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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cover Illustration: Black-crowned Night Heron by Joe Rigli
The line drawings of the Black-capped Chickadee and Yellow-breasted Chat in this issue are also by Joe Rigli.

Purple Martins Nesting on McClure Pass

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During the summer of 1984, I received separate reports from Mark Janos and Jerry Cairo regarding their sightings of a couple of adult and immature Purple Martins (Progne subis) near the summit of McClure Pass along highway 133 between the towns of Marble and Paonia. A subsequent review of Bailey and Niedrach's Birds of Colorado, revealed at least eight separate sightings of Purple Martins were reported relatively close to the McClure Pass area between 1907 and 1957. Furthermore, Issue #2 of the Colorado Field Ornithologists Newsletter (1 January 1971), indicated a flock of 15 Purple Martins on McClure Pass on 18 August 1970. All these records occurred in June, July and August and all occurred at elevations of approximately 8500 feet.

My wife and I decided to see if the Purple Martins had returned and nested in 1985. On 4 July 1985, we discovered eight Purple Martins (one adult male, two adult females and five first spring birds; first spring birds are defined as juveniles from the previous year which have not yet attained adult plumage (National Geographic Society 1983)) feeding near a series of beaver ponds located 1/4 mile below the summit of McClure Pass on the Marble (northeast) side of the pass. These ponds are only about 250 yards from highway 133, and are clearly visible from the highway. There is good access to this area by a two lane dirt track which goes off the right side of the highway as one heads down McClure Pass towards Marble.

The area near the beaver ponds are covered by a substantial grove of mature aspen trees, many of which contained a large number of woodpecker holes. It appeared that most of the holes were small holes drilled in a sapsucker pattern, and that fewer of the holes were larger, consistent with flicker usage.

In this area, we observed the adult male feed over the ponds and return to an abandoned flicker hole about 25 feet above the ground in an aspen tree. When he entered the nest hole, the adult female would leave the nest hole and feed. When she returned,

the male would leave, etc. This process continued through our stay in the area and we concluded the birds were nesting. I attempted to listen for the sounds of feeding young from the base of the tree, but didn't hear anything. Large numbers of Tree Swallows and Violet-Green Swallows were also seen nesting in the sapsucker holes in this area.

It seemed that other Purple Martins in the flock were in a similar pattern of feeding, disappearing and reappearing but we could not find any other nest holes. In the next weeks, Jack Merchant and Homer Hatch made further observations at this location. They discovered two more birds and also discovered two additional nesting holes. The two additional pairs appeared to be first-year birds and were also engaging in similar behavior consistent with nesting. These birds were also using flickersize nest holes.

Unfortunately, none of the observers were able to return to the area to determine if these birds successfully fledged young. The Roaring Fork Audubon Society has, however, adopted this site as a continuing project. In addition to a regular 1986 observation schedule, the society intends to build a number of single family Purple Martin houses, and place them in the nesting area to encourage nesting by martins unable to find appropriate flicker holes this year. We hope to provide better data next year.

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SEASONAL REPORT - WINTER 1984-85
(December 1 - February 28)

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Spectacular increases in the numbers of raptors, particularly Bald Eagle, were reported statewide. The northcentral part of the state evidently hosted the greatest increase, while a mere 10% increase in raptor numbers was reported from the San Luis Valley. Noteworthy among the myriad reports were two observations of Bald Eagle pirating a prairie dog from Ferruginous Hawk.

Pine Grosbeak and Cassin's Finch followed last winter's trend of higher than average numbers, especially along the east slope foothills of the Front Range. Observers also reported high numbers of Redbreasted Nuthatch, Red Crossbill and Evening Grosbeak. But where were our sparrows? White-crowned Sparrow and Dark-eyed Juncos were virtually absent from many areas, while numbers of White-throated Sparrow and Harris' Sparrow were average.

This seasonal report is divided into two parts. Part I is records of species found in small numbers in winter and late-lingering normally migrating species. Part II consists of records of rare species and first latilong records (Chase, et al. 1982).

I.

SPECIES	TOTAL BIRDS	DATES	LOCATION
Arctic Loon	1	12/2	Arapahoe County
Common Loon	3	12/1-2/28	FR
Horned Grebe	7	12/2-1/26	FR
Western Grebe	18	1/2-2/25	FR, NE CO
Double-crested Cormorant	4	12/15-12/20	FR
Black-crowned Night Heron	6	1/5-2/17	FR
Tundra Swan	5	12/14-12/15	FR
	14	throughout	West Slope

SPECIES	TOTAL BIRDS	DATES	LOCATION
Greater White-fronted Goose	8	12/10-1/13	FR, NE CO
	2	12/27-2/28	West Slope
Ross's Goose	5	12/15-1/19	FR
	9	12/27-2/26	West Slope
Wood Duck	7	1/5-2/16	Estes Park*
			San Luis Valley*
Greater Scaup	3	12/2-2/15	FR
	27	12/27	West Slope
Surf Scoter	1	12/2	FR
White-winged Scoter	1	12/1	Pueblo County
Barrow's Goldeneye	7	12/2-2/18	FR*
Ruddy Duck	2	12/2-1/13	FR
Peregrine Falcon	1	12/25	FR
	2	12/13-1/21	West Slope
Virginia Rail	8	12/2-2/2	FR, Morgan County
Thayer's Gull	10	12/2-2/28	FR
Glaucous Gull	9	12/16-2/20	FR, Weld County
Burrowing Owl	1	12/2	Berthoud
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	12/17	FR
Say's Phoebe	1	1/14	West Slope
Barn Swallow	10	12/8	FR
Chihuahuan Raven	21	12/22	El Paso County
House Wren	1	12/15	Pueblo County
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	3	1/15-2/22	West Slope
Eastern Bluebird	1	1/14	Boulder County*
Mountain Bluebird	1	1/15	Weld County*
Varied Thrush	1	12/8-1/7	Boulder County
	2	12/16-12/18	West Slope
Gray Catbird	2	12/26-1/9	Boulder County
Northern Mockingbird	5	12/2-2/24	FR, Fremont County
Brown Thrasher	2	12/9-12/15	FR
Water Pipit	25	2/11	West Slope
Loggerhead Shrike	1	12/15	Jefferson County*
Yellow-rumped Warbler	2	12/15-1/25	FR
	4	12/9-2/22	Front Range

SPECIES	TOTAL BIRDS	DATES	LOCATION
Northern Cardinal	2	12/27-12/30	Yuma County
Green-tailed Towhee	3	12/15-1/1	Boulder County
Sage Sparrow	4	2/27	West Slope
Fox Sparrow	6	12/1-1/10	FR
	1	12/1-1/19	West Slope
Lincoln's Sparrow	1	2/7	Pueblo County
Swamp Sparrow	2	12/9-?	Arkansas Valley, Pueblo County
Rusty Blackbird	19	12/1-2/16	Pueblo County Washington County?
Common Grackle	16	12/1-21/31	FR
Red Crossbill	8	2/6	Crook County
White-winged Crossbill	4	1/18-2/16	FR
Lesser Goldfinch	7	1/26-2/8	West Slope

*indicates very few records at a particular location.

II. Notable Observations

Old Squaw 1/25 (1) Bonny SRA, Yuma Co. (WL,JR).

Greater Yellowlegs 12/19 - 1/12 (1) Wheat Ridge, (AH,WL,DM).

Franklin's Gull 2/8 (1 1st winter) Cherry Creek SRA, Arapahoe County (WL)

Mew Gull (subsp. brachyrhynchos) 1/2 (1 1st winter) Cherry Creek SRA. (LH,WL,JR).

Brown Creeper 2/8 - 2/10 (3) Lamar, Prowers County (PL).

Wood Thrush 12/15 (1) Waterton, Jefferson County (AB,JG,DH,BL).

Varied Thrush 1/5 - 1/26 (1) Bonny SRA, Yuma County (LH,WL,DM,DW,JW).

Pine Warbler 12/2 (1) Boulder County (SW).

Brewer's Sparrow 1/9, 1/27, 2/2 (1) Escalante SWA, Delta County (MJ).

Pine Grosbeak 12/6 - 12/7 (3m,8f) Lamar, Prowers County (PL). no details.

White-winged Crossbill 11/21 (2) Ft. Morgan, Morgan County (FH, JRi).

White-winged Crossbill 2/16-17 (2) Ft. Morgan, Morgan County (DG,DJ,DS).

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COLORADO SPECIES AFFECTED BY THE THIRTY-FIFTH SUPPLEMENT TO THE A.O.U. CHECK-LIST OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS

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The American Ornithologists' Union has published the 35th supplement to the A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds (Auk 102: 680-686). Three of the changes adopted by the Committee on Classification and Nomenclature affect species found in Colorado. All the changes involve the reclassification of a present species into two species. The net effect for Colorado is the deletion of one species from the state list and the addition of three others.

ARCTIC LOON VERSUS PACIFIC LOON

Three distinct groups of the Arctic Loon (Gavia arctica) were previously recognized: arctica, viridigularis, and pacifica. Based in part on a distinct plumage and a separate breeding distribution, the pacifica group is now considered a distinct species with the name Pacific Loon (Gavia pacifica). It is added directly after the Arctic Loon in the A.O.U. check-list.

Distinguishing Characters

In alternate (breeding) plumage, the Arctic Loon is best separated from the Pacific Loon by the color of the throat patch (National Geographic Society 1983, Harrison 1983). The throat patch of the arctica group of the Arctic Loon is black (it is called the Black-Throated Diver in Europe) while the throat patch of the viridigularis group is dark green. The throat patch of the Pacific Loon is purple. Unfortunately the throat patch of all three groups appears black under most field conditions. In basic (winter) plumage, it is virtually impossible to distinguish the two species. The Arctic Loon is slightly larger than the Pacific Loon.

Distribution

The arctica group of the Arctic Loon occurs in Eurasia. The viridigularis group of the Arctic Loon breeds in eastern Siberia and in western Alaska in the Cape Prince of Wales region. It winters in Eurasia and in North America in western and southern Alaska with scattered records south to British Columbia.

The Pacific Loon breeds in eastern Siberia, Alaska and across northern Canada to Hudson Bay. It winters south to Japan and along the Pacific coast to southern Baja California. It winters casually inland in North America south to Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas.

Colorado Status

The Pacific Loon occurs in Colorado as an uncommon to rare fall migrant with most records occurring from September to December (Bailey and Niedrach 1965, Lane and Holt 1979, Chase et al. 1982). The Pacific Loon replaces the Arctic Loon on the state list.

WESTERN GREBE VERSUS CLARK'S GREBE

The two color morphs of the Western Grebe (Aechmophorus occidentalis) are now considered to be two separate species. This split is based on the fact that the two are morphologically distinct and although there is great overlap in their breeding ranges, there is no apparent hybridization. The light phase is now the Clark's Grebe (Aechmophorus clarkii). It is added directly after the Western Grebe in the A.O.U. Check-list.

Distinguishing Characters

As noted by Ratti (Farrand 1983), the Western Grebe and Clark's Grebe are easily distinguished. The Western Grebe has a dark cap that extends to below the eye, a dull greenish-yellow bill and uniformly dark back and flanks. The Clark's Grebe has a dark cap that stops above the eye, a bright orange-yellow bill and paler gray back and flanks which are speckled with white feathers. The Western Grebe gives a two note call, "creet creet," while the Clark's Grebe gives only a single note call, "creet."

Distribution

The ranges of the Western and Clark's Grebe are widely sympatric (overlapping). Both species breed in western United States. They winter along the Pacific coast, the Gulf coast of Texas and Louisiana, and southern New Mexico and western Texas. The Clark's Grebe is rare in the north but becomes equally common in the southern part of the range.

Colorado Status

Both species breed in Colorado. The Clark's Grebe is at least as abundant as the Western Grebe on many reservoirs in the San Luis and Arkansas Valleys but is much less abundant in the northern part of the state (R. Bunn, pers. comm.). The Clark's Grebe is added to the state list after the Western Grebe.

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER VERSUS RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER

The nuchalis group of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (Sphyrapicus varius) is considered a separate species with the name Red-naped Sapsucker (Sphyrapicus nuchalis). This decision is based on the fact that there is very little hybridization where their breeding areas overlap. The Red-naped Sapsucker is added directly after the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in the A.O.U. Check-list.

Distinguishing Characters

Both sexes of the Red-naped Sapsucker have a red patch on the back of the crown (Farrand 1983). This red nape does not occur in the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. The female Yellow-bellied Sapsucker has a white chin and throat. The female Red-naped Sapsucker also has a white chin but many have a varying amount of red on the throat. The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker has an unbroken black frame surrounding the throat but in the Red-naped this frame is broken at the lower cheek.

Habitat

The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is found in deciduous or mixed deciduous-coniferous forest while the Red-naped Sapsucker occurs primarily in coniferous forest including aspen (AOU 1983).

Distribution

The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker breeds from southeastern Alaska south to the Dakotas and east across southern Canada and into northeastern United States. The Red-naped Sapsucker breeds throughout the Rocky Mountains from Canada to New Mexico.

The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker winters from Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, the Ohio Valley, and New Jersey south through Texas, the southeastern United States, Middle America to central Panama. The Red-naped Sapsucker winters from southern California, southern Nevada, central Arizona, and central New Mexico south.

Colorado Status

The Red-naped Sapsucker breeds in the mountains of the state and migrates on the plains with a few regularly found in winter (Bailey and Niedrach 1965). The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is a casual winter visitor (Bailey and Niedrach 1965, AOU 1983) and an uncommon transient through the eastern portion of the state (C. Chase pers. comm., P. Gent pers. comm.). The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker does not breed in the state. The Red-naped Sapsucker is added to the state list after the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

DISCUSSION

Geographically distinct populations of a species often evolve different morphologic characters. If these characters make a population distinct from another then the populations are called subspecies (or races). If the isolating factor continues to operate, physiological or behavioral barriers can be established which prevent successful interbreeding. Once reproductive isolation has occurred, the two populations may each be considered a species.

Often it is difficult to determine when speciation has occurred between two populations, especially if they are allopatric (ranges do not overlap). Therefore, the Committee on Classification and Nomenclature base their taxonomic decisions on extensive studies which usually include exhaustive field research. All of these studies are published in professional journals.

It should be noted, however, that these changes are not necessarily permanent. They are based on dynamic research which could yield new information in the future. Therefore field observers should not concentrate just on the species level, but should collect as much information as possible on all identifiable forms (subspecies, color morphs, and hybrids). The Denver Field Ornithologists are to be commended for their published efforts to date. To further aid in the collection of such information, the C.F.O. Records Committee should add identifiable forms to the state list. Future revisions of the Colorado Bird Distribution Latilong Study (Chase et al. 1982) should also reflect the known status of these identifiable forms.

Avian systematics is constantly being refined. The next species to be considered by the A.O.U. Committee on Classification and Nomenclature include:

Anser albifrons elgasi ("Tule Goose" form of the Greater White-fronted Goose)

Dendragapus obsucurus-fuliginosus ("Dusky Grouse" vs. "Sooty Grouse" form of the Blue Grouse)

Pluvialis dominica-fulva ("American Golden-Plover" vs "Asiatic Golden-Plover" form of the Lesser Golden-Plover)

Anthus spinoletta-rubescens (Two races of the Water Pipit)

Vireo olivaceus-flavoviridis ("Red-eyed" vs. "Yellow-green" Vireo)

Regardless of future decisions of this committee, field observers should continue to monitor all identifiable forms of birds occurring in Colorado. As demonstrated by the Sapsucker complex, species that have been previously lumped may be split again in the future.

Acknowledgements

Richard Bunn's information concerning the status of Clark's Grebe and his review and comments are greatly appreciated.

Information on the status of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in Colorado from both Charles Chase and Peter Gent, plus their review and comments, are also greatly appreciated.

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Weld County Birding Spots - An Area Site Guide

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Not too much has been written about Weld County and Greeley area birding spots. There are many good birding spots in Weld County that can provide birding adventure. The city parks are fair spots to bird in April-May and in August-September. Glenmere Park is the best of the city parks. The whole park can be good but the best area is the wildlife area located along the stream in the southwest part of this park. There is a crude trail that follows the stream and in spring and fall many warblers can be seen here. Glenmere Park is located on 14th Avenue near 18th Street. A good thing to remember in Greeley is that the avenues run north to south and the streets run east to west. Also good is Luther Park located at 10th Street and 21st Avenue. At Luther Park it is best to walk the whole park and, like Glenmere, warblers and vireos can be seen here spring and fall. The city parks are a good place to watch for broad-winged hawks in late April to mid-May.

Latham Resevoir is located about 6 miles southeast of Greeley. Just south of where the South Platte River crosses Route 85 is Road 52. Take Road 52 going east to Road 43. Go right here for 2 miles to Road 48. Go left here and you'll see the cattails to your left. Look for sky ponds on both sides of the road. These are great shorebird spots, spring and fall. Latham Reservoir is probably the best known of the Weld County birding spots and for good reason. In the past 3 years I've seen rarities such as Common Moorhen, Little Blue Heron, Eurasian Wigeon (2 of 3 years), Golden Plover and King Rail. More typical birds of April through September include American Bittern, Black-crowned Night Heron, Virginia and Sora Rail, White-faced Ibis, many ducks and shorebirds. Road 48 is the best road to bird but you can scope the entire lake better from Road 47, next left. Also, sky ponds can usually be found on Roads 46, 44, 42 and 40 going south of Roads 47 and 45. There is a willow-cottonwood grove located on Road 45 near Road 42, which can be full of birds. Continue south on Road 43 until you come to Road 38. Go right here for 2 miles to Road 39. Go left on Road 39 for 3 miles to Road 32. Go left

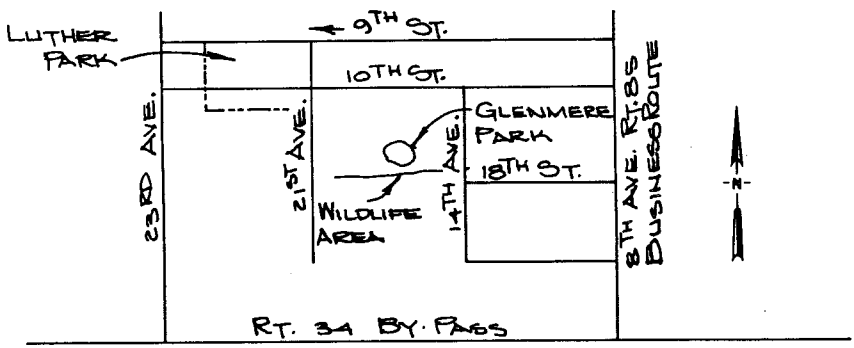
here and start watching for Upland Sandpipers and Dickcissels. Neither are common but are annual visitors. Go to Road 43 and go right and then left on Road 30. Milton Reservoir is on your left but you can't really get close to it. Where the canal feeds into the lake (1/2 mile after you turn onto Road 30) this is an area to check out with a scope. To get back to Rt. 85 backtrack to Road 32 and go west for 8 miles to Platteville.

For more birding spots the following tour is suggested. From Greeley take 8th Street (Rt. 263) going east. After 4 1/2 miles look for Division of Wildlife signs on your right just west of a house, and take the lane back to the parking area. This area is called the Mitani-Tokuyasu State Wildlife Area. The Poudre River meets the South Platte River here. The area is small but can be productive in spring and fall. Although this area is hunted starting in September, it is not widely used. Continue going east on 263 for 2 1/2 miles; the highway becomes Rt. 37 at this point. Before going north on Rt. 37, go straight at the gravel road. Here on the right is a marsh which can be good for shorebirds and marsh birds in the spring, and is a good spot for American Bittern. Go back to Rt. 37 and go north 3 miles to Rt. 392. Go right for 3 miles to Road 61, then go left for 3 miles. At the intersection of Road 61 and Road 64 are 2 lakes that are worth checking in March, April and May and again in August-October. Look for Long-billed Curlews here, Stilt Sandpipers and during the last two weeks of May and the first week of June, White-rumped Sandpipers. Go west on Road 74 for one mile to Road 59. Here go left and there is a small irrigation pond on your left. When it's lowered it is full of shorebirds in migration. Continue on another 1 1/2 miles to Faber Reservoir, a small but productive pond for ducks, shorebirds, and herons. Backtrack 1 1/2 miles to Road 74 and go left (west). Go 14 miles to Wood's Lake just past Road 29. Although good in March and April, the attraction here is in November and December when the geese stop over. Canada Geese appear by the thousands and mixed in are Snow Geese, including a few Blue Phase, and also Greater White-fronted Geese. The latter are usually hard to find and require a scope. Also here in fall are thousands of mallards and gulls. This is a good spot to check for the more uncommon gulls of Colorado such as Thayer's, Glaucous and Bonaparte's. Also there is usually some open water in mid-winter here. Continue on Road 74 for

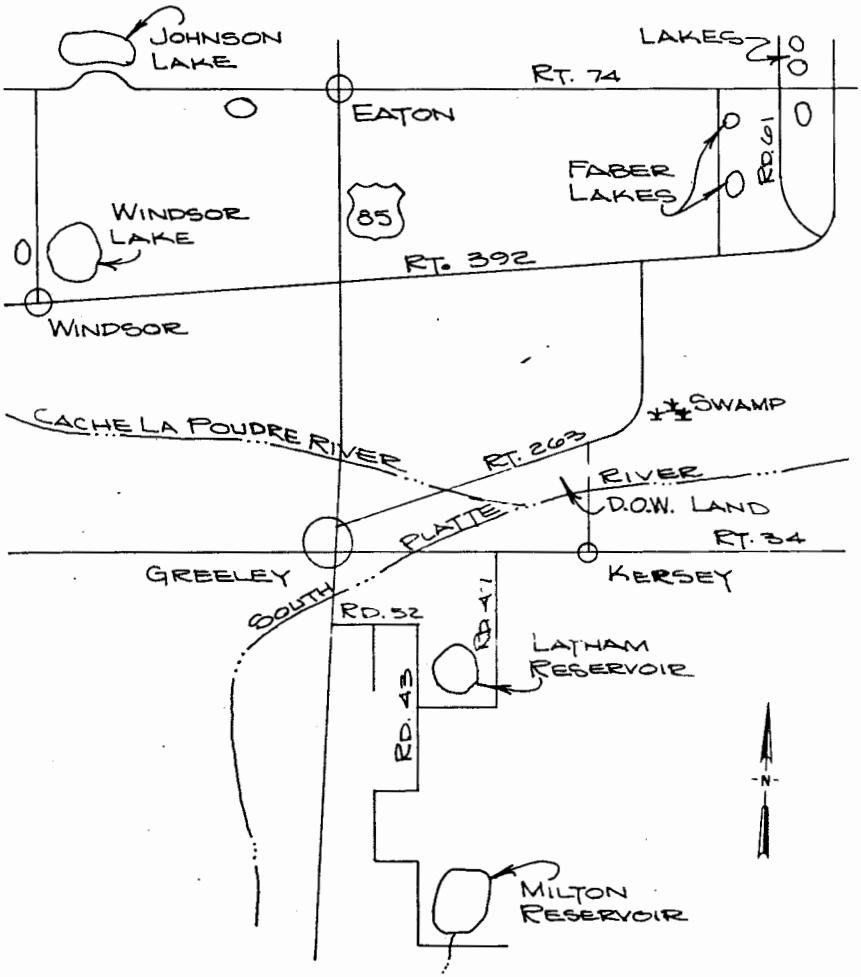
4 1/2 miles and you'll come to Johnson Lake, which is not spectacular for birds but is worth checking out for terns in spring and fall. This is a fair area in summer for the Green-backed Heron. Go 1/2 mile to Rt. 257 and continue left for 3 miles to Windsor Lake. The water level of the lake drops off in fall and exposes mud flats for shorebirds. This is a good area for Semi-palmated Plover, Black-bellied Plover, Pectoral Sandpiper and Long-billed Dowitcher. This is also a good area for gulls and terns, herons, cormorants, etc. When the water is high check for ducks, grebes and loons. The next intersection is Rt. 392. Go right here and go 2 miles to Road 13. Go left on Road 13 and soon you'll cross the Poudre River. Just on your left after you cross the river is the Division of Wildlife's Frank Easement. You can walk along the river here for a mile or two and it can be excellent in April-May and August-October as warblers, flycatchers, vireos, and sparrows move through in migration. This area is also inter- esting in summer with nesting Blue Grosbeaks, Lazuli Buntings and Red-headed Woodpeckers.

Weld County in winter can be dull but good hawk areas exist southeast of Latham Reservoir where Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks are common. Also good for Rough-Legs and Prairie Falcons is the area of Faber Lake and vicinity northeast of Greeley. In the city parks Cedar and Bohemian Waxwings can be found in January and February and some years Common Redpolls also appear.

MAP OF GREELEY CITY PARKS



MAP OF THE GREELEY AREA



Status of Ross' Goose in Western Colorado

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Ross' Goose (Chen rossii) was considered a straggler in Colorado by Bailey and Neidrach in 1965 and there were still only 31 state records as late as 1977 (CFO Journal 15: 54). Chase et al (1982) treat this species as a migrant in 14 of 28 Colorado latilongs and as accidental in all but three of these: Ft. Collins (latilong 4), Georgetown (latilong 11) and Denver (latilong 12). Since publication of that 2nd edition of the Colorado bird distribution latilong study in 1982, Ross' Goose has been added to the Durango latilong (latilong 23) and should no longer be considered accidental in the Grand Junction (latilong 8), Delta (latilong 15) or Montrose (latilong 16) areas in western Colorado.

Table 1 lists the sight records of Ross' Goose in the last four years in west-central Colorado. The bulk of these migrants passed through from late October to mid-November in the fall and from March to early April in the spring. Up until the end of 1977 when the 31st record of Ross' Goose was recorded, the majority of these records were small groups of 1-3 individuals (CFO Journal vol. 14-18; Hugh Kingery, pers. comm.). The increase in numbers of records of Ross' Goose in recent years in western Colorado, as well as a trend to larger flocks seen (the flock of 33 birds in March of 1984 is the largest flock seen in years in Colorado) likely indicates a change in the status of this species.

Ross' Goose is a sparse winter visitor to southern Arizona (Monson and Phillips 1981). It was considered an occasional migrant in Utah (Behle 1975) but more recently Behle and Sorensen feel that this species might be on the increase there (1985). It normally winters in interior valleys of California and in southern New Mexico, Texas and the Gulf Coast of Louisiana (AOU 1983). Numbers wintering in New Mexico have increased in recent years (Hubbard 1978).

The present increase in sight records in western Colorado is mirrored by a similar increase in sight records in Utah (Ella Sorensen and Steven Hedges pers. comm.). Is this increase due to better coverage by birders in western Colorado and Utah or is it due to an actual increase in Ross' Geese?

In Utah there has been an increase in sightings since 1980 with a parallel increase in the number of observers there and their experience. However, the number of Ross' Geese killed by hunters there has increased in recent years while the numbers of hunters has remained the same (Ella Sorensen and Steven Hedges pers. comm.).

Table 1. Records of Ross' Goose in west-central Colorado from January 1981 through June 1985.

Date	Location	Latilong #	Number Seen
10 Mar 1981	Sweitzer Lake	15	6 ad.
26 Oct 1981	Sweitzer Lake	15	1 ad.
26 Jan 1982	Sweitzer Lake	15	1 ad.; 1 im.
30 Jan 1982	Sweitzer Lake	15	1 ad.
6 Jan 1982	Highline Res.	8	1
24 Mar 1983	Hart's Basin	16	1 ad.
3 May 1983	Hart's Basin	16	2 ad.
10 Nov 1983	Sweitzer Lake	15	1 ad.
2-12 Mar 1984	Gunnison River	15	3-33 ad.
13 Mar 1984	Highline Res.	8	33
17 Mar 1984	Highline Res.	8	15
18 Mar 1984	Sweitzer Lake	15	6
1 Nov 1984	Highline Res.	8	7 ad.; 1 im.
1 Nov 1984	Cheney Res.	15	1
4 Nov 1984	Hart's Basin	16	2
9 Nov 1984	Hart's Basin	16	3
23 Mar 1985	Hart's Basin	16	2 ad.
26 Mar 1985	Sweitzer Lake	15	3 ad.
30 Mar 1985	Hart's Basin	16	2 ad.
2-8 Apr 1985	Hart's Basin	16	1 ad.; 1 im.

In Colorado, the Delta and Montrose latilongs (latilongs 15 and 16) were infrequently covered prior to 1979. However, the reservoirs in the nearby Grand Junction area, where there have been recent observations of Ross' Geese (Table 1), were covered throughout the 1970's when there were few such observations. Earlier, Davis (1969) did not even include Ross' Goose in his guide to the birds of western Colorado.

One must consider that the Ross' Goose can be misidentified as the similar Snow Goose. Although there have been excellent field observers and good field guides available for many years, this probably does play a part. Increased observer awareness and knowledge of local bird distribution could cause an increase in Ross' Goose sightings, at the expense of observations of Snow Geese.

In this same vein, are those same observers now looking for the differences between Ross' Geese and Snow Geese? While there is probably an element of increased coverage and greater observer awareness I do not believe that a handful of additional bird-watchers in western Colorado could contribute this many new observations without a concurrent increase in actual numbers of birds.

Consequently, based on recent observations, I would consider Ross' Goose to be a regular, although uncommon migrant in western Colorado and sill proabably a rare migrant in most of eastern Colorado. Will there continue to be an increase in sight reports in western Colorado? Will it begin to show an increase in the eastern part of the state as well? Has it already?

Acknowledgements

I benefitted from correspondence with Ella Sorensen, Steven Hedges, Hugh Kingery and Ron Lambeth and I also wish to thank them for reviewing this paper and making many valuable suggestions.

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An Observation of a Least Tern in Western Colorado

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On 11 May 1980 I observed an adult Least Tern (Sterna antillarum) at Fruitgrower's Reservoir near Delta, in west-central Colorado (latilong 16)*. The bird was present for several days, sometimes in the company of Black and Forster's Terns (Chilidonias niger and Sterna forsteri). I last saw the bird on May 20th. This is the first published record of Least Tern west of the continental divide in Colorado (Chase et al 1982; Bailey 1965) and came before the first record for Utah.

The Least Tern breeds locally in some years in eastern Colorado and is an uncommon migrant on the eastern plains (Chase et al 1982; Bailey 1965). The status of this species in neighboring states makes this record in western Colorado more remarkable: it is considered a sparse visitant in southwestern Arizona with the northernmost record from Mormon Lake near Flagstaff in central Arizona (Monson and Phillips 1981). There is only one record for Utah, coming from Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge in the west-central part of the state on 3 June 1981 (Am. Birds 35: 965). In New Mexico this species has nested in the southeastern and south-central part of the state and is rare to casual elsewhere (Hubbard 1978).

Where did this bird come from? Its provenance may have been the Colorado River where, much further south, the Least Tern breeds locally (A.O.U. 1983). The Gunnison River, a tributary of the Colorado River, passes within 3.5 miles of Fruitgrower's Reservoir and would provide continuity with the main river system.

*Written description on file with the C.F.O.

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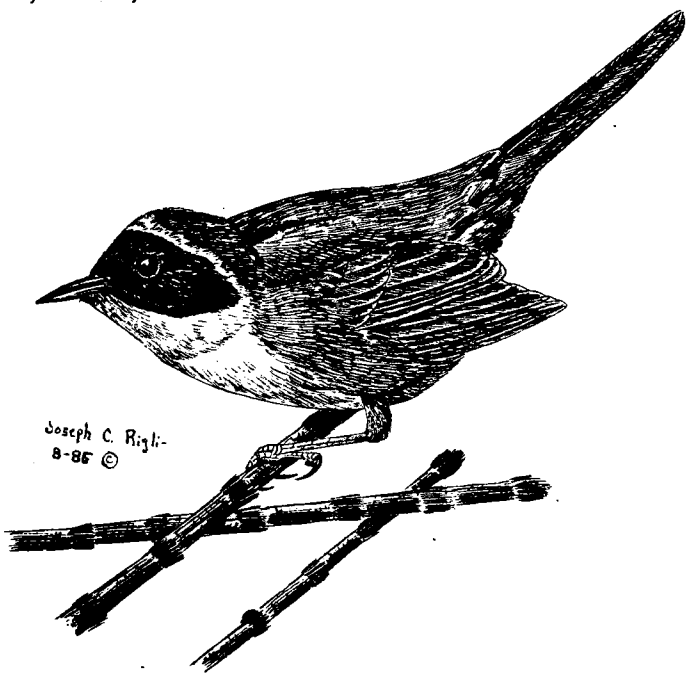

White Ibis - First Colorado Record

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En route to Texas on 20 July 1985, I did some birding in southeastern Colorado. I had checked out Nee Noshe Reservoir with no luck, when I noticed that across highway 287 to the west there were quite a few waders and shore birds in Nee So Pah Reservoir, which is mid-way between Eads and Lamar in Kiowa County.

I drove to a spot where highway 287 is closest to Nee So Pah Reservoir and set up my telescope. There were two ibis together, about 200 yards away. One was totally dark and presumably a White-faced Ibis, but the other ibis was a little larger, generally light brown with a white belly and a pink, decurved bill.

I studied my bird guides (Scott 1983; Robbins, Bruun, and Zim 1966) and concluded that neither White-faced Ibis nor Glossy Ibis young are ever light brown with a white belly. Therefore, the larger ibis must be an immature White Ibis (Eudocimus albus), which would be a new state record. (Note: Bailey and Neidrach (1965) reported that a White Ibis specimen was collected in Colorado in 1890. Since that time the specimen was lost so the bird was removed from the state list by the Records Committee).

From Lamar, I called the Rare Bird Alert in Denver, left my message on the recorder and drove to Texas. I was very concerned that the bird would move on and become another hypothetical sighting because I was the only person to see it. Fortunately, Wade Leitner and Jack Reddall took the chance that the bird would still be there, drove down from Denver and confirmed the identification.

To the best of my knowledge, the latest sighting was on August 8th, but that provided enough time for quite a few Colorado birders to add another bird to their state lists. So few of us bird southeast Colorado in mid-summer, who knows how many

accidental White Ibis, Roseate Spoonbills, Wood Storks, Reddish Egrets, and/or Tricolored Herons visit without being observed?

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WHOOPING CRANES IN EASTERN COLORADO

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Ft. Collins, CO 80526

Historically, Whooping Cranes (Grus americana) were casual migrants to eastern Colorado. Prior to the publication of Bailey and Niedrach, there were three reported sightings of this species in the 20th Century: 1) one on 20 June 1931 near Fort Collins; 2) one in October 1941 in "eastern Colorado"; and 3) one on 18 October 1965 near Orchard, Morgan County (Bailey and Niedrach, 1965).

On 11 September 1985, one mile south of Hudson, Weld County, Bill Phillips observed a large white bird in a pasture near their house. The bird was there the next day and on the 13th he told his wife about it. She observed the bird through binoculars and was sure it was a Whooping Crane. At that time they decided to notify the Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW). Since it was after 5:00 PM, the DOW office in Denver was closed. On Monday, 16 September, they informed the DOW that they thought there was a Whooping Crane near Hudson. The DOW sent Tom Lynch, a District Wildlife Manager, to see if he could find the bird. Later that day he confirmed that the bird was, indeed, a Whooping Crane.

On 23 September, Jack Schneider saw a large white bird, which he assumed was a domestic turkey, in his corn stubble field, 1.75 miles east of Severence, Weld County. The bird was about 0.5 miles from Mr. Schneider's house. During the next two days Mr. Schneider drove into the field with the bird, observed it at close range (30 to 50 yards) and photographed it. At that time he had no idea what kind of bird it was.

Just before dark on 25 September, Walt Graul, N.E. Regional Manager for the DOW, was driving west toward Severence from the Wood's Lake area and saw a bird which he identified immediately as a Whooping Crane. It was in a corn stubble field owned by Jack Schneider. This was the first identification of the bird in Mr. Schneider's field.

Since the time both birds were identified, they have been closely monitored for movements, behavior, etc. by the DOW, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and two citizens groups; the Fort Collins Audubon Club and the Foothills Audubon Club of Loveland. As of this writing, 24 October, both birds are in the same areas where they were originally seen.

Both of these birds are from an experimental flock started at Gray's Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Idaho. This flock was started by the USFWS, in cooperation with the Canadian Wildlife Service. Eggs were taken from Whooping Crane nests in Wood Buffalo National Park (Canada) and from captive pairs at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, Maryland. The eggs were placed in nests of Sandhill Cranes (Grus canadensis) for them to incubate and raise. This technique is called cross fostering. For more information on this experiment see "ENDANGERED BIRDS, Management Techniques for Preserving Threatened Species". Stanley A. Temple, Ed. University of Wisconsin Press, 1977.

Because of the close monitoring of this entire flock by USFWS, certain things are known about the two birds presently in Colorado. The Hudson bird is wearing a plastic band numbered A31. From this we know that the bird was born at Gray' Lake in 1984 and summered in 1985 along the Green River, outside Pinedale, Wyoming. It is probably a male. The Severence bird has a yellow plastic radio-pack band on its right leg and an aluminum USFWS band on its left leg. This combination identifies it as a bird born in 1982 at Gray's Lake. It, too, is probably a male. In 1984, it spent the summer in the San Luis Valley, Colorado and the summer of 1985 near Pinedale, Wyoming (about 20 miles from where the Hudson bird summered).

There has been a great deal of public desire to see these birds, especially the Severence bird. The Hudson bird frequents areas where it is difficult to observe, while the Severence bird spends 80% of its time in the open corn stubble where it is easy to watch. Since 28 September, approximately 1000 people have observed this crane.

Observations of Whooping Cranes in eastern Colorado may increase in the future if the Gray's Lake flock establishes itself. Any future observations should be reported to either the

Colorado Division of Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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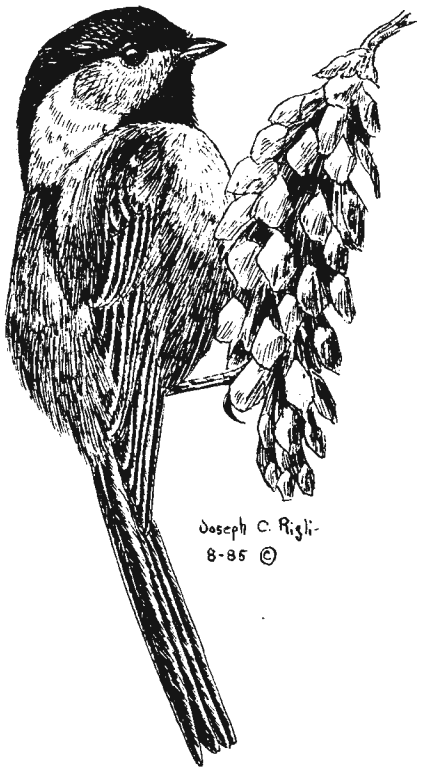


ANNOUNCEMENTS

1985 - 1986 Calendar of Events

*** SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO ALL CFO MEMBERS ***

There will be a membership list published in the first issue of next year's C.F.O. Journal (Volume 20, Number 1, Spring 1986). This list will also include telephone numbers. If you do not wish your name and address or telephone number to be published, or if we do not have your present telephone number and you would like to supply it please contact David Blue (3145 Westcliff Dr. W., Colorado Springs, CO 80906, (303) 576-2475) by December 1, 1985.

22 November 1986, 6:30 p.m. CFO Board meeting at Denver Museum of Natural History.

Gull Identification Clinic. 23 November 1986, 8 a.m. Denver Museum of Natural History. Call Charlie Chase at the Museum, 370-6353, for details and to register. Cost of this clinic is $5.00 for members, $7.50 for non-members.

February 1985. Raptor Identification Clinic, Denver Museum of Natural History. Confirmed date and details to follow.

Late March or early April Field Trip to Monte Vista NWR for Whooping Cranes, Joint trip with the Glenwood Springs Audubon Society.

Saturday and Sunday April 26 and 27, 1986: Greater and Lesser Prairie Chicken to Yuma and Baca Counties, more details later.

May 17 and 18, 1986: 24th Annual CFO Convention, planned for Colorado Springs, more details later.

Memorial Day Weekend: Trip to Baca County

June 21 and 22, 1986: Latilong Trip, location and more details later.

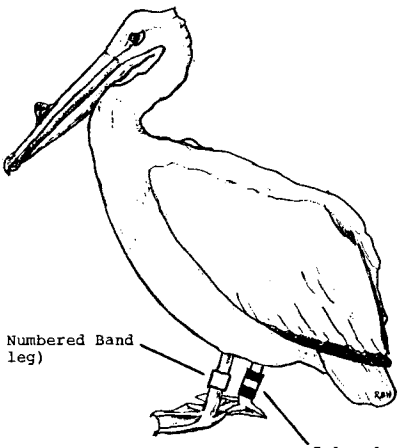
COLOR-MARKED AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS

In 1985 approximately 150 immature American White Pelicans were color-marked at Pathfinder Reservoir, Wyoming to determine their post-fledging dispersal, migration routes, and wintering areas. Birds were marked with red plastic legbands with horizontal white stripes. If you observe a color-marked white pelican the following information would be appreciated:

1) Date of observation
2) Location of observation
3) Behavior of bird (size of group, feeding, etc.)
4) Observer's name, address, and phone number

Please report sightings to:

Scott Findholt or
Bob Oakleaf
Wyoming Game & Fish Department
206 Buena Vista Drive
Lander, WY 82520
(307) 332-9110



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