

Report of the Nevada Bird Records Committee: 1999 records

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This report reflects the actions taken by the Nevada Bird Records Committee (NBRC) on bird sightings submitted in 1999. Only 13 documentations were submitted in 1999, compared with 36 in 1998. The low submission rate for 1999 is disappointing, but it is encouraging that 35 submissions have already been received for 2000 records.

Reports of birds sighted in Nevada prior to the establishment of NBRC in 1994 are yet not centralized in a single location. For this reason, comments regarding state records, including the number of sightings, have been omitted in many cases. However, it is expected that future reports by NBRC will be able to include data on frequency of previous sightings.

NBRC takes a conservative approach when reviewing reports. Individuals who submitted reports should not be overly concerned if NBRC voted not to accept a report on a specific bird sighting. In certain cases, it is very difficult to identify a species unless one has the bird in hand, and at times even that is not adequate. The committee strongly encourages photographing or sketching a bird and recording field notes while the bird is in sight. This documentation should accompany the written report.

Nevada is partitioned into three reporting regions. While a bird may be rare in one area of the state, it may be common in another area. Please see the NBRC Review List (pp. 13–18 of this volume), for a list of species requiring review in each of Nevada's three reporting region. Documentation forms are available via email or as hard copy from Jim Eidel, NBRC secretary, at eidel@att.net or 4150 Meadow Wood Road, Carson City NV 89703.

Current NBRC members are as follow: Pete Bradley, Dorothy Crowe, Chris Elphick, Ted Floyd, Fred Ryser, and Gary Voelker. Jim Eidel serves in a non-voting capacity as NBRC secretary. Mark Ports stepped down from the NRBC during 2000, and Pete Bradley of the Nevada Division of Wildlife in Elko took his place.

The following table shows those records that were accepted or rejected by the committee. Votes in favor of acceptance are indicated by a **Y**, and votes against acceptance are indicated by an **N**.

1999 Sightings Accepted by NBRC.

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumatella carolinensis*). Found at Cave Creek Headquarters of Ruby Lake NWR, Elko County, on 10 June 1999 by Grace Hubenthal and Justin Dean. Written documentation by Hubenthal. The bird was banded. **5-Y, 1-N**.

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumatella carolinensis*). Found and photographed at the landing strip at Mary's River Ranch, Elko County, on 16 June 1999 by Grace Hubenthal and Justin Dean. Written documentation by Hubenthal. The bird was banded. **6-Y, 0-N**.

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumatella carolinensis*). Found and photographed at Torrance Ranch, Nye County, on 22 September 1999 by Ken Voget. Written documentation by Voget. The bird was banded. **5-Y, 1-N**.

Note: Six Gray Catbirds were reported in 1999. The three above were documented. Agitated behavior by an individual bird in the Toiyabe National Forest of northern Nye County on 23 June 1999 suggests the possibility of breeding catbirds (G. Chisholm et al., *Great Basin Birds* 3:17-27), and there is the possibility that there is a small breeding population in eastern Nevada. Gray Catbirds are reported on migration nearly every spring and fall in Nevada.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*). Found by Carolyn Titus, Phoebe Fowler, Joan Clarke, and Karen McDonal at Corn Creek, Clark County, on 22 May 1999. Written documentation by Titus. R.A. Alcorn (*Birds of Nevada*, 1988, Fairview Press, Fallon) reported only four records, including three from 1981-86. However, the present record and at least 5 more in 2000 suggest that this species may be more common than previously thought. The excellent description of this distinctive male led to a unanimous vote. **6-Y, 0-N**.

NORTHERN PARULA (*Parula americana*). Seen and heard on the Carson River at New Empire, Carson City County, by Jim Eidel and Alan Gubanich on 15 June 1999. Written documentation by Eidel. A

single bird was heard, and then seen high in cottonwood trees at the edge of the river, which is a known migratory corridor. Alcorn reported 14 sightings, all in southern or eastern Nevada. This is the latest spring record by two days. **6-Y, 0-N.**

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*). Found at Ruby Lake NWR, Elko County, on 25 May 1999 by Grace Hubenthal and Justin Dean. Written documentation by Hubenthal. Also provided were an excellent sketch and a description of the male foraging in aspen and willow. This species is seen with increasing frequency in Nevada, and may one day be removed from the review list. More attention should be paid to possible females. **6-Y, 0-N.**

1999 Sightings not Accepted by NBRC.

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*). Bird observed and photographed on 30 May 1999 at Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve, Clark County. There was no doubt that this bird was a Black-bellied Whistling-Duck. Three members questioned whether the bird could have been an escapee, however. The existence of private bird collections in Las Vegas made this a difficult vote. There appears at the present time to be no way to know for sure which species or numbers exist in private Las Vegas collections. **3-Y, 3-N.**

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*). Bird observed on 1 September 1999 at Gallagher Fish Hatchery, Ruby Lake NWR, Elko County by a single observer. Description questioned, specifically that of the tail, which did not rule out Red-shouldered Hawk. Sightings of Broad-winged Hawks in the Goshute Mountains during migration by HawkWatch International suggest that the bird may be more common elsewhere in the state. **2-Y, 4-N.**

SWAINSON'S WARBLER (*Lymnolthypis swainsonii*). Found at Corn Creek, Desert NWR, Clark County, by a single observer. This bird would have been a first state record, and further documentation and a longer observation period by more than one observer would have been desired. The single record for New Mexico and the lack of records in California also caused concern. The good description and adequate sketch resulted in two acceptances. This bird exemplifies the problem that occurs when a single experienced observer sees a rare bird for a short period of time. **2-Y, 4-N.**

KENTUCKY WARBLER (*Oporornis formosus*). Bird observed at Torrance Ranch on 11 September 1999 by a single observer. Description deemed inadequate. **0-Y, 6-N.**

1999 Sightings Still under Consideration by NBRC in 2000.

VARIED THRUSH (*Ixoreus naevius*). Found at Torrance Ranch, Nye County, on 29 September 1999.

PRAIRIE WARBLER (*Dendroica discolor*). Found at Corn Creek, Desert NWR, Clark County, on 15 September 1999.

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER (*Dendroica caerulescens*). Found at Torrance Ranch, Nye County, on 11 October 1999.

1998 Sightings Accepted by NBRC in 1999.

KING EIDER (*Somateria spectabilis*). Female, shot 6 December 1998, by Jim Rhea of Sparks, NV, at Carson Lake, south of Fallon, Churchill County. The bird was frozen and submitted to the Nevada Division of Wildlife. Written documentations by Graham Chisholm, Martin Meyers, and Greg Scyphers. Specimen photographed by Meyers. The diagnostic field marks were photographed on the thawed bird provided by the Nevada Division of Wildlife. The shape of the bill, details of the feathered gape, flank markings, and coloration were well documented. The collector is commended for recognizing the uniqueness of the bird and for submitting the specimen. First state record. **6Y-0N.**

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Vermivora peregrina*). Seen and heard on 21 May 1998, by Chris Elphick, on the University of Nevada Reno campus, Washoe County. Written documentation by Elphick. Alcorn reported seven records from southern Nevada, all but one of which were spring birds. This species may be overlooked as a vagrant in Nevada. Accepted on second vote. **5Y-1N.**

1997 Sightings Still under Consideration by NBRC in 2000.

POMARINE JAEGER (*Stercorarius pomarinus*). Third vote in progress.

PARASITIC JAEGER (*Stercorarius parasiticus*). Third vote in progress.