

Tenth Report of the Alberta Bird Record Committee

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Since publication of the Ninth Report of the ABRC (Hudon et al. 2009), the Alberta Bird Record Committee (hereafter the Committee) considered 44 records of bird rarities for the province. The records consist almost entirely of recent sightings, the Committee having dealt with the back-log of unadjudicated records from the 1980s and 1990s on file.

In addition, the Committee re-examined a previously accepted species (Spoon-billed Sandpiper, *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*), in light of better knowledge of the species' vagrancy and abundance in the wild, as well as another (Whip-poor-will), necessitated

by its recent split into Eastern (*Caprimulgus vociferus*) and Mexican Whip-poor-will (*C. arizonae*) by the American Ornithologists' Union's (AOU) Check-list Committee (Chesser et al. 2010). As result of these reviews (see below), both species are removed from the list.

In spite of these losses, the addition of Common Gallinule (*Gallinula galeata*) to the provincial list in this report, as well as of Pacific Wren as a result of the split of the former Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) into Winter Wren (*T. hiemalis*) and Pacific Wren (*T. pacificus*) in North America by the AOU keeps

the provincial list total at 415 species.

Finally, the provincial list is amended to bring it in line with the 50th, 51st and 52nd supplements to the AOU's "Check-list of North American Birds" (Chesser et al. 2009, 2010 and 2011) which have appeared since the Ninth Report of the ABRC was published. Proposed changes include sweeping changes to genera and linear sequence of taxa in the wood-warbler family (Parulidae) (Lovette et al. 2010), as well as splits of genera and species and generic reassignments of several taxa.

RECORDS ACCEPTED

Black Scoter (*Melanitta americana*): female at French Bay, Cold Lake; 31 October 2009; 2 images (Richard Klauke) **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*): juvenile on Bow River upstream of [Hwy 1X] bridge at Seebe; 25 October 2009; brief description on post to Yahoo! Albertabird discussion group and 4 images (Malcolm and Joan McDonald). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*): slough in Quarter Section NW, Section 1, Township 43, Range 25, W4 Meridian; 16 October 2009; 4 images (D. Murray Mackay) **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Common Gallinule (*Gallinula galeata*): along Hwy 23 in a small pond between Hwy 799 and 804; 11 July 2010; written report (Gary Edelman). **CODE 3 RECORD.** First documented occurrence in the province.

Snowy Plover (*Charadrius nivosus*): Cooking Lake; 2 June 2009; written report and 1 image (Gerald Romanchuk). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*): juvenile on slough in NW corner of SR 582 and Range Road 34 W of Didsbury; 6 September 2009; description of bird and 4 images (Ray Woods). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*): Glenmore Reservoir, SW Calgary; 18 and 25 October 2009; written reports (Hank Vanderpol, H.D. Sandy Ayer), 1 image posted on Albertabird Yahoo! website (Ken Havard). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*): Cassils Reservoir, W of Brooks; 16 May 2009; written report with 3 images (Gerald Romanchuk). **CODE 1 RECORD.** Glenmore Reservoir, SW Calgary; 24 May 2010; brief description (Ray Wershler). **CODE 3 RECORD.**

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*): Waiparous, NW of Cochrane; since about 2 October 2010, was still seen daily in the spring of 2011; several images (Jim H Davis [1], Dan Kingston [2]) **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Common Poorwill (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*): one found dead by Michael O'Shea on road at top of Reesor Hill in the Cypress Hills; 30 May 2009; Royal Alberta Museum specimen (accession number Z09.14.1) **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*): juvenile female in Jasper, Jasper National Park; 5 to at least 15 October 2009; 3 pictures (Anne L. Williams) **CODE 1 RECORD.** Sub-adult male coming to a feeder in Casa Vista Estates, about 8 km SE of Gibbons (NE of Edmonton); 26 September to 31 October 2009; 10 images (John and Wendy Farquhar). **CODE 1 RECORD.** Yard in Braeside, SW Calgary; 23 and 25 – 26 October 2010; written report with 2 images (Katrina Lybbert). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

RECORDS ACCEPTED...continued



**NORTHERN
WHEATEAR**
NEAR ANDREW
AB, 2007.
DEBBIE FONTAINE

Lewis's Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*): along Sibbald Trail (Hwy 68) W of Calgary; 30 May 2009; written report (Phil Cram, Simone Marler, Jerry Pilny and Hank Vanderpol). **CODE 3 RECORD.** Lake Louise, Banff National Park; 25 August 2010; written description (Jason Rogers). **CODE 3 RECORD.**

Pacific Wren (*Troglodytes pacificus*). The species is added on the basis of specimens in the collections at the Royal Alberta Museum and the Canadian Museum of Nature (Ottawa), as well as song recordings of this form from Alberta (Barb Beck, David Toews and Darren Irwin, Ross Lein).

Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*): two along Range Road 172 W of Andrew; 16 September 2007; 2 images (Debbie Fontaine). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*): female SW of Red Deer (one mile W of Red Deer Regional Airport along C & E Trail); 9 – 13 October 2009; 2 images (Terry Krause). **CODE 1 RECORD.** Along RR281, N of Cochrane; 23 May 2010; 1 image posted on Albertabird Yahoo! website, 3 more on Flickr (Eduardo Matoud). **CODE 1 RECORD.** Pair breeding at

Beaverhill Lake Natural Area; Summer 2010; image of female and one of four chicks published in "Beaverhill Bird Observatory Update June 20-20, 2010" (Lisa Priestley). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*): Tillebrook Provincial Park; 17 May 2009; written report and 1 image (Gerald Romanchuk). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*): Cornflower Ranch S of Turner Valley; 18 June 2009; written report (Bill Cutfield). **CODE 3 RECORD.**

Hooded Warbler (*Setophaga citrina*): along Bow River about 3 km E of Exshaw; 7 and 11 July 2010; written report with 2 images (Cliff Hansen). **CODE 1 RECORD.** Inglewood Bird Sanctuary; 27 August 2010; written report (John Riddell and Ray Wershler). **CODE 3 RECORD.**

Green-tailed Towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*): Jasper, Jasper National Park; From 3 December 2009 to at least early March 2010; detailed description (Gord Ruddy, transcribed by Jason Rogers), written report with 2 pictures (Anne L. Williams), 2 images (Richard Klauke). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Eastern Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*): Medicine Hat; 18 – 20 May 2009; written report and 4 images (Robert Wapple). **CODE 1 RECORD.** At feeder near Busby, N of Edmonton; photographed on 20 November 2010; 2 images (Gerald Romanchuk). **CODE 1 RECORD.**



GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE. RICHARD KLAUKE

Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*): first spring male at Cypress Hills Provincial Park (by the Elkwater campground); 19 May 2009; written report and 3 images (Michelle and Curtis Manly). **CODE 1 RECORD.** NE Calgary S of the airport; 11 – 12 June 2010; written report with 3 images (Dale Poloway). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*): Calgary; 7 July 2009; written report and 1 image (Bernard Burke) **CODE 1 RECORD.**

Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*): family with one young near Sherwood Park; male has been coming to feeder since about 2006; a female showed up in the fall of 2008; young first seen on 24 September 2009; pair also bred in 2010 and fledged three young that year; video of male (spanning several years), female and young (Maxine and Ernie Zutz). **CODE 1 RECORD.** First documented breeding in the province.

Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*): backyard in Lacombe; late May 2009 (probably 27 May 2009); 1 image (Lynn Millar). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED

Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*): Stobart Lake on the Siksika reserve near Gleichen, E of Calgary; 28 July 2009; written report (Christine McDonald).

Two Spoon-billed Sandpipers (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*) about 3 km NW of Bruce Lake E of Keoma; 19 May 1984; written report with sketches (John B. Steeves). Another on the same slough; 9 May 1992; written report with sketches (Peter Sherrington). Reviewed previously with decisions in Second Report of ABRC (Slater 1999). The Committee reevaluated

these records in light of better knowledge of vagrancy in North America – limited to four confirmed records for Alaska (May to August) and one early fall record for British Columbia (Will Russell, pers. comm.), and its ranking as "critically endangered" by Birdlife International. Because the above two accounts are of brief, distant views which at best suggest the possibility of this species, the Committee felt the documentation as submitted did not meet the threshold for acceptance, and the species is removed from the Official List of the Birds of Alberta.

Eastern Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*). Identity of the species picked up in downtown Calgary on 6 October 2006 (see Eighth Report of the ABRC [Hudon et al. 2008]) cannot be established from the evidence at hand, also nagging doubts as to it having reached the province on its own, compel us to remove the species from the List.

Vaux's Swift (*Chaetura vauxi*): Waterton Lakes National Park; 2009; audio recording of call notes purported to be of this species acquired on 10-minute point count part

IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED...continued

of a long-term monitoring program at the park. Unfortunately, call notes do not conclusively rule out all other possibilities.

White-headed Woodpecker (*Picoides albolarvatus*): along Hwy 3 just E of Bellevue; 11 May 2010; written report (Ian Gardiner).

Gray Vireo (*Vireo vicinior*): About 10 km W of Millarville; 23 April 2009; written report (Peter and Anne Barr).

QUESTIONABLE ORIGIN

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*): Glenmore reservoir, SW Calgary; 30 March – 11 April 2010; written report (Andrew Slater), several images (Jim Davis [12], Ron Kube [3] posted on Albertabird Yahoo! website).

Baikal Teal (*Anas formosa*): Irricana area (Range Road 264, 1.7 km N of Twp Road 262), NE of Calgary; 30 April – 1 May 2009; 2 written reports (Thomas J. Simonsen; Eric Tull, Phil Cram and Mike Mulligan), 6 images (Malcolm McDonald).



MUTE SWAN THAT SHOWED UP AT GLENMORE RESERVOIR (CALGARY) IN SPRING 2010; LISTED UNDER BIRDS OF "QUESTIONABLE ORIGIN". RON KUBE

ADDITIONAL TAXA

Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*): Irricana area, NE of Calgary; 10 April 2010; brief description, with two images (Ray Woods). Although the images are of this taxon, at present the AOU considers Bewick's Swan a subspecies of *Cygnus columbianus*.

Common Teal (*Anas crecca crecca*): Shepard Slough in SE Calgary; 24 March – 15 April 2010; 2 images (Dave Breckon, Tim Allison). Although the images are of this taxon, at present the AOU considers Common Teal a subspecies of *Anas crecca*.

The authors are members of the Alberta Bird Record Committee, chaired by Jocelyn Hudon, Curator of Ornithology at The Royal Alberta Museum.

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THE CODE DEFINITIONS REPORTED ARE:

ACCEPTED, CODE 1. Records supported by material evidence, i.e. specimens, identifiable body parts, identifiable photographs or sound recordings, whose origin from within the borders of Alberta is in no doubt, that are accompanied by written reports of the circumstances of the observation.

ACCEPTED, CODE 2. Sight records (without supporting material evidence) by multiple observers that are supported by independent written descriptions that leave no doubt as to the species identity. A Code 1 or 2 sighting must receive four favourable votes and no more than one dissenting vote to be accepted.

ACCEPTED, CODE 3. Sight records by single observers that are supported by a written description that leaves

no doubt as to species identity, and which receive five favourable votes and no dissenting vote. A Code 3 is the minimum for inclusion in the official provincial list.

ACCEPTED, CODE 4. Sight records by single observers that receive four favourable votes and no more than one dissenting vote. For record adjudication purposes, such a record is acceptable, but does not pass the more stringent requirements for inclusion on the official provincial list. A list of species that have no higher than a Code 4 record may be published as an appendix to the official list.

IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED. Records supported by material evidence or written descriptions that are not detailed enough to eliminate all other possibilities,

or to support conclusively the identification of the species as presented. Placement in this category should in no way be interpreted as a reflection on the veracity of the observation, but should be looked upon as an encouragement to substantiate occurrence of the species in the province more fully.

ERROR IN IDENTIFICATION. Records where the documentation available to the committee runs counter to the stated identification, whether it identifies another species or not.

QUESTIONABLE ORIGIN. Records that concern species that are of questionable origin, possibly escapees, and whose wild status cannot be determined accurately.