

CHANGES, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE OFFICIAL STATE
LIST OF THE BIRDS OF COLORADO AS PUBLISHED JUNE 1, 1973
BY THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - OFFICIAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

Jack Reddall, Chairman
CFO Official Records Committee
4450 South Alton Street
Englewood, Colorado 80110

ADD: Boat-tailed Grackle (Photograph)
ADD: Kentucky Warbler (Sight Report)
DELETE: Scott's Oriole (Sight Report)
CHANGE: Golden-winged Warbler (From Sight Report to Photograph)
DELETE: Hooded Oriole (Sight Report)
ADD: Smith's Longspur (Sight Report)
CHANGE: Gray-cheeked Thrush (From Sight Report to Specimen)
CHANGE: Varied Thrush (From Sight Report to Photograph)
CHANGE: Kentucky Warbler (From Sight Report to Photograph)
ADD: Anna's Hummingbird (Sight Report)
CHANGE: Bay-breasted Warbler (From Sight Report to Photograph)
CHANGE: Parasitic Jaeger (From Sight Report to Photograph)
DELETE: Inca Dove (Sight Report)
DELETE: Caracara (Specimen-Escape?)
ADD: White-eyed Vireo (Sight Report)
ADD: Caspian Tern (Photograph)

With the above additions and deletions, the Official State List now totals 428 species as of July 1, 1974.

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REPORTS FROM THE CFO OFFICIAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

Jack Reddall, Chairman
CFO Official Records Committee
4450 South Alton Street
Englewood, Colorado 80110

BLACK VULTURE -- *Coragyps atratus*

The CFO Official Records Committee has examined evidence to corroborate the sightings of Black Vultures in the vicinity of the Great Sand Dunes National Monument on July 20, 1954; June 1956 and June 7, 1966. The Committee was unable to uncover any concrete evidence to support these reported sightings. Thus they have been rejected. The Black Vulture as yet remains to be reported satisfactorily within Colorado.

Chairman's Comment:

An undated *Check-List of Birds of the Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Vicinity* as compiled by Park Naturalist Warren H. Hill and Ranger-Naturalist George West lists the Black Vulture as a "Rare Summer Visitor". The Chairman wrote to the Great Sand Dunes National Monument regarding the details supporting the occurrence of Black Vultures in the Monument area. Mr. Garth Nelson, Chief, I&RM, provided a copy of their observation card for this species. This card depicted the following information:

An entry dated 7/20/54 states, "This vulture observed flying low over the checking station around 11 A.M. New recording. Harold Schaafsma."

Another handwritten entry dated 6-56 simply states, "Also seen in June."

A third and last entry dated 6-7-66, "Several seen (10) in area of V.C. and Medrano Creek below picnic area."

The Chairman received a copy of a letter dated March 21, 1974 from Warren H. Hill, who is now Superintendent of the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt NHS on Long Island, New York, to Mr. Nelson in which he discusses his recollections surrounding this matter. Mr. Hill writes (in part), "It's always good to hear from 'one of your old parks' but, I am afraid I cannot be of much help regarding the Black Vulture observation. I have been following the activities of the Colorado Field Ornithologists through their monthly journal and have noticed the establishment of the Official Records Committee. They have, and rightfully so, established some fairly rigorous standards for bird records within the state. The same standards were not applied to the check-list of birds which George West and I prepared at Great Sand Dunes National Monument. If your files do not contain a sight record card for the Black Vulture with adequate substantiation of the sighting, I suggest it be deleted the next time the list is prepared. I certainly cannot ever recall seeing one there."

As one Committee Member was moved to say, "lots of words but little convincing evidence of species identification." The occurrence of a Black Vulture in Colorado would of course be unusual, but not unexpected. There is a fairly good probability that eventually it will be satisfactorily recorded in our state.

In passing, it should be noted that the Official Records Committee, when preparing the Official State List of the Birds of Colorado, threw out the Black Vulture sighting near Pueblo on May 27, 1953 as also too inconclusive (see *Birds of Colorado*, Bailey and Niedrack (1965), Volume I, page 191).

July 4, 1974. File No. N-10-40

ROSE-THROATED BECARD -- *Platyparis algaiae*

A report of a Rose-throated Becard killed along the road near Pine, Jefferson County on May 12, 1973 has been investigated by the CFO Official Records Committee. Due to the very limited information provided by the person submitting the report, the Committee voted for rejection and not to add this species to the State List.

Chairman's Comment:

Unfortunately the person making the report did not preserve the specimen. Also, at the time he examined this road-kill he had no field guides available nor any other reference material. And finally, the reporter himself allowed as how he was "not too familiar with western birds." The Rose-throated Becard belongs to a tropical group of birds classified as Cotingas and barely reaches the United States in southeastern Arizona and the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas as a summer visitor. An occurrence within the borders of Colorado would be an unusual record indeed. All Colorado field observers are urged to save any and all dead specimens of suspected rare and unusual or new species. The Chairman or any member of the Official Records Committee would be most happy to receive and examine these specimens as would staff members of the Denver Museum of Natural History and the biology departments of any of our state universities. Particular caution must be observed when giving consideration to road-kills however, since a bird can be hit by a car and carried hundreds, even thousands of miles before dropping off, thus always providing an element of doubt.

July 4, 1974. File No. N-33A-41

CASPIAN TERN -- *Hydroprogne caspia*

The CFO Official Records Committee has reviewed written documentation and photographic evidence to support the occurrence of one Caspian Tern at Lake Henry, Crowley County on May 27 and 28, 1974. The Committee voted to accept this record and to add the Caspian Tern to the Official State List of the Birds of Colorado. This bird was first observed on May 27, 1974 by Dave Griffiths of Pueblo and Jack Reddall of Englewood. On the following day black and white photographs were obtained by Stan W. Oswald of Rocky Ford.

Chairman's Comment:

As one Committee Member commented, "it's about time we found this species." Caspian Terns have been recorded in most of the states bordering on Colorado, so it is certainly not startling to have finally come across one in our state. Mr. Oswald's photographs turned out superbly. One caught the bird in flight which clearly depicts the dusky or dark wing primaries from below. Another shows the bird at rest at the water's edge in the company of two Ring-billed Gulls, one California Gull, one Forster's Tern and one Franklin's Gull. It's extremely large size and massive bill are clearly depicted. The Committee is very appreciative of receiving Mr. Oswald's excellent photographs to support this record. Detailed written documentation was supplied by Dave Griffiths and Jack Reddall.

July 4, 1974. File No. N-32-42.

WHITE-EYED VIREO -- *Vireo griseus*

Written reports substantiating the sight report of a White-eyed Vireo just below the dam impounding Two Buttes Reservoir, Baca County on May 10, 1974 have been reviewed by the CFO Official Records Committee. Based upon the documentation submitted, the Committee has ruled to accept this record and add the White-eyed Vireo to the Official State List of the Birds of Colorado. Detailed written reports were received from Paul Julian of Boulder, Hugh Kingery of Denver, Doug Stott of Evergreen and Urling Cannon of Denver.

Chairman's Comment:

All observers provided excellent details and all key field marks were observed and documented.

Paul Julian mentions, "white eye seen clearly; yellow flanks with rest of underparts whitish; vireo bill; double white wing-bar very clear; very yellow lores and forehead."

Hugh Kingery reported, "Vireo by size, and heavy bill, long but not thick like a finch. The bird had yellow lores which went from bill to the eye and then diffused around the eye; the pupil of the eye was black, the iris white. It had two white wing-bars, gray breast, definite yellow sides. The center of the belly was white. It had a greenish-gray back and rump. It fed very deliberately in a chokecherry thicket. It really did not move much, so that we could approach very closely and even observe field marks with the naked eye."

Doug Stotz, who first found and identified the bird states, "the bird was approximately the same size as a Bell's Vireo although it appeared slightly larger. The bill was thicker than that of a warbler. It had a green back with slightly darker wings. The wings showed two strong white wing-bars. The eye was definitely and obviously white; the spectacles were a strong yellow. The undersides were white except on the flanks which were bright yellow."

Urling Cannon also mentions, "yellow line from beak to eyes; white iris; yellow down sides of breast."

All four observers stated that the bird was silent throughout the period of observation. In addition, the observers reported that at various times anywhere from one to three Bell's Vireos were also present, providing a good point for comparison. At least two of the observers had had prior field experience with this species.

July 4, 1974. File No. N-51-38

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER -- *Vermivora pinus*

The CFO Official Records Committee has reviewed written documentation to support the sighting of one Blue-winged Warbler along Van Bibber Creek in the vicinity of Hogback Gap near Golden in Jefferson County on May 23, 1961. Based upon the data presented, the Official Records Committee has ruled to reject this sight report as too inconclusive to add this species to the State List of Colorado birds.

Chairman's Comment:

This observation was made over thirteen years ago, long before the establishment of the CFO Official Records Committee with its very stringent acceptance criteria. Unfortunately, the documentation provided did not convince the Committee. Had the observer been aware of the importance of detailed reporting, as many Colorado observers are

practising today, he quite possibly would have been inclined to provide more complete and thorough details -- a good lesson for all of us.

July 1, 1974. File No. N-52-16

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER -- *Vermivora pinus*

Written documentation submitted to substantiate the sighting of one Blue-winged Warbler at Barr Lake in Adams County on September 18, 1965 has been reviewed by the CFO Official Records Committee. Due to the fact that the details of this sight report were quite sketch and provided for the most part from memory, the Committee had no choice but to rule to reject it thus precluding this species from being added to the Official State List of the birds of Colorado.

Chairman's Comment:

The same comments apply to this record as for the previous Blue-winged Warbler report (N-52-16). The Committee will continue to require complete and accurate documentation.

July 1, 1974. File No. N-52-39

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER -- *Vermivora pinus*

The CFO Official Records Committee has completed its review of a new species reported from the state, the Blue-winged Warbler. Based upon the documentation presented to support this sight report, the Committee has ruled to accept this species and approve its inclusion on the Official State List of the Birds of Colorado. Three observers are credited with making this observation, recording the occurrence and supplying details to the Committee. On May 9, 1970, Mr. Willis C. Royall, Jr. of Lakewood and Mr. C. Edward Knittle of Arvada observed one adult Blue-winged Warbler along the north bank of the South Platte River near the Kassler Water Works at Waterton, Jefferson County. Mr. Knittle first observed the bird about 8:00 A.M. He notified Mr. Royall who independently found and observed apparently the same bird about 11:00 A.M. On the following day, May 10, Mr. Hugh Kingery of Denver successfully located this bird at the same site at approximately 5:00 A.M. All three observers submitted written reports of their sightings. Mr. Knittle reported (in part):

"Small size, about size of Virginia's Warbler or Parula. The characteristics that immediately caught my eye were the black beak, black eye-line and solid yellow chest and undersides. Wings were bluish with

wing-bars. Flitted among low bushes along the river bank. The bird was silent."

Mr. Royall stated (in part):

"I spotted the bird so close to me that binoculars were almost a hindrance. It remained in the open and I had an unobstructed view for only a few seconds, but there was no doubt whatever. The narrow black eye-line and the white wing-bars were quite distinct along with the generally bright yellow head and underparts. It was actively foraging among the thickets and vines along the river bottom. The bird was silent."

Mr. Royall further stated that he was very familiar with this species from Connecticut where he found them nesting.

Mr. Kingery reported (in part):

"I walked to the place where it had been, about one-quarter of a mile below the bridge at Waterton, walked through the viney grove of box elder, grape and cottonwood and heard the bird singing -- a song I had not heard before. About ten feet away I observed a perfectly marked male of gold and blue markings. It sang for some time and was not particularly bashful."

Chairman's Comment:

Undoubtedly it was only a matter of time until a well documented report was received to support a sighting of a Blue-winged Warbler. The Committee is currently reviewing two additional reports of sightings of this species made subsequent to the May 9 and 10, 1970 occurrence. Results of these investigations will be published when the Committee has concluded its review.

July 30, 1974. File No. N-52-43

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