

NINTH REPORT OF THE UTAH BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE*

Steven P. Hedges, Keith L. Dixon, Ella D. Sorensen, Clayton M. White

The ninth report of the Utah Bird Records Committee summarizes 38 records of 34 species that were reviewed by the Committee. Of those 38 records, 28 were accepted by the Committee and 10 were not accepted for reasons to be discussed later. Committee members who reviewed all or some of these records were Keith Dixon, Steven Hedges, Craig Kneedy, Ella Sorensen, and Clayton White. First state records were accepted for Garganey, Boreal Owl, and Golden-winged Warbler, which increase the Utah bird list to 408 species.

All records evaluated by the Committee are listed by common name and scientific name using the nomenclature and taxonomic order of the 7th AOU Check-list (1998). The following information is included with each accepted record: common name, scientific name, Committee number of the record in parentheses, the number of birds observed along with age and sex of known, date(s) of occurrence, location of sighting, all known observers in parentheses with the initial finder listed first, observer(s) who submitted written documentation of the record (doc:), observer(s) who submitted photographs of the record (photo:), and literature reference for sightings published in *American Birds* (AB), *Field Notes* (FN), or *Utah Birds* (UB). Information for unaccepted records is the same as for accepted records except that names of observers and those submitting documentation are not included.

The Records Committee would like to thank those individuals who submitted documentation of their sightings to the Committee. The Committee encourages all observers to document and submit a report of unusual sightings. Multiple documentation of sightings is often more valuable than a single report, since one observer may notice key field marks that are missed by other observers. Those field marks may be the difference between a record being accepted or not accepted. The Committee also encourages the submission of photographs and tape recording of songs or calls, which significantly aid in the proper identification of records.

RECORDS ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

PACIFIC LOON *Gavia pacifica*. (3-1990); one; 6-30 Jul 1990; Ivins Reservoir, Washington Co.; (WNS,CK,SH); doc: WNS; photo: WNS; AB 44:1161.

Pacific Loons have been recorded nearly every fall in Utah for the past few years and there are several spring and winters as well. However, this bird is the first summer record of Pacific Loon in Utah. This bird was first reported as a Common Loon, but photographs submitted by the initial observer, and subsequent observations by others including two members of the Records Committee, easily led to the proper identification of this bird.

YELLOW-BILLED LOON *Gavia adamsii*. (5-1996); one; 29 Dec 1996-1 Jan 1997; Gunlock Res., Washington Co; (MAP,JCB,SS); doc: MAP.

Inland records of Yellow-billed Loon in the western U.S. have increased substantially in recent years. Utah's first record occurred at Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge in 1991 and since that time there have been five additional documented records, all from Lake Powell or Washington County. This is the second record for Washington County.

ROSS'S GOOSE *Chen rossii*. (21-1984); one adult; 31 Oct 1984; Minersville Res., Beaver Co.; (SH); doc: SH. (20-1988); two adults, one immature; 29 Oct 1988; Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge, Juab Co.; (JDE); doc: JDE.

Ross's Goose occurs annually as a spring and fall transient throughout Utah and is also a regular winter visitor to Washington County. Records of this species are no longer being reviewed by the Committee.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK *Anas rubricaps*. (1-1947); one; 8 Nov 1947; Ogden Bay Waterfowl Management Area, Davis Co.; (1-1967); one; 15 Oct 1967; Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area, Davis Co.

Both of these records are specimens of banded birds collected during the fall waterfowl hunting season. Details of these records were published in *Utah Birds* 11(3):40.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*. (4-1996); one; 27 Oct 1996; Great Salt Lake, Davis Co.; (TS); doc: TS.

This well-described bird is the first record of Garganey for Utah. There are several spring and fall records of Garganey along the West Coast, particularly in California, and also a spring record for Arizona. A female Garganey can easily be confused with a female Green-winged or Blue-winged Teal. Key field marks that separate Garganey from Blue-winged Teal are the prominent head markings (dark brown crown, light supercilium, dark eye line, light stripe under the eye line, and white spot in back of the bill), brownish-gray shoulder patch, and green speculum bordered on the front and rear with white. Garganey is separated from Green-winged Teal by its larger size, heavier bill, and head pattern.

WHITE-TAILED KITE *Elanus leucurus*. (13-1990); one immature; 2 Nov 1990; St. George, Washington Co.; (WNS); doc: WNS; photo: WNS.

This bird was initially reported as a Mississippi Kite, but photographs of the bird were sent to several authorities on kites who confirmed the bird as an immature White-tailed Kite. This is the second report of this species for Utah. White-tailed Kites have been expanding their range in recent years and should become more common in Utah.

GYRFALCON *Falco rusticolus*. (16-1990); one adult; 15 Nov 1990; Logan, Cache Co.; (RDA,GAA,KA,SD,RR,LR); doc: RDA; photo: RDA. (3-1991); one immature female; 26 Dec 1991; Magna, Salt Lake Co.; (AJH,PM,BE); doc: AJH; photo: RW.

There are several records of Gyrfalcon for Utah and most previous sightings have been individuals of the dark race, but Record 16-1990 was an extremely white bird and Record 3-1991 was a gray morph. There is always speculation about the origin of any Gyrfalcon observed in Utah, since Gyrfalcons are popular birds in falconry. Record 16-1990 was of particular concern since white phase Gyrfalcons are extremely rare in the West, but the bird showed no signs of captivity, such as jesses, bands, or unusual feather wear. The fall of 1990 was a good flight year for Gyrfalcons in the western U. S. and several were recorded in states adjacent to Utah, so the Committee considered record 16-1990 to be a valid wild bird. Record 3-1991 was captured and banded, and likewise showed no indications of being a captive bird.

LEAST TERN *Sterna antillarum*. (6-1997); one adult; 25 May 1997; St. George, Washington Co.; (MW,LWe,JM); doc: MW.

This sighting is the third documented record for Utah and the first for southern Utah. Previous sightings include one at Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge on 3 June 1981 and another at the same location on 12 June 1993.

INCA DOVE *Columbina inca*. (6-1996); 1 Jan 1996-7 Aug 1997; Washington, Washington Co.; (JK,MW,SS,PS,MDa,LWi,DT,DSH); doc: JK; photo: JK.

Inca Doves are well established in many areas of Washington County and are increasing in other areas of southern Utah (*Utah Birds* 12(3):48-52). This species is likely to be removed from the Committee review list on the next revision.

BOREAL OWL *Aegolius funereus*. (2-1997); one adult; Jun 1997; Heber; (DSt,others); photo: DSt.

This bird was photographed on the Uintah National Forest and constitutes the first accepted record for Utah. Boreals Owls were found in Colorado and Idaho in the 1980s, so were suspected of occurring in Utah. The first Boreal Owl in Utah was reported in March 1993 on the Ashley National Forest and there have been a few other undocumented sightings between 1993 and 1997, but none of the previous sightings were adequately documented.

CHAETURA SWIFT *Chaetura* spp. (24-1985); one adult; 13 May 1985; Grafton, Washington Co.; (CAM); doc: CAM.

This record was submitted as a Vaux's which is the expected species of *Chaetura* in Utah. However, the description did not adequately eliminate Chimney Swift, so the Committee decided to accept this report simply as a *Chaetura* swift. Separating the two species is not always possible with a brief observation or in poor light conditions.

BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD *Cynanthus latirostris*. (5-1997); one; 13 Sep 1997; Zion National Park, Washington Co.; (BZ,PZ,MSP,CG,BS,CC); doc: BZ ; photo: BZ.

This is the fourth record of Broad-billed Hummingbird for Utah and the third from the Zion area. All records have been males observed at feeders. The previous Zion area sightings were 10 October-25 November 1978 at Springdale (photographed) and 9-10 September 1979, also at Springdale (*Utah Birds* 2(3):69-70). The other Utah record was observed and photographed 24 July-4 August 1986 at Jensen, Uintah Co. (*Utah Birds* 2(3):75-76).

ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD *Calypte anna*. (1-1997); one adult male; 29 Mar 1997; Zion National Park, Washington Co.; (MSP); doc: MSP.

There have been several winter and spring sightings of Anna's Hummingbird in Utah since the first state record was recorded at Salt Lake City on 16-25 November 1985 (*Utah Birds* 2(3):73-74).

RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKER *Sphyrapicus ruber*. (17-1993); one adult; 15 Oct 1993; Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge, Juab Co.; (TS); doc: TS.

This sighting was the third record of Red-breasted Sapsucker for Utah.

BLACK PHOEBE *Sayornis nigricans*. (20-1990); 3 Feb 1990; Bountiful, Davis Co.; (DJ,MH,RS,MS,GR) doc: DJ.

Black Phoebes are permanent residents of extreme southern Utah, especially Washington County, but are rare in other portions of the state. Many of the extralimital records are from winter.

EASTERN BLUEBIRD *Sialia sialis*. (1-1996); one adult male; 16 Mar 1996; Lytle Ranch, Washington Co.; (MDe,PD,JK); doc: MDe.

This sighting is the second record of Eastern Bluebird in Utah and the first of the pale southwestern race which nests in southeastern Arizona. The first state record, from Moab on 16-23 December 1989 (*Utah Birds* 5(4):86-88), were two males of the darker eastern race.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER *Vermivora chrysoptera*. (3-1997); one female; 30 Aug 1997; Fish Creek, Wayne Co.; (TR,AS); doc: TR,AS; *FN* 52:99.

This bird was observed in riparian habitat along a southern Utah stream and is the first record for the state.

BLACK & WHITE WARBLER *Mniotilta varia*. (59-1985); one female; 30 Sep 1985; Arches National Park, Grand Co.; (CHW); doc: CHW. (1-1987); one adult male; 27 Apr 1987; Alton, Kane Co.; (BRL); doc: BRL.

Black-and-white Warbler is one of the more common species of eastern warbler that occurs in Utah, with records scattered all over the state. It has been recorded most often during spring and fall migration, but there are also records for July and December.

HOODED WARBLER *Wilsonia citrina*. (7-1992); one adult male; 5 Jun 1992; Abajo Mountains, San Juan Co.; (CL); doc: CL.

This is the fourth record of Hooded Warbler from Utah.

SUMMER TANAGER *Piranga rubra*. (10-1989); one adult male; 25 Sep 1989; Logan, Cache Co.; (AF); doc: AF.

Summer Tanager is a common summer resident of Washington County. There are a few records elsewhere in state and most are from September.

SCARLET TANAGER *Piranga olivacea*. (8-1996); one adult male; 27 May 1996; Utah Lake, Utah Co.; (MTS, many others); photo: MTS.

This is the second documented record of Scarlet Tanager from Utah. The first record, also a male, was collected at St. George on 17 Jun 1950 (*Utah Birds* 1(3):54-55).

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK *Pheucticus ludevicianus*. (7-1995); one adult male; 2 Nov 1995; Washington, Washington Co.; (JK); doc: JK.

There are several Utah records of Rose-breasted Grosbeak for November. Rose-breasted Grosbeak is a rare but regular migrant through Utah, while the closely-related Black-headed Grosbeak is a common summer resident statewide. However, Rose-breasted Grosbeak is the more likely of the two species to be found in Utah during November. Female and immature Rose-breasted Grosbeaks can be differentiated from female/immature Black-headed Grosbeaks

by their boldly and extensively streaked breast and pure white belly. Immature male Rose-breasted Grosbeaks also have reddish underwing linings (yellowish in Black-headed Grosbeaks and female Rose-breasted Grosbeaks).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD *Euphagus carolinus*. (1-1990); one adult female; 7 Jan-10 Feb 1990; Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge, Juab Co.; (JDE,CK); doc: JDE; *AB* 44:300.

This is the fourth documented record for Utah and all are from late fall and early winter. Rusty Blackbird probably occurs in Utah more often than is reported, but can be easily overlooked in flocks of other blackbirds.

BRONZED COWBIRD *Molothrus aeneus*. (7-1996); one adult female; 2 May 1996; Washington, Washington Co.; (JK,SS,DT,MK); doc: JK; photo: JK; *FN* 50:311.

This is the second record for Utah. The first record was an adult male photographed in December 1984 at Genola, Utah Co. (*Utah Birds* 6(1):13-14).

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED, IDENTIFICATION UNCERTAIN

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK *Anas rubriceps*. (7-1991); seven; 29 Aug 1991; La Sal Mountains, San Juan Co.

In late summer, Mallards are in eclipse plumage and look somewhat like 'black ducks.' The observer did not attempt to differentiate between an eclipse-plumaged Mallard and Black Duck. The observer described the ducks as having pale tails, but Black Ducks have dark tails. The observer also failed to see the speculum. The observer reported seven ducks in the flock, which would be an extraordinary number for Black Duck anywhere in the West. August 29 is also an extremely early date for Black Ducks in Utah. Black Ducks normally do not migrate until late fall, so any Black Duck observed in August would be strongly suspected of being captive escapees. See *Utah Birds* 11(3):41-44 for a discussion of the status of American Black Duck in Utah.

ZONE-TAILED HAWK *Buteo albonotatus*. (2-1991); one; 25 Jan 1991; Washington fields, Washington Co.

Zone-tailed Hawks winter in Mexico, so a winter record in Utah would be extremely unusual. The observer had no previous experience with this species and did not adequately describe a Zone-tailed Hawk. A "black" hawk similar in size and shape to a Red-tailed Hawk, with a banded tail, and wings tilted in flight like a Turkey Vulture does not eliminate dark phase Rough-legged Hawk or Harlan's Red-tail. The observer even mentioned that "at first I thought it was a dark phase Redtail." There was only one documented sighting of Zone-tailed Hawk in Utah at the time of this sighting.

CHIMNEY SWIFT *Chaetura pelagica*. (23-1984); one; 2 May 1984; Hurricane, Washington Co.

The description of this bird did not adequately rule out Vaux's Swift, which is the regularly occurring *Chaetura* in Utah. There are only two records of Chimney Swift for Utah.

WHITE-EARED HUMMINGBIRD *Hylocharis leucotis*. (6-1991); one female; 19 Sep 1991; Salt Lake City, Salt Lake Co.

The description of this bird did not fit a White-eared Hummingbird. The description of the bird and an accompanying sketch showed a bird with a narrow straight white line behind the eye. The bill was very long, with a red base and black tip. White-eared Hummingbird has an extremely short bill for a hummingbird and should have been obvious when compared to other hummingbirds that were also seen at the feeder. The barred sides found on the White-eared Hummingbird were also not mentioned. The description most closely fit a female or immature male Broad-billed Hummingbird, although some female Black-chins can also have a white stripe behind the eye. White-eared Hummingbirds are very rare summer visitors to southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico. A sighting in Utah would be extremely unusual, yet the observer did not think it was unusual enough to warrant reporting the bird at the time of sighting.

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*. (13-1988); two adults; 26 Jun 1988; Abajo Mtns, San Juan Co.

This brief sighting was made as the birds flew through a ponderosa pine forest at considerable distance. Light and shadow conditions within forests can make affect coloration and other field marks, even for a distinctive species like a Red-headed Woodpecker. Longer observations are needed to confirm or not confirm initial perceptions, especially in atypical habitats. Red-headed Woodpecker is a bird of deciduous woodlands, so a high elevation sighting in a coniferous forest should have raised a question in the observers mind to check the observation more closely.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER *Pyrocephalus rubinus*. (5-1989); one adult male; 13 Jun 1988; Moab, Grand Co.

The coloration and pattern as described for this bird did not fit a Vermilion Flycatcher. Observers are urged to take photographs of rare birds, even supposedly obvious ones, since photographs can generally be used to determine the identity of most observations.

PHILADELPHIA VIREO *Vireo philadelphicus*. (3-1992); one; 8 Aug 1992; Ogden, Weber Co.

Reports of Philadelphia Vireo are made nearly every year in the West, especially in California, but the reports are seldom substantiated as that species. Usually those reports turn out to be immature Warbling Vireos. The date of Record 3-1992 is more than 2 months earlier than nearly all vagrant sightings of this species in the western U.S. The earliest date for Philadelphia Vireo in California is September and the majority of records from that state are from October. Philadelphia Vireo is a late migrant and not to be expected before mid September.

Immature Warbling Vireo is very yellow below and with a stronger face pattern than an adult Warbling Vireo, so can be very similar in appearance to Philadelphia Vireo. Fall Warbling Vireo can be quite yellow below, sometimes yellower than Philadelphia, but the strongest yellow is on the flanks. In Philadelphia Vireo, the throat and upper breast are the brightest yellow. The observers stated that the bird was yellow below from throat to undertail coverets, with a slight paling in the belly area. One observer stated that the bird had a dark line from the lores to ear, while the other observer did not mention this mark. Most Philadelphia Vireos (but not all immatures) have dark lores, but most Warbling Vireos also have a spot on the lores. The

line behind the eye is generally more prominent on Philadelphia Vireo.

Other species that can be confused with Philadelphia Vireo are Tennessee Warbler and Orange-crowned Warbler. Orange-crowned Warbler, particularly birds of the race *lutescens* which are early fall migrants through Utah and much different than the race *orestera* which breeds in Utah, are similar in appearance to Philadelphia Vireo. *Vermivora lutescens* has yellow underparts, a pale eye stripe, dark line through eye, and a small white cheek patch. Some Orange-crowned Warblers can also have a belly that is paler yellow than either the breast or the undertail coverts.

Any possible sighting of Philadelphia Vireo requires an immaculate written description and preferably also photographs to distinguish from other similar species. There are no accepted records of Philadelphia Vireo from Utah.

WOOD THRUSH *Hylocichla mustelina*. (21-1991); one; 23 Jun 1991; Arches National Park, Grand Co.

This bird was observed at close range, but observer mentioned that the eye ring was not distinct. The bold white eye ring is one of the most prominent field marks on Wood Thrush. The bird was observed hopping around and feeding on a lawn, which is unusual behavior for a Wood Thrush but typical of a juvenile robin.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW *Spizella pallida*. (17-1984); one adult; 22 May 1984; Bluff, San Juan Co.

Several field marks are required to adequately separate Clay-colored and Brewer's sparrows. Most field guides place too much emphasis on three marks to distinguish Clay-colored from Brewer's: a light median crown stripe, gray collar, and distinct brown cheek patch. That is unfortunately since those marks when used alone are not diagnostic of Clay-colored Sparrow.

The overall pattern and coloration of the crown should be the first field mark to note. A spring adult Clay-colored Sparrow usually has a brown crown with prominent black stripes and a light median stripe. The observer did not describe the crown of this bird other than to mention that it had a light median stripe. Some Brewer's Sparrows can also have a faint median stripe, especially if viewed from the front, but the crown of Brewer's sparrow is usually less distinctly marked. Clay-colored Sparrow has gray on the sides of the neck and often on the back of the neck as well. Brewer's Sparrow also has gray on the sides of its neck, though it is usually a paler gray than on Clay-colored Sparrow. Clay-colored Sparrow has a distinct brown cheek patch, but again this mark is not diagnostic for that species since many Brewer's Sparrows also have a distinct brown cheek patch. One mark that is usually diagnostic for adult Clay-colored Sparrow is the color of the supercilium. It is white in adult males and dingy white in females. In Brewer's Sparrow, the supercilium is brownish-gray.

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED, ORIGIN OF RECORD QUESTIONED

PAINTED BUNTING *Passerina ciris*. (2-1992); two males; 1 May 1992; Logan, Cache Co.

A male Painted Bunting is a fairly easy bird to identify under good light conditions. Painted Buntings are rare in the West and there are no previous records for Utah. Two males were observed together at a Logan feeder, which seemed highly unusual, so the question of the origin of these birds was raised. Introduction of birds from other parts of the country is not new in

Utah, having occurred only recently in the Provo area with Northern Cardinals.

Observers cited: Keith Archibald, Gladys Ann Atwood, Robert A. Atwood, Jutta C. Burger, Christi Carmichael, Marilyn Davis (MDa), Scott Datwyler, Matt DeVries (MDe), Pia DeVries, Joseph D. Engler, Bruce Ewald, Ann Flannery, Colleen Gibbons, Margy Halpin, Steven Hedges, Alan J. Hinde, David Jensen, Craig Kneedy, Joshua Kreitzer, Matthew Kreitzer, Catherine Landis, Blaine R. Lunceford, Phillip Magasich, Jim Matheson, Clyde A. Morris, Michael A. Patten, M. Shane Pruett, Tim Reeves, Grenville Roles, Larry Ryel, Ron Ryel, Terry Sadler, Al Schmierer, Dennis Shirley (DSh), Bob Showler, Ray Smith, Mark Stackhouse, W. Neal Stephens, Dave Stricklan (DSt), Priscilla Summers, Steven Summers, Dave Thompson, Clarice H. Watson, Lynnette Webb (LWe), Merrill Webb, Lou Wilkinson (LWi), Becky Zurcher, Pat Zurcher.

*source: *Utah Birds* 14(4):51-63.

