher. The specimen was then placed in Brewster's personal collection. When Brewster died in 1919, his 40,000-specimen collection, including Thorne's discovery, was donated to Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ) (Davis and Jackson 1995). Thorne's specimen acquired the MCZ tag number 225,639. At a later date, but prior to the publication of Birds of Colorado in 1965, Dr. Raymond A Paynter Jr., then Curator of MCZ, authenticated the presence of Thorne's specimen in the MCZ collection (Bailey and Niedrach 1965).

On 21 May 1984, J. V. Remsen, Curator of Birds and Adjunct Professor of Biological Services for the Museum of Natural Science at Louisiana State University, wrote a letter to Steve Jones, then the Chairman of the Colorado Bird Records Committee. Remsen stated he had looked at Thorne's specimen and it was a Dusky-capped Flycatcher. He further wrote "It is the small subspecies olivascens of NW Mexico-SW U. S. as identified on the original label." This letter is in the Colorado Bird Records Committee files at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

While there is no doubt of the identification of Thorne's specimen as a Dusky-capped Flycatcher, the evidence in Colorado's Records Committee files of this species is anecdotal as it is based solely on someone else's word. On 16 June 2000 while at MCZ, I measured and photographed Thorne's specimen.

### **Thorne's specimen, its tags and measurement information**

#### Specimen

Thorne's specimen was in fairly good shape considering it is over 100 years old. The only noticeable disfigurement was that its head was loosely joined to its body. The color of the ventral side of all of the retrices (tail feathers)



appeared a dun brown color, there was not even a hint of rufous to any of the underside of the retrices. The specimen didn't appear any different in size, coloration, or markings than the rest of the Dusky-capped specimens that were in the same collection tray.

#### Specimen tags

There were two tags attached to a leg of the specimen. One side of the first tag contained the following information: "No 143 Capt P M Thorne USA Myiarchus t olivascens M ad Fort Lyon Colorado May 11 1883." The other side of the first tag contained the following information: "No 143 7+9+3.9 ["only one seen here in 5 years"] yes! W.B." Alison Pirie, the associate collection manager at MCZ, confirmed that W. B. referred to William Brewster. From the following information one could speculate this tag belonged to Thorne.

One side of the second tag contained the following information; "25639 Sex M. Colorado (Fort Lyon) May 11, 1883." The other side of the second tag contained the following information, "MCZ 225639 Capt. P. M Thorne..." Also on the same side was printed "...Collection of William Brewster," which implied the tag was printed especially for Brewster.

#### Specimen measurement

All of the measurements taken on Thorne's specimen complied with Pyle (1997).

Total length of specimen: Since the head was loosely connected to the body, the exact length of the specimen from tip of bill to tip of outer retrices could only be an approximation, which was 150-160 mm.

Wing cord measurement: Taken from an "unflattened" position was 78 mm, and from a "flattened" position was 79 mm.

Bill measurement: From the nares (nostril) to the bill tip was 12 mm; the bill width as measured from its ventral side aligned with the nares was 7 mm; the bill depth measurement was not possible since the two mandibles could not be completely closed.

Retrices length measurement: From in between the two, center rectrix was 60-63mm.

Primary length ratio: Primary number four was longer than primary 10 by ca. 3 mm.

From all of the above measurements, as well as the color of the ventral retrices, any other reasonably to be expected *Myiarchus* flycatcher is categorically ruled out.

### Who was P. M. Thorne?

According to a biography written by Joel A. Allen for Biographies of Members of the American Ornithologist Union (Palmer 1954), Platte Marvin Thorne enlisted in the Army during the Civil War and became a member of General Slocum's staff and later became Acting Inspector-General to General Sheridan. By the end of the war he had risen to the rank of Brevetted Lieutenant Colonel. After the war he was put in command of an Army company which traveled through out the west; Fort Thorne, New Mexico was named after him. After retiring from the U. S. Army he became interested in ornithology and was elected an Associate Member to the A. O. U. in 1885. Allen goes on the say "He was a careful, conscientious observer, and made a considerable collection of ornithological specimens, many of which have been generously loaned or presented to specialists for examination or study."

This biographical sketch points out Thorne was a trustworthy individual and would be unlikely to state a location which he was not at.

### Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Alison Pirie the associate collection manager at MCZ who graciously made the specimen available for examination.

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## BARBED WIRE FENCE FATAL TO BURROWING OWL

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On 20 July 1999, while conducting Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) surveys in Logan County for the Colorado Bird Observatory, I found a dead Burrowing Owl impaled on a barbed wire fence. The owl had apparently collided with the fence and was caught by the wing on a set of barbs. The carcass was desiccated and decomposed, but was still identifiable as a Burrowing Owl. The fence was along a county road in an area of cattle pastures and bordered a prairie dog colony of approximately 200 acres. I saw only one other Burrowing Owl in the area, although it was late morning and other owls might have been underground.

Collisions with human-made objects result in the mortality of staggering numbers of birds. Estimates of the annual death toll in North America include 2–4 million from collisions with communications towers and their guy wires (Kane 1998), and 98–976 million from collisions with buildings and windows (Klem 1990). Wire fences built to exclude deer from pine plantations in Europe pose a documented hazard for birds, and collisions with the fences are considered a significant cause of mortality for some species (Baines and Summers 1997). Barbed wire and other fences seem to be a particular problem for owls (Fitzner 1975), possibly because rodent prey are more common along fencelines, where vegetation is often denser and taller. Also, hunting owls may focus their attention so completely on prey that they fail to detect the wire. The problem is compounded for nocturnal and crepuscular species, as strands of wire are nearly invisible even under the best lighting conditions. Owl species reported killed by collisions with barbed wire fences include Burrowing (Lohofener and Ely 1978), Great Horned (Edeburn 1973), Short-eared (Fitzner 1975), and Great Gray (Nero 1974).

This may be a significant cause of mortality for some species, but biologists cannot be certain because such incidents are probably under-reported. Indeed, in my early days of birding I found an owl killed by colliding with a fence at Crow Valley Campground in Weld County, but I knew so little about the importance of such a finding (and so little about birds) that I failed to even identify the species and I never reported it. Such occurrences should always be published in appropriate venues in order to document the impact of this hazard on bird populations.

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\*\*\*\*\*



Sigrid Noll Ueblacker rescued this Barn Owl caught on a barbed-wire fence at Rock Creek Farm, Boulder County Open Space, in August 2000. This bird was hanging by the wing, with feet resting on the lower strand of wire. Although it was caught only by the feathers, its struggles caused serious damage to the elbow, patagium, tendons, and nerves. After one week of treatment, it had to be euthanized. Photo courtesy Sigrid Noll Ueblacker.

## CODES OF ETHICS ADOPTED BY CFO

In 1998, the Colorado Field Ornithologists' Board of Directors adopted two sets of ethics code, to guide the activities of CFO and its members. The Board further requested that the codes be reprinted annually in the *Journal*. The codes were developed by the American Birding Association (ABA) and the Ornithological Council (OC) of the North American Ornithological Societies. ABA's code, targeted to birders, is reproduced here in its entirety. The OC's code, targeted to researchers, has been summarized by Jim Chace.

The CFO Board asks each member, and any non-member involved with CFO in any capacity, to read through these codes of ethics and abide by them with the spirit of thoughtfulness and conservation in which they were conceived.

### ABA Code of Birding Ethics

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.
  - a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.
  - b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming. Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.
  - c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.
  - d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.
2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.
  - a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.
  - b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

- c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.
3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.
  - a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.
  - b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.
  - c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.
4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care. Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.
  - a) Respect the interest, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.
  - b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.
5. Group Leader Responsibilities (amateur and professional trips and tours)
  - a) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.
  - b) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and does not interfere with others using the same area.
  - c) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.
  - d) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g., no tape recorders allowed).
  - e) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interest. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

### **Ornithological Council Code of Ethics**

#### Part I

#### A. Overview

“Consistent with long standing interests in conservation, education, research, and the well-being of birds, the Ornithological Council

endorses the following guidelines and principles for scientists conducting research on wild birds.... Investigations often involve risk of injury or death to the experimental subject. Risks that threaten the health or existence of populations are far more serious. Except under extraordinary circumstances, experiments that threaten the stability or existence of populations are proscribed.”

“Humane treatment of wild vertebrates in field research is essential for ethical, scientific and legal reasons.”

#### B. Relationships among Concerned Organizations

“Most research on wild birds falls under the aegis of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Legal background for current practices involving laboratory animals in the United States stems from the Animal Welfare Act of 1970. Both the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and of the Interior are signatories of the Interagency Research Animal Committees Principles for the Utilization of Vertebrate Animals used in Testing, Research, and Training.”

#### C. General Consideration (taken directly from OC’s *Guidelines*, except where noted)

1. Procedures with animals must avoid or minimize distress and pain to the animals, consistent with sound research design.
2. Procedures that may cause more than momentary or slight pain or distress to the animals should be performed with appropriate sedation or analgesia.
3. It is unethical to allow an animal to suffer severe or chronic pain that cannot be relieved.
4. Methods of euthanasia will be consistent with recommendations of the American Veterinary Medical Association panel on euthanasia.
5. The living conditions of animals held in captivity at field sites should be appropriate to satisfy the standards of hygiene, nutrition, group composition and numbers, refuge-provision, and protection from environmental stress necessary to maintain that species in a state of health and well-being.
6. Taxa chosen should be well-suited to answer the question(s) posed.
7. The investigator must have knowledge of all regulations pertaining to the animals under study, and must obtain all permits necessary for carrying out proposed study.
8. Individuals of threatened or endangered taxa should [not] be removed from the wild except in compliance with applicable regulations.
9. Investigators must be familiar with the study species and its response to disturbance.
10. Every effort should be made prior to any removal of animals to understand the populations status of the taxa studied, and the

numbers of animals removed from the wild must be kept to a minimum. This statement should not be interpreted as discouraging study or collection of uncommon species.

11. Except in the most extraordinary circumstances, procedures likely to affect the stability or existence of a population are proscribed.
12. Studies should use the fewest animals necessary to answer reliably the questions posed.
13. The usefulness of specimens should be maximized by preserving not only skins but also carcasses, skeletons, DNA samples, and specific tissues.
14. The principal investigator must ensure that all personnel associated with the project have been properly trained.

## Part II

[Presented is a summary of the OC's *Guidelines*, paraphrased with a minimum amount of text, with the intention of retaining the original meaning. Emphasis is placed on conditions that authors for CFO or research funded by CFO would be most likely to encounter (i.e., laboratory research is not emphasized as much as field research conditions).]

I. Permits — All researchers must be aware of the regulations that protect wild birds and obtain the necessary permits for their work. Any possession, capture, handling, collecting, marking, transporting, or disturbing of native birds, their nests, or their eggs requires some kind of special licenses or permits. Nearly all bird species in North America are protected by a large variety of laws, including the salvage or possession of any portion of dead birds.

## II. Investigator Impacts

“Ornithologists have an obligation to assess their research for potential negative effects on their study populations as well as on the environment in general, and to minimize such effects. Although research may further scientific knowledge, investigators should weigh any potential gain in knowledge against the consequences of disruption. In assessing the consequences of disruption, however, it should be borne in mind that, although short-term adverse effects may result from research activities, populations usually recover rapidly, and research often yields long-term positive effects for the affected populations.”

Two important types of observer-caused disturbance are addressed: disturbance that causes biases in the data collected, and disturbances that affect the status and well-being of the study subjects themselves. Such disturbances include: nest visitation, aircraft overflights, and approach to sensitive areas.



- III. Collecting and Trapping — Ornithological research often involves the judicious collecting of birds in the field, and specimens are then deposited in museum collections. The collection of scientific specimens typically has no lasting effect on avian populations. Humane scientific methods of trapping and shooting are those that kill the bird instantly but avoid injury to the body parts. Collecting should always be conducted so as to leave the habitat as undisturbed as possible. Systematists should search for suitable specimens in extant collections before conducting fieldwork.
- IV. Marking — It is essential to the welfare of the birds and the integrity of the research that the marking procedure not adversely affect the behavior, physiology, or survival of individuals. For a marking procedure to be effective, it should meet as many of the following criteria as possible (Marion and Shamis, 1977, *Bird Banding* 48:42–61).
- The bird should experience no immediate or long-term hindrance or irritation.
  - The marking should be quick and easy to apply.
  - The marking code should be readily visible and distinguishable.
  - The markings should persist on the bird until research objectives are fulfilled.
  - The bird should suffer no adverse effects on its behavior, longevity, or social life.
  - Careful records should be made of all aspects of the marking procedure. Specific guidelines for metal bands, colored plastic leg bands, dyes and UV markers, neck collars, nasal discs and saddles, wing markers, radio transmitters, and electronic tags are provided within the document.
- V. Transport of Wild Birds — It is frequently necessary to transport birds, whether as part of an experimental protocol or to move research birds from capture sites to the laboratory or other holding facilities. Transport of all warm-blooded animals is covered by provisions of the Animal Welfare Act, and specific requirements are stated within.
- VI. Housing and Captive Breeding — Maintaining birds in captivity is expensive, time consuming, and requires special expertise. The living conditions of birds should be appropriate for each species and contribute to their sound health and comfort. Housing, feeding, and non-veterinary care should be directed by a person trained and experienced in the proper care, handling, and use of the species being maintained. Specific guidelines are outlined for quarantine and isolation, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and control of diseases, separation by species, daily care, caging, housing and maintenance, considerations for aquatic birds and raptors, record keeping, disposition of birds after experiments, variations on standard procedure, and zoonoses.

### VII. Minor Manipulative Procedures

“The collection of tissue samples, experimental manipulations using injections and implants of hormones/drugs, playbacks of tape-recorded vocalizations, and presentation of decoys are fundamental tools for ornithologists. Most if not all of these activities require permits from federal and/or state agencies.”

Specifics on blood and tissue collection, collection of food samples, cloacal lavage, injections and insertion of implants, determination of egg viability, playback vocalizations, artificial eggs, and manipulation of plumage are discussed with detail in the text.

VIII. Major Manipulations — Techniques of avian anesthesia and surgery are developing rapidly, and new texts on the subject appear annually. Because the field is not static, OC’s *Guidelines* do not attempt to catalogue acceptable techniques, but rather establish a philosophy that will help all involved determine whether a given approach is acceptable. Specific discussions on restraint, anesthesia, surgery, laparotomy and other sexing techniques, and euthanasia are provided with OC’s *Guidelines*.



Sage Sparrow, by Chris Wood

**NEWS FROM THE FIELD:  
SPRING 2000 REPORT (MARCH – MAY)**

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Spring 2000 saw the beginning of what would be a long, hot spell that lasted into fall. At Denver, precipitation in March and May were above normal, whereas that in April was well below normal. Mean monthly temperatures were above normal in all three months with two new daily record highs set in May. However, the old low temperature record for 13 May (28°F) was shattered by the 23° that day.

Last year, Leukering (1999) wrote in this column, “The gull bonanza of winter 1998-1999 continued with a vengeance into spring; this was particularly true in the Loveland area....” As many of you know, compared to the gull show in Loveland in Spring 2000, the gull show last spring was just whistlin’ Dixie! Except for a return to more normal numbers of Glaucous Gulls and relatively low numbers of Herring Gulls, EVERY other regularly-occurring species was much more abundant in March 2000. And with the increase in gull numbers came the rarities! In March 2000, it was possible, with a bit o’ luck, to see ten species of gulls in one day (even, just an afternoon) in the Loveland area. Record numbers of Thayer’s Gulls and an incredible six (or more!) Lesser Black-backed Gulls were joined by at least three Mew Gulls, two Glaucous-winged Gulls, a couple very early or over-wintering Franklin’s Gulls, and a Great Black-backed Gull. Oh, yeah, and there was something about a Slaty-backed Gull, too.

Though the details will, hopefully, be published elsewhere, Colorado’s first record for Slaty-backed Gull was represented by a full adult in Basic plumage found at Horseshoe Reservoir by Dave Leatherman and Dave Ely in early March. This bird probably did more for the art/science/obsession of gulling in Colorado than any previous event. More than 200 birders got to experience

this Siberian waif during its nearly month-long stay. Birders from as far away as (at least) Indiana and Wisconsin got to see the bird. This Slaty-back has to have been the most reliable individual ever to be found in the inland Lower 48, as its daily schedule was sussed out early on and the bird mostly stuck to it.

As reported above, this was the most incredible spring (or, any season, for that matter) for gulls ever in the state. But, it's not finished! Two different Iceland Gulls (Colorado's second and third records) made appearances at Pueblo Reservoir and near Lafayette, respectively! The first one enabled Leukering to see 12 species of gulls in one day in Colorado on 18 March. And that was after finishing up a public program in Ft. Collins around 10 a.m. With the large number of gulls in March, it is not much of a surprise that quite a few wintering species lingered later (in some cases, much later) than normal. **A final gull note:** Despite the fact that quite a few rare gull species were found in relatively large numbers this year, the CBRC requests that documentation for ALL reports of the underlined species (see main body of report) be submitted for review. In addition to the usual archival and reviewing purposes, the committee would also like to attempt to figure out how many of the various species were found in 2000. So, warm up that ball-point pen or Pentium III and submit those documentations!

A reasonable number of eastern passerine species was found on the eastern plains this spring. However, the effort expended to find those seemed to be much greater this year than in recent years, suggesting that it was actually only a mediocre season for such species in the state. Percival, Wood, and Leukering spent essentially all of May in southeast Colorado and managed to find some "good" birds, but they worked hard for what they found. It seems the best strategy may have been to save your gas money and see what's around your yard. While Mark Janos spent his fare share of time birding the plains this spring, his best bird, indeed the best landbird all spring, he found from his yard: a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher that, if accepted by the CBRC, will provide Colorado with its first record.

With the above in mind, here are the totals for the "eastern" warblers: five Blue-wings, four Golden-wings, 11 Tennessees, eight Nashvilles, 18 Northern Parulas, eight Chestnut-sideds, three Magnolias, five Black-throated Blues, one Black-throated Green, two Blackburnians, one Pine, two Prairies, three western Palms, five Bay-breasts, nine Blackpolls, 17 Black-and-whites, 15 American Redstarts, two Prothonotaries, five Worm-eatings, one Swainson's (no details reported to these editors), seven Ovenbirds, 21 Northern Waterthrushes, two Kentuckies, six Mournings, and seven Hoodeds. Other totals of "eastern" birds included ten Summer and five Scarlet tanagers, 13

Northern Cardinals, and 32 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.

The reports included here and those that we heard about but which were not included brought the Spring 2000 species total to 375. This is 11 species fewer than the 386 reported last spring.

The number of reports that we received for this season was encouraging. Thank you! This task is a LOT easier when we have information to report. However, we would not at all mind getting more, particularly from those long-time birders that cover a lot of ground in Colorado. Indeed, a look through this report will reveal many non-included reports; reports not submitted to the editors will NOT be published. Also of great interest and help, Semo birded Standley Lake most days this spring, and sent a detailed report of arrival and departure dates and high counts of some of the more interesting waterbirds. We strongly encourage others who bird particular reservoirs (or other locations) regularly to report such numbers. They certainly give us a much better handle on the migration of these birds.

We particularly want to thank those that live and bird on the West Slope (Ackley and Marchant) for their reports. Theirs obviously go a lot further than most, as there are so few birders, relatively, on the West Slope and every report is precious. In this vein, we have included some significant records from 1999 that we received from Kim Potter. Particularly important among these are numerous records from Rio Blanco County provided to Kim by Dona Hilkey. We strongly encourage all West Slope birders to submit seasonal reports for inclusion in this column. Thanks for the detailed listing, Kim, and keep 'em coming!

After 2000, Leukering will be filling the time-consuming role of Chair of the Colorado Bird Records Committee, so will be easing out of writing the spring and summer seasonal reports. As this happens, Chris Wood and Larry Semo will be easing in to writing these reports. So, please send reports from summer 2000 to Tony, but send spring and summer 2001 reports to Chris. To those that regularly submitted reports to Tony for inclusion in this seasonal summary, he extends a heart-felt "thanks."

**Note 1:** The reports contained herein are largely unchecked, and the author does not vouch for their authenticity. Underlined species are those for which the Colorado Bird Records Committee requests documentation. The Colorado Field Ornithologists' web site (<http://www.cfo-link.org>) has a link to the rare bird Sight Record reporting form that can be submitted electronically; the same form is also printed on the inside cover of this journal's mailer.

**Note 2:** All locations are annotated as to county (and counties are italicized) the **first** time each appears; county names are NOT included with subsequent records.

**Abbreviations:** **A&R**=Andrews and Righter (Andrews, R. and R. Righter. 1992. *Colorado Birds*. Denver Museum of Natural History.); **CBO**=Colorado Bird Observatory; **CBR**=Chico Basin Ranch (State Land Board land straddling the *El Paso/Pueblo* line east of I-25); **CBRC**=Colorado Bird Records Committee; **CVCG**=Crow Valley Campground (Pawnee NG, *Weld*); **et al.**=and others (used for the finding group of a bird that was not seen subsequently, either on specific date or subsequently); **FLWE**=Ft. Lyon Wildlife Easement (near northwest corner of JMR); **JMR**=John Martin Reservoir, *Bent*; **LCC**=Lamar Community College, *Prowers*; **m.ob.**=many observers (used for birds that were refound, either the same day or on subsequent days, by others); **NG**=National Grassland; **ph**=photographed, **Res.**=Reservoir; **SP**=State Park; **SWA**=State Wildlife Area; **TBSWA**=Two Buttes SWA, *Baca/Prowers* (unless specified, records are in *Baca*); **TP**=through period (that is, present into summer); **VPSWA**=Valco Ponds SWA, *Pueblo*; **WRGB**=Wheat Ridge Green Belt (usually Prospect Park), *Jefferson*.

**Red-throated Loon:** An adult in Alternate, found on 3 May (BKP et al.), was present to at least 21 May (TL, CLW, LS) at JMR, *Bent*. See the summer report for another interesting record of this very rare species in Colorado.

**Pacific Loon:** This species is much rarer in spring than in fall, thus Semo's report from Standley Lake, *Jefferson*, is doubly interesting. Two basic-plumaged birds were present 28 Mar to 8 May. On the latter date, one of the birds was seen floating dead, but was not retrievable from shore. The other continued until 15 May when it was almost wholly in Alternate plumage.

**Common Loon:** Reports from the West Slope (where much rarer than in eastern CO) included one in Alternate at Dotsero, *Eagle*, 31 Mar-2 Apr and 20 May-TP (both JM). At least eight different individuals were present on Standley Lake from 28 Mar to 18 May, with a high count of four on 18 Apr (LS). Big Johnson Res., *El Paso*, also got into the spring loon act, with up to four birds present there during Mar and Apr. Though there was a Yellow-billed Loon at the site (see below), at least two pale-billed Commons there in late April caused some confusion. It is quite common for young Common Loons to have pale bills in spring (personal observation). Only just received, one was reported from Ridgway Res., *Ouray*, on 15 Feb (MA) for a very rare West Slope

winter record. Some 1999 records not reported previously include at least six in Apr & May at Lake Avery, *Rio Blanco* (DHi); one 5 May at Wolford Mtn. Res., *Grand* (KP); an Alternate-plumaged adult at Lake Granby, *Grand* (KP); one (plumage?) at Blue Mesa Res., *Gunnison* (KP) on 5 Jul; and one each at Lake Avery and Rio Blanco SWA, *Rio Blanco*, on 6 Nov (DHi).

**Yellow-billed Loon:** The wintering juvenile at Pueblo Res. was present until 19 Mar (m.ob.). A molting adult was found 25 Mar (BM) at Big Johnson Res. This bird was seen by many, wonderfully photographed by G. Lasley, and stayed to 28 Apr.

**Horned Grebe:** The migration period for this species at Standley Lake was 26 Mar-25 Apr with a peak of 16 on 14 Apr (LS). In 1999, one was at Rio Blanco SWA on 30 Oct for a first (?) county record (DHi).

**Western Grebe:** Eight lingered TP at Dotsero (JM). At Standley Lake, Westerns were present 28 Mar to 26 May with high counts of 90 on 12 Apr, 124 on 20 Apr, 156 on 21 Apr, and 133 on 25 Apr. There were only nine still present on 26 May (all LS). Last year's summering bird in *Summit* returned in late April and was present TP (SB).

**Clark's Grebe:** Ten were at Standley Lake on 12 Apr (LS), which is relatively north and west for this species. One was at Rio Blanco SWA, on 24 May 1999 (DHi); A&R reported no specific records for this county.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** Potter recorded one at Rifle, *Garfield*, on 8 Mar 1999 for one of few county records (see A&R) and three were late and out-of-place at DeBeque, *Mesa*, on 6 Dec 1999 (J. Grode).

**American Bittern:** Though A&R report this species as occurring in the South Platte drainage in *Adams*, specific records are relatively few. Thus, Leukering was surprised to hear one "oonk-a-choonking" below the dam at Barr Lake in spring 1999. In April and May 2000, he was even more surprised to hear and see the species numerous times in the same spot, with up to three present. Apparently, there is now a breeding population. A rarely-noted migrant was at Chatfield Reservoir, *Jefferson*, 14 May (JK).

**Least Bittern:** One was heard near Ft. Lyon, *Bent*, on 14 and 15 May (BKP, m.ob.)

**Great Egret:** In addition to its normal haunts in *Boulder* and *Weld*, this species was present in above average numbers along the Arkansas River Valley and elsewhere in eastern Colorado. The high count for "The Valley" was of six on 21 May with five at Queens SWA, *Kiowa*, and the other in *Crowley* (CLW, LS, TL). One was at Ramah Res., *El Paso*, 12-13 Apr (JB) and two to four were seen at Chatfield Reservoir, *Jefferson/Douglas*, where unusual, with one on 8 April, two on 30 April, and another 10 May (all JK).

**Snowy Egret:** One was at Kenney Res., *Rio Blanco*, 14 May 1999 (DH*i*) and another was at Dotsero 27 May 2000 (JM) for a couple of rare northwestern Colorado records.

**Cattle Egret:** One was at Troublesome Cr., *Grand*, on 20 May 1999 (KP); A&R reported only one spring record for the county.

**Little Blue Heron:** One adult and one “calico” immature on 10 May (CLW video, BKP, m.ob.) were among the only birds of note this spring at Blue Lake, *Bent*.

**White Ibis:** The third Colorado record (and second in three years) was supplied by a bird at Barr Lake in late Apr. It was found on 17 Apr by Eric Yesko who reported it to CBO staff. Despite quite a few staff members searching for it, it was not seen again until 25 Apr, when a participant on a CBO education program asked the leader, Jennie Duberstein, what this white bird was. Jennie identified it and then informed the rest of the CBO staff, who again went out searching unsuccessfully for it at noon. Finally, near dusk, Semo (with Faulkner and Leukering) refound it in the heron colony. After that, it was seen every day until at least 30 Apr (TL ph., m.ob.).

**Glossy Ibis:** Spring 2000 saw yet another large number of reports of this increasingly-reported species with the most out-of-place being the bird found by J. Amoroso at Edwards, *Eagle*, 23-28 Apr (JA, BB, m.ob.). Other reports included single birds east of Lake Holbrook, *Otero*, 8 Apr (BKP), at Lake Cheraw, *Otero*, 21 Apr (CLW, BKP), near Greeley, *Weld*, 22 May (KS), and north of Grover, *Weld*, 23 May (CLW). Two singles were found in different flocks of White-faceds in the same field near Ft. Lyon 16 Apr (MJ et al.)

**Snow Goose:** One was at Rio Blanco SWA on 1 Dec 1999 (DH*i*). A&R report no specific county records for this species or for Ross’s Goose. The latest reported in Spring 2000 were two at Lake Hasty, *Bent*, on 25 May (BKP).

**Ross’s Goose:** One was at Edwards 15 Apr (JA, BB); A&R report no specific *Eagle* record. Late individuals included one at Lake Cheraw to at least 15 May (TL) and another at Lake Hasty until 18 May (CLW).

**Tundra Swan:** One was at Fruitgrowers Res., *Delta*, in early Mar (RL, DG, MA).

**Eurasian Wigeon:** The wintering male in Pueblo was present into early Mar (m.ob). Apparently, birders stopped looking for it, as it wasn’t seen again until 21 Apr (BKP, CLW).

**Tufted Duck:** Schofield, searching through the large number of Greater Scaup at Barr Lake (see below), found an adult male on 28 Mar. Despite an intensive effort by CBO staff and other birders, the bird could not be refound that afternoon amongst all the ducks present. It probably



departed with the scaup.

**Greater Scaup:** Two were at Lathrop SP, *Huerfano*, 2 Apr (BKP, MJ). A&R report only one previous specific record for the county. The eight or nine birds that spent the winter at Lake Cheraw were still there 9 Mar (TL et al.). Up to 17 in early March at Marston Reservoir, *Denver* (CLW), seemed like an incredible number until a new state maximum of  $\pm 1092$  was found at Barr Lake 25-29 Mar (TL, DF, m.ob.). The previous maximum was two orders of magnitude lower! Refer to Leukering (2000) elsewhere in this issue.

**Surf Scoter:** Though this is the most numerous scoter in the state and regular in fall, scoters are quite rare in spring. Thus, the two (1m, 1f) at Standley Lake on 26 Mar (LS) and one at the Rocky Ford sewage ponds, *Otero*, on 14 May (BKP) are of more-than-passing interest.

**Barrow's Goldeneye:** An immature male was late at Dotsero 28 May (JM). Along with the Tufted Duck, there were two Barrow's (1m, 1f) at Barr Lake, whence there are very few reports, on 28 Mar (KS). The *seven* at Marston Reservoir into early March (CLW) represented a high number away from the Colorado River and nearby mountain reservoirs.

**Hooded Merganser:** One (sex?) was at Dotsero 19 Mar (JM) for one of very few specific *Eagle* records.

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** The wintering juvenile at Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe*, was present until at least 12 Mar (KS).

**Black Rail:** Numerous birds were heard at the usual *Otero* and *Bent* locations with at least 17 heard near Ft. Lyon on 14 May (CLW).

**Virginia Rail:** White Ibis observers at Barr Lake were surprised to find a pair of Virginias feeding at least two recently-hatched chicks on the seemingly-early date of 27 Apr (TL et al.).

**Common Moorhen:** One of the best finds of the season, was a bird found 7 May near JMR by Kansas birder, Scott Seltman, who actually saw it. All others had to be content with hearing its distinctive vocalizations at dusk. It was present through the end of the season (CLW).

**Black-bellied Plover:** One at Fruitgrowers Res. on 4 May (MA) was on the West Slope, where the species is decidedly scarce.

**American Golden-Plover:** While flocks over 10,000 are regular in Illinois, this species is very rare in CO in spring. The only one found this season was a molting bird at Neesopah Res., *Kiowa*, on 9 May (TL, DO). It was refound early the next day at the same location and by 8:30 am had moved to Upper Queens Reservoir (CLW, BKP).

**Snowy Plover:** If correctly identified, the Snowy at Rio Blanco SWA on 10 May 1999 (DH*i*) would be a first for the county if not for all of northwestern Colorado.

- Black-necked Stilt:** Probably reflecting the increasing numbers of northern breeding birds, two were found at Chatfield Reservoir, one on 28 April, and one 10 May (both JK)
- Lesser Yellowlegs:** Two were at Rio Blanco SWA on 10 May 1999 (DHi); A&R reported only one fall record, no spring records, for this species in *Rio Blanco*.
- Upland Sandpiper:** This species is quite rare in southeastern CO, so the four records in spring 2000, all in nine days, were more than usual and probably indicate the prime migration timing for this species in the southern part of the state. One was near Campo, *Baca*, on 29 Apr (LS), six were near Pritchett, *Baca*, on 2 May (DF et al.), one was at Upper Queens Res., *Kiowa*, on 2 May (BKP), and the last was a calling flyover at Two Buttes Res. on 7 May (BKP).
- Whimbrel:** Of the many reports this spring, the most interesting was of one at Fruitgrowers Res. 21-22 May (MA, DG), which might provide the first specific *Delta* record. The species was also recorded sporadically at Barr Lake, Big Johnson Res., JMR, and Thurston Res., *Prowers*, in late April through 20 May (V. Remsen).
- Long-billed Curlew:** Of interest were two at Fruitgrowers Res. in late Apr (DG, MA, et al.).
- Hudsonian Godwit:** The only individual of this CO rarity found this spring was at Thurston Res. on 16 Apr (CLW video, TL, MJ, BKP).
- Least Sandpiper:** What was probably a first *Eagle* record, one Least was at Wolcott on 15 Apr (JA, BB).
- White-rumped Sandpiper:** There were two records of this species from further west than normal: four in *Pueblo* 17 May (D. Silverman) and another at CBR, northern-most *Pueblo*, on 19 May (TL, CLW, TD, A. Versaw).
- Pectoral Sandpiper:** Spring reports of this species, which is much rarer in spring than in fall in CO, included one at Fossil Creek marsh, *Larimer*, on 29 Mar (SD), one at Lower Queens Res., *Kiowa*, on 10 May (CLW, BKP), and another at Upper Queens Res. on 21 May (CLW, TL, LS).
- Dunlin:** The only one reported to us this spring was at under-birded Sheridan Lake, *Kiowa*, on 9 May (CLW).
- Short-billed Dowitcher:** An alternate-plumaged *hendersonii* adult was at the Rocky Ford sewage ponds on 21 May (CLW, TL, LS). There are few spring records for this rare CO migrant.
- American Woodcock:** One of the great events of the spring, a male woodcock spent many spring evenings performing the species' sky dance in an apparently vain attempt to attract females. The bird was first found by S. Oswald on 13 Apr, and remained until at least 10 May. At this point it was no longer displaying so was unfindable despite a reasonable probability that it was present for quite some time hence.

This bird probably ranks right up there with the most appreciated (and most watched) American Woodcock of all time as numerous long-time Colorado birders finally “caught up” with the species in CO with this individual and tape recordings of the flight display were made by CLW. Kudos to Stan!

**Wilson’s Phalarope:** The high count reported in spring 2000 was of 1460+ at Sheridan Lake on 29 Apr (LS).

**Red-necked Phalarope:** Reports of this species seemed quite scarce this spring and included seven birds near Lake Holbrook on 8 May (CLW, BKP) and one at Ft. Collins on 13 May (LS). In 1999, Hilkey found 200+ at Rio Blanco SWA on 14 May. A&R reported no specific records for *Rio Blanco*.

**Bonaparte’s Gull:** The latest reported was an immature on 25 May at Upper Queens Res. (BKP). One was at Windy Gap Res., *Grand*, on 14 Apr 1999 (KP) and two were at Lake Granby on 18 May 1999 (KP) for two rare county records.

**Mew Gull:** The Basic I bird that wintered in the Barr Lake area stayed to at least 28 Mar (CLW). A bird in Basic II sojourned at Jim Hamm Park, *Boulder*, in March (D.W. King, m.ob.). Another bird seen there once in Mar was felt by the observer to be either a Common Gull (the Old World representative of the Mew Gull complex) or an intergrade/hybrid between the two, as there were characters that appeared intermediate (JV). One adult molting to Alternate was at the Ft. Collins landfill, *Larimer*, on 31 Mar (SD).

**California Gull:** Winter ‘99-‘00 saw the largest-ever wintering effort in the state by this species. So, when the spring migrants arrived in *Larimer* in late Feb/early Mar, they only added to the 100s already present; wintering Cal Gulls can usually be counted on one’s fingers and/or toes.

**Herring Gull:** The latest reported, in a fairly-poor winter for this species, was one on 13 May at the Ft. Collins landfill (LS).

**Thayer’s Gull:** A plethora of Thayer’s graced *Larimer* this spring and it’s anyone’s guess as to how big that number was, as there was certainly some migration through the county. Single-day high counts that accounted for different plumages and locations went as high as ten. Additionally, there were individuals reported from *Boulder*, *Denver*, *Jefferson*, *Pueblo*, and *Weld* including some April reports, which is late for this species. Three (Basic I, Basic II, and Basic adult) were in the Prince Res. #2 and Erie landfill (*Boulder/Weld*) area on 18 April (TL, JV, RL, LS) and a very late adult was at Standley Lake on 30 April (LS).

**Iceland Gull:** Colorado is apparently playing catch-up with this species. After

finally getting the first state record in January 1999, the year 2000 has seen two records, both this spring and both of birds in Basic I plumage. The first was found at the South Marina, Pueblo Res., on the morning of 18 Mar (BKP et al.) and was seen by the lucky few that happened to be going to Pueblo that day, anyway. Vic Zerbi managed to hear about it in Glenwood Springs just in time to see it that evening. Luckiest of all may have been Joey Kellner, who was teaching a birding class at Chatfield Reservoir at the time the mad chase was on. Many Denver area birders tried to call Joey, but no one could get in touch with him. Wood, who was in a far corner of Wisconsin lamenting his inability to chase the bird, paged his mentor to make sure he knew about it. Joey immediately called him back, got directions, and drove down to Pueblo in time to see the bird! Amazingly, a second individual was found at Prince Res. #2 by Peter Gent and John Vanderpoel on 9 Apr. This bird was initially left unidentified due to the harsh lighting of mid-day, but was confirmed as an Iceland when JV saw it well at this location early on 18 Apr. JV, TL, and RL explored the landfill near Erie later that morning and were rewarded with the bird's presence there. Others continued to see the bird at the original location until at least 26 Apr (CLW video, KS, LS ph, B. Kaempfer, m.ob.).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** This species was seemingly everywhere in Larimer in winter 2000 and this phenomenon continued into the spring. As for Thayer's Gull, above, there must have been some migration through the county, but single-day counts reached at least five on 7-8 Mar (CLW, TL, N. Komar, m.ob.) when there was at least one of each recognizable winter plumage (Basic I, II, III, IV, and Def. Basic). At minimum, six individuals were involved. Elsewhere, there was an adult in Alternate 17-18 Mar at Pueblo Res. (BKP, m.ob.) and the latest report was of a bird in Alternate IV on 30 April at Standley Lake (LS), which also might represent the first *Jefferson* record.

**Slaty-backed Gull:** Though there was great competition, we consider the occurrence of this species in the state in March to be the event of the season! While sorting through the already-great variety of gull species at Horseshoe Lake on 6 Mar, Dave Leatherman and Dave Ely found a Basic-plumaged adult Slaty-back that stayed in the Loveland area until 6 Apr and was seen by hundreds.

**Glaucous-winged Gull:** This species also got into the incredible gull show this spring with at least two individuals found at the Ft. Collins landfill and area lakes. A Basic II bird, found in late Feb, was present at least 19 Mar (m.ob.). A bird in Basic I was found 7 Mar (MJ) and it, or another, was present 29 Mar-3 Apr (S. Mlodinow ph, SD, JF, CLW

video, TL, m.ob.).

**Glaucous Gull:** After the showing in 1999, it was somewhat disappointing to “only” have four, three in Basic I and one in Basic II, in *Larimer* this spring when all other gulls were putting on record-setting shows. The latest reported to us was one on 31 Mar (SD).

**Great Black-backed Gull:** The wintering Basic I bird in *Larimer* continued until at least 19 Apr when it was seen at Horseshoe Lake (SD, m.ob.).

**Caspian Tern:** The many spring reports included one at Big Johnson Res. on the record-early date of 25 Mar (BM). Two were briefly at Confluence Park, *Delta*, on 28 May (RL et al.).

**Common Tern:** Rare in spring, an adult was seen at Strauss Cabin Lake, *Larimer*, on 8 May (SD). For those unused to the problem, care should be used to separate sub-adult Forster’s Terns from Common Terns, as wing patterns can be similar.

**Forster’s Tern:** Thirteen were at Rio Blanco SWA on 14 May 1999 (DHi) for a first (?) county record.

**Black Tern:** With the Forster’s above were eight Blacks, again, a first (?) county record (see A&R).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** The invasion continues! Collared-Doves were reported from many new locations in spring 2000 and they continued at both of the “historic” locations: Rocky Ford, *Otero*, and Springfield, *Baca*. They were found numerous times in Lamar, *Prowers* (D. Nelson, TL, CLW, BKP, m.ob.), for the first time in *Bent* 21 Apr (BKP, CLW), and were found nest-building in Campo, *Baca*, on 30 Apr (TL). The northeastern-most record to date for CO was provided by a bird at Ovid, *Sedgwick*, on 1 Apr (TL, LS, CLW video).

**Inca Dove:** Actually Stan Oswald’s first coup of the spring, but second taxonomically, the Rocky Ford resident located multiple Inca Doves (at least three, possibly more) in his home town, to the delight of many Colorado birders. The birds were present all spring into the summer and were found building and/or sitting on nests on a couple occasions - as early as 4 Mar (CLW photos, et al.). Another was a one-day wonder at Willow Creek Park in Lamar, 16 Apr (TL, CLW video, et al.).

**Spotted Owl:** The long-resident birds near Beulah, *Pueblo*, were heard on 21 May (CLW, TL, LS).

**Calliope Hummingbird:** If correctly identified, the bird (sex?) reported from Eagle, *Eagle*, on 17 May (JP) would be one of very few spring records for the state.

**Lesser Nighthawk:** A male was reported from the Lamar Cemetery 6 May (BKP).

**Common Nighthawk:** Aside from one on 5 May in *Washington* (CLW), the 7<sup>th</sup>

of May was the big arrival date this spring, as the species was recorded in *Baca* (A. Panjabi et al.) *Bent* (BKP, CLW), and *Arapahoe* (CLW) on that date.

**Common Poorwill:** Records of migrants on the plains this spring included one near TBSWA, *Prowers*, on 21 Apr (TL et al.), one at Lamar on 28 Apr (LS), and one near Lake Holbrook, *Otero* 13 May (CLW).

**Black-chinned Hummingbird:** A female was at TBSWA on 4 May (TL et al.). This species is rare away from the foothills and mesas in eastern CO, though there are previous records from this location.

**Odd hummingbirds:** Ackley reported multiple large, female hummers with big, white tail spots and “lots of white around the eyes” on private property along McElmo Cr., *Montezuma*, this spring (summer?). We would certainly encourage birders to visit southwestern Colorado more, as there is a plethora of interesting bird possibilities down there and VERY few birders to find them!

**Lewis’s Woodpecker:** A few were seen in May around the city of Eagle, where the species is scarce (JM, JP). Additionally, individuals were a bit out of range at Two Buttes Res. on 4 May (BKP) and at the Little Washington Work Center of Comanche NG, *Baca*, on 6 May (TL et al.).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker:** This spring witnessed one of the largest known influxes (influxes?) of this species into eastern Colorado; when most of these birds arrived is mostly speculative since few birders arrive in these parts until there are hopes for spring warblers. One on 24 April in Holyoke was the first for non-birded *Phillips* county (CLW), while one in Cope, *Washington*, on 30 Apr (LS) would probably have been a first county record, except for the records along the South Platte in the extreme northwestern corner of the county. Numerous individuals present at a few sites in *Prowers* and extreme NE *Bent* into May got birders thinking about rare local breeding records. But, it was not to be, as all disappeared by mid-May.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** The wintering immature female at Pueblo City Park stayed to at least 30 Mar (BKP).

**Red-naped Sapsucker:** A female at the Hasty campground, *Bent*, on 21 Apr (CLW, BKP) provided a rare eastern plains record. Even more unlikely was a male on 24 April in Holyoke (CLW), which not only provided the first known record for *Phillips*, but was only three trees away from the county’s first Red-bellied Woodpecker.

**Ladder-backed Woodpecker:** A male at TBSWA 22 Apr-9 May (BKP, m.ob.), was a bit out of range. Many observers commented on the difficulty of finding this species in the traditional Cottonwood Canyon hotspot, *Baca/Las Animas*.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** A singing bird was well described from the Janos' yard, Pueblo, on 28 May (MJ). The timing of this record conforms well to this species' occurrence in the East. If accepted by the CBRC, this will provide Colorado with its first record of this long-overdue species.

**Dusky Flycatcher:** An individual at Neenoshe Res. on 5 May (BKP, D. Quesenbery ph) was well out on the plains where quite rare. Two others were part of the large landbird flight at CVCG and surrounding *Weld* on 23 and 24 May (CLW), which also included at least two Hammond's Flycatchers and numbers of both "Eastern" and "Western" Willow Flycatchers.

**Gray Flycatcher:** This species is rare on the eastern plains, thus, one at the Lamar High School Grove, *Prowers*, on 15 May (CLW, JK, NE) and another 15 miles north of CVCG at an isolated woodlot in *Weld* on 23 May (CLW) are noteworthy.

**Eastern Phoebe:** A singing bird was present below and just above the dam at TBSWA for a few weeks in late Apr/early May (m.ob.). This is well northeast of the eastern edge of the regular breeding range in the state, as mapped in A&R.

**Black Phoebe:** CBO staff encountered a Black Phoebe that was apparently paired with an Eastern Phoebe at the Burnt Mill Bridge, *Pueblo*, on 19 May (TL, CLW). The pair (?) was still there on 21 May and in June. This is the site of one of the few previous Front Range nest records for the species. CBO conducted the annual Black Phoebe survey on the San Miguel River, *Montrose*, on 8 May and found 18 adults between Piñon and Uravan (RL, DF), which is down from higher numbers in the previous two years. However, the timing of the survey was earlier and probably avoided the problem of counting recent fledglings which may have inflated previous totals. The same observers confirmed the continued presence of a breeding pair near DeBeque in *Garfield*, first found in 1998. After the survey, additional breeding locations were found, with a pair on the Dolores River southeast of Slick Rock, *San Miguel*, another pair at Roc Creek, *Montrose*, (both DF) and the final at the confluence of Mesa Cr. and the Dolores River on 8 May (RL, KP). CBO hopes to expand the survey effort to more river miles in both southwestern and southeastern Colorado in 2001.

**Vermilion Flycatcher:** A pair attempted nesting at the Higbee cemetery in southernmost *Otero*, and was present TP, though the birds could be amazingly hard to locate (L. Zuckerman, m.ob.). See the summer report for more information. Another male dropped in at Lake Holbrook for a brief visit on 1 Apr (BKP et al.). We are told that this

isn't an April Fool's Day joke!

**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** An individual at VPSWA 19-20 Apr (BKP) was early. At an odd location, another was found in the Springfield cemetery on 22 Apr (R. Lentz et al.).

**Eastern Kingbird:** One each were at Parshall (1 June 1999) and Radium (24 Aug 1999) for rare *Grand* records (both KP).

**White-eyed Vireo:** A male was singing at the WRGB 20-21 May (LS, m.ob.).

**Bell's Vireo:** A singing bird at LCC 10 May (BKP, CLW) provided a rare migration record for this species.

**Plumbeous Vireo:** As they are not very common in spring migration away from the foothills, the bird at CVCG on 20 May (LS) was of interest.

**Red-eyed Vireo:** A singing bird was present in possible breeding habitat at FLWE on 21 May (LS, TL, CLW), while two or more were present most of May through the end of the season at TBSWA (CLW).

**Blue Jay:** At least one continues in Eagle, where there have been a couple for a few years (JM).

**Western Scrub-Jay:** After the big influx to the Arkansas River valley in winter '99-'00, there were still birds present in *Bent* and *Otero* this spring with the latest being five at JMR on 8 May (BKP, CLW). A pair were seen carrying nesting material in late April at the La Junta cemetery, *Otero* (CLW video).

**Chihuahuan Raven:** A bird seen briefly, but well, south of Florence, *Fremont*, on 21 May (TL, LS, CLW) adds another record in the recent spate in that county. Is there a previously-unknown breeding population there?

**Juniper Titmouse:** An out-of-range, out-of-habitat, individual at the Springfield cemetery, *Baca* since mid-February remained until at least 23 Apr (BKP, CLW, m.ob.). There are no records for nearby Kansas.

**Carolina Wren:** A singing bird was at Ovid, *Sedgwick*, 25 Mar to 1 Apr (JK, CLW video, m.ob.).

**Winter Wren:** The wintering individual at RFSWA was present until at least 1 Apr (BKP) and two migrants were at VPSWA on 11 Apr (BKP).

**Marsh Wren:** Along with the American Bitterns, the 8+ singing Marsh Wrens below the dam at Barr Lake probably provides a new breeding location (TL), though, the Breeding Bird Atlas (Kingery 1998) recorded the species as Probable in this block.

**American Dipper:** Field work by CBO focused on Black Phoebe has also increased our knowledge of breeding dippers. There were at least two active nests along the San Miguel River between Naturita and Uravan on 7 Apr (TL, RL). These were below the range of breeding elevation for the species provided in A&R. Additionally, one was along the St. Charles River near Burnt Mill Road on 19 May (TL,



CLW). The date is highly suggestive of local breeding, as even high-elevation breeding dippers usually have young in the nest by that date. See the summer report for further info.

**Eastern Bluebird:** This species (number?) was recorded at Picketwire Canyon, *Las Animas*, 27 Mar (JB). One (sex?) reported from near Eagle 2-3 Apr would be a first county record and one of exceedingly few records from the West Slope (JM). The site of the previous West Slope record, the Tiara Rado Golf Course in Redlands, *Mesa*, continues to host this species as a breeder. Three boxes at the golf course were occupied by Easterns this spring/summer (M. Henwood, m.ob.). I would strongly encourage observers of these birds to submit documentation to the CBRC and/or write a paper about the phenomenon for inclusion in this journal.

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** As for eastern warblers, eastern thrushes seemed hard to find this spring, such that only a handful were reported. One at the Neenoshe Res. locust grove, *Kiowa*, on 1 May (BKP et al.) was the only one from southeast Colorado. One at CVCG on 23 May (CLW) and another at an isolated woodlot in *Weld* on 24 May (CLW) were part of a large thrush (and other landbirds) movement that included over 1200 Swainson's Thrushes, 26 fairly late Hermit Thrushes, and at least seven Veeries at CVCG and isolated *Weld* woodlots (CLW). This same movement was responsible for both Veery and Gray-cheeked Thrush at nearby Hereford Ranch in extreme southeastern Wyoming (CLW)

**Varied Thrush:** One graced a yard in Walsenburg, *Huerfano*, in late Mar and early Apr (R. Selar, D. Hiatt, P. Hiatt, m.ob.).

**Gray Catbird:** One was at Rio Blanco SWA 9-20 Aug 1999 (DHi) and three were at Burns, *Eagle*, on 10 Aug 1999 (KP, R. Potter). Though the species is probably regular in the latter county, A&R reported only two specific records for *Rio Blanco*, both in fall.

**Northern Mockingbird:** Individuals were present in Eagle on 27 Apr (JM) and Avon, *Eagle*, on 30 Apr (BB). This species is rare this far up the Colorado River drainage.

**Bohemian Waxwing:** Though this species is probably of regular occurrence in winter in northwestern Colorado, since there are few resident birders there, it only gets reported in these pages when flocks show up in other parts of the state (where it is rarer). Thus, the following records, all in 1999, are of interest - 300 at Plateau City, *Mesa*, on 1 Jan (KP); 30+ on 4 Jan at Buford, *Rio Blanco* (DHi), and 200+ and 150+ at Meeker, *Rio Blanco*, on 21 Jan and 18 Feb, respectively (both DHi).

**Cedar Waxwing:** Twenty at Hot Sulphur Springs, *Grand*, on 11 Jun 1999 (KP) were probably migrants as this species typically migrates very late in

the spring. Nesting in the county has only been recorded a couple times.

**Blue-winged Warbler:** Unlike many eastern warbler species, Blue-wings put on a good show this spring, with the earliest of five reports being a male at the FLWE 29 Apr-1 May (BKP, m.ob.).

**Golden-winged Warbler:** A singing male at TBSWA 7 May (BKP) was a nice find.

**Black-throated Gray Warbler:** Migrants on the eastern plains, where not at all common, included single males at Campo on 22 Apr (BKP et al.) and at Lamar on 4 May (BKP).

**Townsend's Warbler:** While a common fall migrant, spring migrants are decidedly uncommon in the state. Five reports came from *Baca* (one), *Bent* (three), and *Weld* (one) and ranged from 23 April in *Bent* (CLW, m.ob) to one at CVCG, 23 May (CLW, m.ob).

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** A singing male enlivened TBSWA on 4 May (TL, et al.).

**Northern Parula:** The first of 18 reported this spring was at Turk's Pond SWA, *Baca*, on 17 Apr (DHa). Hanni also found one of the last ones, a bird at CBR, *El Paso*, 18 May (DHa, TL, CLW).

**Blackburnian Warbler:** A male was at CVCG on 20 May (LS).

**Pine Warbler:** A singing male was at the Lamar cemetery 25 May (BKP). We would like to know what this species is doing showing up in late spring, as it is one of the earliest of eastern warbler migrants; it arrives on territory in March in many locations.

**Prairie Warbler:** The only one reported to us this spring was a singing male near JMR 14 May (BKP).

**Palm Warbler:** Individuals of the western race were found at TBSWA 3 May (CLW, TL) and at Neenoshe Res. 14 May (BKP).

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** A first-year (1999 youngster) female was at the Lamar Cemetery on 21 May (BKP) and a female was present at CVCG 24 May (CLW, JF, m.ob.).

**Kentucky Warbler:** One sang sporadically all day 14 May at the WRGB (D. Schottler, m.ob.) and was at least heard (seen by some) by many. Another singer was at the LCC on the same day (DL, m.ob)

**Mourning Warbler:** A male skulked at TBSWA 4 May (CLW et al.) and another was at an isolated migrant trap known fondly as "Van's Grove," *Bent*, on 14 May (CLW). Perhaps most noteworthy was a very rare Front Range sighting on 13 May at Chatfield Reservoir, *Douglas* (JK).

**Summer Tanager:** There were numerous reports (10) on the eastern plains in late Apr and early May; many of the birds were molting, immature males.

**Scarlet Tanager:** An adult male brightened the woods at the LCC on 21 May (BKP) and another was singing at CVCG on 22 May (KS, m.ob.), while a singing male at TBSWA on 16 May rounded out the four Colorado tanagers for Wood's year list.

**Hepatic Tanager:** Chris Wood definitely used up all his Hepatic Tanager luck in 2000. In addition to a bird he found in June (see the summer report), he saw two spring migrants in May. The first, a female found with Leatherman, was at the Lamar cemetery on 14 May. Then, he and Leukering found an adult male at CBR in northernmost *Pueblo* on 19 May. The latter site is at least 10 miles from the closest conifer!

**Eastern Towhee:** The wintering adult male at Penrose, *Fremont*, continued until 16 Apr (RW).

**Rufous-crowned Sparrow:** The small population in Cañon City, *Fremont*, first found on the Penrose CBC a couple winters ago, continues with at least two birds seen there on numerous occasions this spring (m.ob.).

**Sage Sparrow:** In the rare-but-regular category, a few migrant Sage Sparrows showed up along the foothill edge on the east side of the state in the prime time for the phenomenon. One was at Pueblo Res. on 23 Mar (BKP), one was foraging among juncoes in the parking area at Vogel Canyon, *Otero*, 27 Mar (JB), another was at Chatfield Res., *Douglas*, 3 Apr (JK), a different bird was at a different location at Chatfield Res., just barely in *Douglas*, 5 Apr (CLW), and the final and most interesting record was of a bird present at the Dinosaur Ridge hawkwatch, *Jefferson*, 5-6 Apr (TD, CLW video.).

**Lark Bunting:** One was in Montrose, *Montrose*, 14 May (MA) for a first (?) county record. In 1999, Potter noted this species four times in *Grand* (where not regularly reported) in Aug and once in *Eagle* - seven at the Catamount Campground along the Colorado on 5 Aug. A&R reported no specific *Eagle* records.

**Baird's Sparrow:** As this editor has always suspected, concerted effort to find this species in Colorado this spring was rewarded with the locations of 6-7 individuals at two sites in late Apr in *Baca*. At least two and probably three were located by a group effort on 22 April at Comanche NG (CLW, TL, MJ, DQ) and at least four were found in less than ten minutes' search in a CRP field north of Cottonwood Canyon on 30 Apr (DF, CLW, TL, DHa). However, the Baird's Sparrow find of the year was turned in by participants at the CFO convention. Gregg Goodrich, Glen Walbek, and Larry Modesitt found a bird at the Glade Park cemetery, *Mesa* (!), on 27 May! The bird was seen and described well, though the record, as are all reports mentioned here, is pending acceptance by the CBRC.

**Le Conte's Sparrow:** The wintering birds (up to three) at JMR stayed to at

least 11 Mar (m.ob.).

**Fox Sparrow:** An individual of one of the “Red” races, most likely *zaboria*, was at TBSWA in mid-late Apr (DL, m.ob.) and a “Dusky” Fox Sparrow (the Rocky Mountains breeder) was near Ft. Lyon on 29 Apr (BKP). We strongly urge birders to keep track of the different forms of Fox Sparrow, as it is of interest from both bio-geographical and keep-track-because-they’ll-probably-get-split-soon points-of-view. The CBRC is reviewing subspecies that will require documentation in Colorado. At this point, it seems likely that “Red” Fox Sparrows will be on this list.

**Golden-crowned Sparrow:** One was reported from Dolores, *Dolores*, on 22 Apr (MA). If accepted by the CBRC, this would provide one of very few West Slope records, mostly due to the few resident birders, as compared to the Front Range. Another was found near Pritchett 30 April (DF, DHa).

**Chestnut-collared Longspur:** Late was a female in northeastern *Bent* on 1 May (TL et al.).

**Northern Cardinal:** At least four, and possibly more, birds were in Ovid most of the spring (m.ob.). Nine or more were found by CBO staff (CLW) at different times this spring within two miles of Wray, *Yuma*, which is undoubtedly this species’ stronghold in Colorado.

**Blue Grosbeak:** Two (sex?) were at Rio Blanco SWA 9-20 Aug 1999 (DHi).

**Indigo Bunting:** One (sex?) was at Hot Sulphur Springs 18-21 May 1999 (KP); A&R reported no previous *Grand* records.

**Painted Bunting:** One of the most interesting records of the year, a male was photographed in Silverthorne, *Summit*, 28 Apr-5 May (S. Miller fide SB). If accepted by the CBRC, it would probably provide the highest-elevation record in the state. An adult male was also enjoyed by many at Hasty Campground during the 7 May CFO trip (BKP, MJ, m.ob).

**Great-tailed Grackle:** Two in Edwards 12-31 May (JM) suggested local nesting. If true, it would be only the second *Eagle* nest record and an illustration of the continued range expansion of this formerly very rare Colorado species.

**Common Grackle:** Six were at Woody Creek, *Pitkin*, on 2 Jan 1999 (KP) for a very rare West Slope winter record, though a bird wintered in Buford (not Meeker *contra* Gent (2000)), in ‘98-‘99 (DHi).

**Pine Siskin:** This was apparently a year for this species to linger on the plains, as birds were present at numerous locations well into May. In my experience at this latitude, this is highly suggestive of local breeding.

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Cited Observers: Mymm Ackley, John Amoroso, Jason Beason, Brad Benter, Sue Bonfield, Bob Brown, Todd Dilley, Steve Dinsmore, Doug Faulkner, Joe Fontaine, David Galinat, David Hanni (DH<sub>a</sub>), Dona Hilkey (DH<sub>i</sub>), Mark Janos, Tony Leukering, David Leatherman, Rich Levad, Jack Marchant, Bill Maynard, Darrin O'Brien, Brandon K. Percival (BKP), JoAnn Potter, Kim Potter, Dave Quesenberry, Karleen Schofield, Larry Semo, John Vanderpoel, Christopher L. Wood (CLW).



### A BIT OF JCFO HISTORY

#### *10 Years Ago in the Journal...*

Duane Nelson presented a paper at the CFO convention about locating the Dakota Hogback hawk migration corridor.

#### *15 Years Ago in the Journal...*

Betsy Webb related the bizarre story of a Magnificent Frigatebird attacking windsurfers at Green Mountain Reservoir, Summit County.

#### *20 Years Ago in the Journal...*

Peter Moulton's "Winter Report" included the first state record of Great Black-backed Gull, at Centennial Park in Denver.

#### *25 Years Ago in the Journal...*

An article by J.V. Remsen, Jr. provided detailed information on separating Purple and Cassins' Finches.

## **CFO'S PROJECT FUND APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

The Colorado Field Ornithologists' Project Fund Committee—Linda Vidal (Chair), Pearle Sandstrom-Smith, and Jim Chace—grants funds to individuals and organizations seeking to conduct projects/research that will result in a lasting benefit to Colorado's birds and the habitats upon which they rely. Guidelines for applicants follow:

- A. Applications should contain name, address, and telephone number of the person or organization applying for a grant.
- B. Applications should include a description of the project: what will be done, who will direct the project, who will actually conduct the work, a timetable, and rationale (how does the project support CFO's Mission). CFO grants may be considered "matching funds."
- C. Applications must be submitted by 1 December each year directly to the Project Fund Chair, Linda Vidal, at: 855 Wooden Deer Rd., Carbondale, CO 81623.
- D. Projects must have anticipated start/completion dates.
- E. Applicants must submit a complete budget. Projects should be realistic in terms of cost, volunteer resources, and time required to complete the project.
- F. Travel expenses and purchase of equipment readily available from other sources (e.g., camera, spotting scope, office equipment) generally will not be funded.
- G. After receipt of a grant and completion of the project, the applicant must submit a final written report to the Project Fund Chair. The report should include an accounting of money spent, time donated, etc.
- H. All funds not used will be returned to the CFO Treasurer.

Any additional supporting materials (e.g., brochures, financial reports) that the applicant wishes to send with the grant application should be sent in quadruplicate, one for each of the four Project Fund Committee members.

Each year, applicants will be notified in February, after the winter CFO Board of Directors' meeting, as to whether or not they will receive funds.

### **BEQUESTS FOR CFO'S PROJECT FUND**

THE CFO PROJECT FUND COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS TO REMEMBER THE CFO PROJECT FUND IN THEIR WILLS. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT LINDA VIDAL AT: 970-704-9950; OR E-MAIL LINDA AT: VIDAL@ROF.NET.

**INDICES FOR VOLUME 34 (2000)**  
**OF THE JOURNAL OF THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS**

**Index by Title**

Title. Author. (Issue no.):page no.

- American Crow Caught on Electric Fence. L. Baumunk. (2):113  
 American Robins Nesting Side by Side. B. Blattspieler. (4):209–210  
 Analysis of Colorado's Only Dusky-capped Flycatcher Record. B. Righter. (4):217–219  
 Announcements (Anonymous)  
   Announcing the Colorado Field Ornithologists' *Convention 2000*. (1):8–9  
   Bequests for CFO's Project Fund. (1):7; (3):185; (4):247  
   Call for Nominations: Ronald A. Ryder Award for Distinguished Service to Colorado Field Ornithology. (1):9; (2):83; (3):129; (4):208  
   CFO Convention 2000. (2):87  
   CFO Supports Ethics Codes. (3):158  
   CFO Website. (3):144; (4):213  
   CFO's Project Fund Application Guidelines. (3):185; (4):247  
   Chiricahua Mountains Trip. (2):86–87  
   Codes of Ethics Adopted by CFO. (4):222–227  
   Colorado Field Ornithologists' Mission Statement. (1):6; (2):90; (3):126; (4):195  
   Journal Sponsors Wanted. (4):216  
   Membership Update Requested. (4):205  
   Upcoming CFO Field Trips. (1):7; (2):84–85; (3):127; (4):196–197  
 Barbed Wire Fence Fatal to Burrowing Owl. S.W. Gillihan. (4):220–221  
*Bird Songs of the Rocky Mountain States and Provinces* by Robert Righter and Geoffrey A. Keller: A Review. B. Lisowski. (1):64–66  
 Bob Righter: The Accomplished Amateur—Recipient of Ronald A. Ryder Award. P. Echelmeyer, L. Willcockson, and D. Pantle. (3):150–158  
 Boreal Owl Nest Box Study: Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests (Colorado Field Ornithologists' Convention 2000 Papers Session Abstracts). T.M. Holland. (3):148  
 Breeding Distribution and Habitat Utilization of Gray and Plumbeous Vireos at Colorado National Monument (Colorado Field Ornithologists' Convention 2000 Papers Session Abstracts). G. Giroir. (3):146  
 Cattle Egret: Range Expansion, Movements, and Population Trends (Colorado Field Ornithologists' Convention 2000 Papers Session Abstracts). R.A. Ryder. (3):145

- CFO Board Meeting Minutes: 8 April 2000. (3):128–129
- CFO Board Meeting Minutes: 19 August 2000. (4):211–213
- CFO Board Minutes, 2-12-00, Condensed for *JCFO*. (2):81
- CFO Photo Quiz. C.L. Wood. (4):204–205
- Christmas Bird Counts 2000–2001. R. Kolokoff. (4):198–200
- Colorado Bird Observatory Occasional Paper Number 3: Birds at Apishapa State Wildlife Area in North-central Las Animas County. T. Leukering and L. Dombroski. (1):10–23
- Colorado Bird Observatory Occasional Paper Number 4: First Breeding Record of Franklin's Gull for Colorado. R. Levad. (2):88–90
- Colorado Bird Observatory Occasional Paper Number 5: Birds of Lone Dome State Wildlife Area and Dolores River Corridor. D. Faulkner. (3):130–143
- Conservation Focus: Modeling the Potential Impacts of Climate Change on the Summer Distributions of Colorado's Nongame Birds. J. Price. (3):160–167
- Conservation Focus: Review of the American Peregrine Falcon's Status: An Endangered Species Success Story. N.R. Ramey, L.Z. Cullum, and N.E. Kirker. (1):24–30
- The Effects of Urbanization on Raptors Along the Front Range of Colorado. M. Swan, C. Ortega, B. Davies, E. Wicks, and A. Otway. (1):32–40
- Field Identification of Winter Goldfinches (American vs. Lesser). A. Versaw. (4):206–208
- Field Trip in San Luis Valley. J. Rawinski and L. Rawinski. (1):60
- A Fledgling Loggerhead Shrike Impaled on Cholla. S.W. Hutchings. (3):159
- Forty Years of Christmas Bird Counts in Colorado: A History of the Activity. W.H. Kaempfer and T. Levy. (1):41–45
- Forty Years of Christmas Bird Counts in Colorado: What Do They Show about the Birds? A. Versaw. (1):46–57
- Greater Scaups Invade Barr Lake. T. Leukering. (4):214–216
- A Letter from the Editor. S.W. Gillihan. (2):79–80; (3):126
- A Letter from Your Outgoing Editor. C. Melcher. (1):3–5
- Louise Hering's 42-year Breeding Bird Study on Enchanted Mesa. S. Jones and P. Hansley. (2):99–113
- Monitoring Colorado's Birds (Colorado Field Ornithologists' Convention 2000 Papers Session Abstracts). T. Leukering. (3):147
- New! CFO's On-line Store. R. Kolokoff. (4):202–203
- A New Colony of Black Swifts along No Name Creek. K. Potter. (1):31
- News from the Field: Fall 1999 Report (August–November). P. Gent. (2):114–124
- News from the Field: Spring 2000 Report (March–May). T. Leukering. (4):228–246



- News from the Field: Summer 1999 Report (June–July 1999). T. Leukering. (1):67–76
- News from the Field: Winter 1999–2000 Report (December–February). P. Gent. (3):186–194
- Of Legumes and Grackles. A. Versaw. (1):58–59
- An Open Letter to the CFO Membership. L. Bright. (1):6
- An Open Letter to the Membership. L. Bright. (3):127
- Owl Prowl 2000. R. Levad. (3):144
- “Pishing” up a Few Good Birders for the NAMC. L. Vidal. (2):82–83
- Recent Ornithological Literature Pertaining to Colorado, No. 7. T.G. Shane. (1):61
- Recent Ornithological Literature Pertaining to Colorado, No. 8. T.G. Shane. (2):98
- Recent Ornithological Literature Pertaining to Colorado, No. 9. T.G. Shane. (4):201
- Report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee: 1998 Records. B. Lisowski. (3):168–184
- Some Aspects of the Nesting Ecology of Grace’s Warbler in Southwestern Colorado (Colorado Field Ornithologists’ Convention 2000 Papers Session Abstracts). S. Hutchings. (3):149
- What *Is* That Bird I Hear Singing? A Review of *Bird Songs of the Rocky Mountain States and Provinces*. L. Bright. (1):62–63
- Winter Range Expansion of Lesser Goldfinches. A. Versaw. (2):91–97

### Index by Author

Author(s). Title. (Issue no.):page no.

- Baumunk, L. American Crow Caught on Electric Fence. (2):113
- Blattspieler, B. American Robins Nesting Side by Side. (4):209–210
- Bright, L. An Open Letter to the CFO Membership. (1):6
- Bright, L. An Open Letter to the Membership. (3):127
- Bright, L. What *Is* That Bird I Hear Singing? A Review of *Bird Songs of the Rocky Mountain States and Provinces*. (1):62–63
- Echelmeyer, P., L. Willcockson, and D. Pantle. Bob Righter: The Accomplished Amateur—Recipient of Ronald A. Ryder Award. (3):150–158
- Faulkner, D. Colorado Bird Observatory Occasional Paper Number 5: Birds of Lone Dome State Wildlife Area and Dolores River Corridor. (3):130–143
- Gent, P. News from the Field: Fall 1999 Report (August–November). (2):114–124
- Gent, P. News from the Field: Winter 1999–2000 Report (December–February). (3):186–194
- Gillihan, S.W. Barbed Wire Fence Fatal to Burrowing Owl. (4):220–221

- Gillihan, S.W. A Letter from the Editor. (2):79–80; (3):126
- Giroir, G. Breeding Distribution and Habitat Utilization of Gray and Plumbeous Vireos at Colorado National Monument (Colorado Field Ornithologists' Convention 2000 Papers Session Abstracts). (3):146
- Holland, T.M. Boreal Owl Nest Box Study: Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests (Colorado Field Ornithologists' Convention 2000 Papers Session Abstracts). (3):148
- Hutchings, S. Some Aspects of the Nesting Ecology of Grace's Warbler in Southwestern Colorado (Colorado Field Ornithologists' Convention 2000 Papers Session Abstracts). (3):149
- Hutchings, S.W. A Fledgling Loggerhead Shrike Impaled on Cholla. (3):159
- Jones, S., and P. Hansley. Louise Hering's 42-year Breeding Bird Study on Enchanted Mesa. (2):99–113
- Kaempfer, W.H., and T. Levy. Forty Years of Christmas Bird Counts in Colorado: A History of the Activity. (1):41–45
- Kolokoff, R. Christmas Bird Counts 2000–2001. (4):198–200
- Kolokoff, R. New! CFO's On-line Store. (4):202–203
- Leukering, T. Greater Scaups Invade Barr Lake. (4):214–216
- Leukering, T. Monitoring Colorado's Birds (Colorado Field Ornithologists' Convention 2000 Papers Session Abstracts). (3):147
- Leukering, T. News from the Field: Spring 2000 Report (March–May). (4):228–246
- Leukering, T. News from the Field: Summer 1999 Report (June–July 1999). (1):67–76
- Leukering, T., and L. Dombroski. Colorado Bird Observatory Occasional Paper Number 3: Birds at Apishapa State Wildlife Area in North-central Las Animas County. (1):10–23
- Levad, R. Colorado Bird Observatory Occasional Paper Number 4: First Breeding Record of Franklin's Gull for Colorado. (2):88–90
- Levad, R. Owl Prowl 2000. (3):144
- Lisowski, B. *Bird Songs of the Rocky Mountain States and Provinces* by Robert Righter and Geoffrey A. Keller: A Review. (1):64–66
- Lisowski, B. Report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee: 1998 Records. (3):168–184
- Melcher, C. A Letter from Your Outgoing Editor. (1):3–5
- Potter, K. A New Colony of Black Swifts along No Name Creek. (1):31
- Price, J. Conservation Focus: Modeling the Potential Impacts of Climate Change on the Summer Distributions of Colorado's Nongame Birds. (3):160–167
- Ramey, N.R., L.Z. Cullum, and N.E. Kirker. Conservation Focus: Review of the American Peregrine Falcon's Status: An Endangered Species Success Story. (1):24–30

- Rawinski, J., and L. Rawinski. Field Trip in San Luis Valley. (1):60
- Righter, B. Analysis of Colorado's Only Dusky-capped Flycatcher Record. (4):217-219
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- Shane, T.G. Recent Ornithological Literature Pertaining to Colorado, No. 7. (1):61
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- Versaw, A. Field Identification of Winter Goldfinches (American vs. Lesser). (4):206-208
- Versaw, A. Forty Years of Christmas Bird Counts in Colorado: What Do They Show about the Birds? (1):46-57
- Versaw, A. Of Legumes and Grackles. (1):58-59
- Versaw, A. Winter Range Expansion of Lesser Goldfinches. (2):91-97
- Vidal, L. "Pishing" up a Few Good Birders for the NAMC. (2):82-83
- Wood, C.L. CFO Photo Quiz. (4):204-205

