

# The 85th Report of the Colorado Bird Records Committee

By Peter R. Gent, Chairman of the CBRC

## Introduction

This 85th Report of the CBRC documents decisions on records submitted in the first six months of 2023, and a few older records. It includes the first record of Limpkin in Colorado, which increases the state list to 520 species. It also includes the second record of Acadian Flycatcher, the third records of Arctic Loon and Red-faced Warbler and the third and fourth state records of Black-bellied Whistling-Duck. Also included are the sixth state record of Swallow-tailed Kite and the tenth record of Harris's Hawk. The 33 records documented in this report were submitted by 32 observers, and I thank them for their support of the CBRC. Accepted records received either six or seven positive votes from various combinations of seven committee members. AWR indicates Accepted Without Review and applies to species that are not on the CBRC Review List. Note that every accepted record in this report was accompanied by photographs, which greatly help to make the decisions of the CBRC much easier.

## Accepted Records

**NORTHEAST**—Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Weld, Yuma

**Wild Turkey** – *Meleagris gallopavo* (GV\*; 2023-004; AWR): An adult was on a front lawn near 19th Ave and Dallas St. in northeast Denver, Denver, on 25 Feb 2023. It is interesting to note that eBird shows a good number of records in 2022 a little to the north along the Greenway and Westerly Creek Trails.

**White Ibis** – *Eudocimus albus* (RR\*; 2023-022; 7-0): An adult was nicely photographed at E 168th Ave and Lima St. northwest of Brighton, Adams, on 24 May 2023. This species has become more common in Colorado, especially along the Front Range, over the past few years.

**Lucy's Warbler** – *Leiothlypis luciae* (JK\*, MM\*; 2023-016; 7-0): An adult was at the Marjorie Perry Nature Preserve in Greenwood Village, Arapahoe, on 17 Apr 2023, although it was first found the day before. This was the second of four Lucy's Warblers found in eastern Colorado in the spring of 2023.

**EAST CENTRAL**—Cheyenne, El Paso, Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln

**Limpkin** – *Aramus guarauna* (KR\*, PS\*, SS\*, BP\*, AD\*, TD\*; 2023-010; 7-0): This new state record was found by Karen Rau at her local birding spot Ramah Res., El Paso, on 23 June 2023. This was the highlight bird of the spring and stayed pretty much in the same spot until 4 July. This addition to the state list was not unexpected because in 2022 eight states to our east and northeast, including Kansas, had recorded their first records of this species. It is not exactly known why this essentially sedentary species has wandered far



Limpkin. 6/23/23, El Paso County. Photo by Brandon Percival.



Arctic Loon. 6/2/23, El Paso County. Photo by Brandon Percival.

and wide over the eastern US in the past few years, but the expansion of an introduced apple snail is probably a contributing factor.

**Arctic Loon** – *Gavia arctica* (BP\*, ML\*; 2023-025; 7-0): An adult in near breeding plumage was at Big Johnson Res., El Paso, between 2 and 6 June 2023. Note the prominent white tufts on the flanks, which distinguishes this species from Pacific Loon. This sighting in mid-summer was a great surprise and provides the third state record of this species. The first was near Franktown, Douglas County, in Nov 2002, and the second was at Chatfield SP in Sep 2005.

**Acadian Flycatcher** – *Empidonax virescens* (BP\*, PG\*; 2023-021; 7-0): One was at Bell Grove in the northern section of Chico Basin Ranch, El Paso, on 22 May 2023. This bird was seen only on 22 May and provides the second record of this species in Colorado. Brandon Percival also found Colorado's first at Van's Grove northwest of John Martin Res., Bent County, on 12 May 2009, the only date of occurrence.



Acadian Flycatcher. 5/22/23, El Paso County. Photo by Glenn Walbek.

**Lucy's Warbler** – *Leiothlypis luciae* (JM\*, KL\*, BP\*; 2023-015; 7-0): One in breeding plumage was at Fountain Creek Regional Park south of Colorado Springs, El Paso, on 15 Apr 2023. This was the first of the four birds found in eastern Colorado this spring.



Lucy's Warbler. 4/15/23, El Paso County. Photo by Kara Laszczyk.

**SOUTHEAST**—Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Las Animas, Otero, Prowers, Pueblo

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** – *Dendrocygna autumnalis* (SD\*; 2020-090; 7-0): Seven birds were photographed at Blaine Park in downtown La Junta, Otero, on 18 Apr 2020. This is the third state record of this species, with the first provided by a bird in the Pawnee National Grasslands, Weld County, in July 1991, and the second of four adults along the Animas River in Durango, La Plata County, in June 2015.

**Long-tailed Jaeger** – *Stercorarius longicaudus* (BP\*; 2023-027; 6-1): An adult in breeding plumage was at Lake Meredith, Crowley, on 26 June 2023. This is a very unusual mid-summer record of this species in Colorado.

**Arctic Tern** – *Sterna paradisaea* (ML\*; 2023-028; 7-0): An adult in breeding plumage was at Lake Hasty, Bent, on 28 and 29 May 2023.

**Swallow-tailed Kite** – *Elanoides forficatus* (JW\*; 2020-100; 7-0): An adult was beautifully photographed at Willow Creek Park in Lamar, Prowers, on 1 Aug. 2020. This is the sixth record of this species in Colorado, and all have been on the Eastern Plains and the Front Range.



Swallow-tailed Kite. 8/1/2020, Prowers County. Photo by Jeffrey Wang.

**Harris's Hawk** – *Parabuteo unicinctus* (DF\*, AL\*; 2023-013; 7-0): An immature bird was just south of Neenoshe Res., Kiowa, between 18 and 22 Apr. 2023. This is the tenth record of this species in Colorado: all have come from the Eastern Plains, except for one from the San Luis Valley.

**Lucy's Warbler** – *Leiothlypis luciae* (BP\*; 2023-017; 7-0): One was below the dam at Two Buttes Res., Baca, on 24 Apr. 2023. This was the third of the four birds found in eastern Colorado this spring.

**Red-faced Warbler** – *Cardellina rubrifrons* (GW\*, DL\*; 2023-018; 7-0): One was photographed at Burchfield SWA, which is east of Springfield very close to the Kansas border, Baca, on 2 May 2023. This is the third state record of this species in Colorado. The first was at the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, Jefferson County, on 3 May 1993, and the second was near Dolores, Montezuma County, on 4 May 2017.



Red-faced Warbler. 5/2/2023, Baca County. Photo by Glenn Walbek.

**NORTH CENTRAL**—Boulder, Broomfield, Grand, Jackson, Larimer

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** – *Dendrocygna autumnalis* (PS\*, TD\*, SS\*; 2023-009; 7-0): Seven were first found by Carl Starace at Pella Crossing Park near Hygiene, Boulder, on the morning of 20 June 2023. They were refound in mid-afternoon with enough time that many people from the northern Front Range were able to see them. This is the fourth record of this species in Colorado, and the first time that many birders were able to see this species in the state.

**CENTRAL**—Chaffee, Clear Creek, Douglas, Fremont, Gilpin, Jefferson, Lake, Park, Summit, Teller

**Common Black Hawk** – *Buteogallus anthracinus* (CB\*; 2023-012; 7-0): An adult was near Wellsville southeast of Salida, Fremont, between 16 and 25 Apr. 2023.



Common Black Hawk. 4/16/2023, Fremont County. Photo by Chris Brown.

**Pacific Wren** – *Troglodytes pacificus* (TM\*; 2022-060; 6-1): An adult was at Genessee Mountain Park, Jefferson, on 18 Dec. 2022.

**Black-throated Sparrow** – *Amphispiza bilineata* (SW\*; 2023-006; AWR): One was northwest of Salida, Chaffee, on 4 Apr. 2023. This is a new record for Chaffee County.



Black-bellied Whistling-Duck. 6/20/2023, Boulder County. Photo by Steve Stachowiak.

**Spotted Towhee** – *Pipilo maculatus* (WW\*; 2023-008; AWR): An adult was in southwest Lakewood, Jefferson, on 2 June 2023. This is not that unusual as this species has spread from up against the foothills to be fairly common in suburban areas along the Front Range in recent years.

**Ovenbird** – *Seiurus aurocapilla* (SW\*; 2023-007; AWR): An adult died after hitting a window in east Poncha Springs, Chaffee, on 22 May 2023. This is another new record for Chaffee County.

**Lucy's Warbler** – *Leiothlypis luciae* (TM\*; 2023-019; 7-0): One was first found by Steve Barlow at Long Lake Regional Park north of Golden, Jefferson, on 3 May 2023. It was seen again on 7 May 2023, and was the last of the four birds found in eastern Colorado this spring.

**Hepatic Tanager** – *Piranga flava* (DB\*, AD\*; 2023-011; AWR): Three adults were first found at Mountaindale Cabins Resort between Colorado Springs and Penrose, Fremont, on 10 June 2023. A pair was there until at least 20 July, although no report of nesting was received. This was an unusual record as this normally quite shy species was very easily seen at this location, often pecking at their reflections in the wing mirrors of parked vehicles.

**WEST CENTRAL**—Delta, Gunnison, Mesa, Montrose, Pitkin

**Reddish Egret** – *Egretta rufescens* (LC\*; 2023-014; 7-0): An adult was at Clifton Nature Park, Mesa, between 20 and 24 Apr. 2023. This sighting was a surprise,

as this is the first record of this species on the West Slope of Colorado.

**Snow Bunting** – *Plectrophenax nivalis* (LC\*; 2023-001; AWR): One was at the junction of S and 8 Roads northwest of Mack, Mesa, on 18 and 20 Jan. 2023. This is a new county record for Mesa County.

**SOUTHWEST**—Archuleta, Dolores, Hinsdale, La Plata, Mineral, Montezuma, Ouray, San Juan, San Miguel

**Williamson's Sapsucker** – *Sphyrapicus thyroideus* (CM\*; 2023-003; AWR): A female was in Hermosa north of Durango, La Plata, on 30 Jan. 2023. This is an unusual mid-winter record of this species in southwest Colorado.



Hepatic Tanager. 7/2/2023, Fremont County. Photo by Aaron Driscoll.



Reddish Egret. 4/20/2023, Mesa County. Photo by Linda Chittum.

**Eastern Phoebe** – *Sayornis phoebe* (CM\*; 2023-005; AWR): One was found in south Durango, La Plata, by Lauren Avery on 28 Apr 2023. The bird was subsequently seen between 3 and 5 May 2023; the species is very rare this far west in Colorado.

## Not Accepted Records

**NORTHEAST**—Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Weld, Yuma

**Mexican Duck** – *Anas diazi* (2014-210; 5-2, 0-7): An adult female with several ducklings in tow was reported at Union Res., Weld, on 25 May 2014. In the first round, two committee members gave very persuasive arguments that a hybrid with Mallard could not be ruled out, and the remaining members changed their votes in the second round. Mexican Duck records are quite difficult to review and evaluate because there is much hybridization of this species with Mallards in the southwest U.S.

**EAST CENTRAL**—Cheyenne, El Paso, Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln

**Mexican Duck** – *Anas diazi* (2022-059; 4-3, 2-5): A pair was reported at the Burlington water treatment plant, Kit Carson, on 1 June 2022. The excellent photographs caused a very lively debate among the voting committee members. The male showed quite a curl in the tail feathers, and the debate centered on whether this meant the bird was a hybrid with Mallard. There was also debate whether the female was dark enough to be a pure Mexican Duck.

**SOUTHEAST**—Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Las Animas, Otero, Prowers, Pueblo

**Garganey** – *Spatula querquedula* (2023-023; 1-6): One was reported at Valco Ponds, Pueblo, on 27 May 2023. Most committee members noted that the description was very brief, and no photographs were submitted. Please submit photographs, even taken with your phone, whenever possible. There are three records of this species in Colorado: the most recent being a male at Boyd Lake SP, Larimer County, in May 2022.

**Hooded Oriole** – *Icterus cucullatus* (2023-020; 0-7): One was reported from the south part of Chico Basin Ranch, Pueblo, on 9 May 2023. All voting committee members thought that the submitted photograph did not eliminate a one-year-old male Orchard Oriole, which is much more likely to occur on Colorado's Eastern Plains. There are four records of this species in Colorado: the most recent being of a male in Cortez, Montezuma County, in May 2017.

**NORTH CENTRAL**—Boulder, Broomfield, Grand, Jackson, Larimer

**Mottled Duck** – *Anas fulvigula* (2022-052; 5-2, 3-4): A male was reported at Wellington SWA, Larimer, on 3 May 2022. In the first round, two committee members thought the face had some streaking and was too gray compared to the unstreaked buff face of a male Mottled Duck. This caused two members to change their vote in the second round, commenting that a hybrid with Mexican Duck was

a possibility. Again, hybrids in this complex of ducks make evaluating reports quite difficult. There are two records of this species in Colorado: one at Andrick Ponds SWA, Morgan County, in July 2013 and one at Neegronde Res., Kiowa County, in July 2018.

**CENTRAL**—Chaffee, Clear Creek, Douglas, Fremont, Gilpin, Jefferson, Lake, Park, Summit, Teller

**European Goldfinch** – *Carduelis carduelis* (2023-024; 0-7): An adult was photographed at a feeder in Parker, Douglas, on 1 June 2023. All committee members agreed with this identification, but questioned the natural occurrence of this bird as it is a popular species in captivity.

**NORTHWEST**—Eagle, Garfield, Moffat, Rio Blanco, Routt

**California Quail** – *Callipepla californica* (2023-026; 4-3, 1-6): A recording from Brown's Park National Wildlife Refuge, Moffat, on 21 June 2023 was submitted. In the first round, three committee members thought that the very brief recording of one call did not eliminate mimicry by Yellow-breasted Chat, and was not definitive enough for a second state record of this species. This argument persuaded three members to change their votes in the second round. The only record of this species in Colorado was one at the visitor center of Dinosaur National Monument, Moffat County, in Apr. 2018.

## Reporters and Cited Observers

DB: Diana Beatty, CB: Chris Brown, LC: Linda Chittum, TD: Todd Deininger, SD: Susan Dietrich, AD: Aaron Driscoll, DF: Doug Faulkner, PG: Peter Gent, JK: Joey Kellner, AL: Adrian Lakin, KL: Kara Laszczyk, DL: David Leatherman, ML: Michael Lester, CM: Chris MacDonald, JM: Jessica Miller, MM: Max Miller, TM: Timo Mitzen, BP: Brandon Percival, KR: Karen Rau, RR: Rich Reading, SS: Steve Stachowiak, PS: Pamela StClair, GV: Gerry Voecks, WW: Wayne Wagner, GW: Glenn Walbek, JW: Jeffrey Wang, SW: Sally Waterhouse.

## Committee Functions

The Committee solicits documentation of reports in Colorado for all species published in its Review List ([cobrc.org/ReviewList.aspx](http://cobrc.org/ReviewList.aspx)), species with no prior accepted record in Colorado and sightings of regularly occurring species that are considered out of range or out of season. Documentary materials should be submitted online at the CBRC website ([cobrc.org](http://cobrc.org)).

## Report Format

The records in this report are arranged taxonomically following the American Ornithological Society's (AOS) Checklist of North American Birds (AOS 1998)

through the 64th Supplement (Chesser et al. 2023) by region. We present the accession number, the initials of the contributing observer(s), and the vote tally in the first round and, if relevant, the second and third rounds (with the number of "accept" votes on the left side of the dash). The initial observer of the bird, if known, is presented first. Additional contributors follow in chronological order of the sighting. Observers submitting a photograph or video capture are indicated with an asterisk. In this report, Res. indicates a Reservoir, SP indicates a State Park and SWA a State Wildlife Area.

## Literature Cited

American Ornithological Society (AOS). 1998. *Checklist of North American Birds*. 7th ed. Allen Press, Lawrence, Kansas.

Chesser, R. T., S. M. Billerman, K. J. Burns, C. Cicero, J. L. Dunn, B. E. Hernandez-Banos, R. A. Jimenez, A. W. Kratter, N. A. Mason, P. C. Rasmussen, J. V. Remsen, Jr., and K. Winker. 2023. Sixty-fourth Supplement to the American Ornithological Society's Check-list of North American Birds. *Ornithology* 140, (3) 1-11 doi.org/10.1093/ornithology/ukad023.

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