

NEVADA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2013

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ABSTRACT: This report covers the 115 records reviewed by the Nevada Bird Records Committee in 2013, of which 105 were endorsed. These 115 records cover sightings from 15 August 1954 through 15 September 2013. Four species are added to the Nevada list as a result of endorsed first state records, the Common Crane (*Grus grus*), Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*), Barred Owl (*Strix varia*), and Rufous-backed Robin (*Turdus rufopalliat*). Also, one species is added as a result of the taxonomic split of the Sage Sparrow. Two species are removed from the Nevada list, the Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) and Pine Warbler (*Setophaga pinus*). The Nevada state list now stands at 492 species, of which 156 are currently on the review list.

The Nevada Bird Records Committee (NBRC) began 2013 with 56 records pending review. During 2013, we added 114 records to the pending queue. The committee completed reviews of 115 records during the year, leaving 55 records in the pending queue at the end of the year. Since the founding of the NBRC in 1994, 1001 records have been reviewed, of which 915 have been endorsed.

At its founding in 1994, the committee decided not to review any sightings prior to that year but reversed that decision several years later. Fortunately, founding secretary James Cressman and Marian Cressman continued to accumulate documentation for "pre-committee" records. One of the committee's long-term goals is to organize and review as many of those records as possible, along with early documentation from other sources. The committee began reviewing pre-committee records in 2007. Since that time, we have reviewed 93 such records, of which 86 have been endorsed. It is impossible to state with any accuracy how many more we might be able to review, because, in many cases, that depends on how much additional information we are able to uncover. Of the 114 records added to the pending queue in 2013, 17 precede the committee's founding, dating as far back as 15 August 1954.

Of the 115 records reviewed by the committee in 2013, 105 were endorsed. Twenty-eight of the reviewed records were of birds found during 2013, 55 were of birds found in 2012, and the remaining 32 were of birds found between 15 August 1954 and the end of 2011. Of the 105 records endorsed, 90 were supported by photographs and four were also supported by specimens, two by video recordings, and one by audio recording. Of the ten non-endorsed records, one, purported to be of an Allen's Hummingbird, was reviewed from photographs of a specimen that had been identified as this species.

The NBRC has six voting members and a nonvoting secretary. In 2013, the committee welcomed new member Aaron Ambos and returning member Greg Scyphers, who had rotated off the committee at the end of 2011. Continuing members are Carl Lundblad, Dennis Serdehely, Jeanne

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Tinsman, and Will Richardson. The position of secretary continues to be held by Martin Meyers. Carl Lundblad and Jeanne Tinsman were reelected to serve second terms.

The NBRC's website at <http://gbbo.org/nbrc> contains a statement of purpose, links to a downloadable submission form, the committee's bylaws, the Nevada state checklist, the state review list, and answers to frequently asked questions. There is a link to a list of all submissions to the NBRC, with each record's status with respect to endorsement and, if available, a photograph. All previous NBRC reports are available through the website as PDF files. The reports through 2007 (1994–1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2005, and 2007) appeared in *Great Basin Birds*, published by the Great Basin Bird Observatory. Beginning with the 2011 report, annual reports appear in *Western Birds*. Reports for 2008 through 2010 are available only on the website.

REVISIONS TO THE NEVADA STATE LIST

During the period covered by this report, four new species were added to the Nevada list following endorsement of first state records, the Common Crane (*Grus grus*), Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*), Barred Owl (*Strix varia*), and Rufous-backed Robin (*Turdus rufopalliatus*). The American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) split of the former Sage Sparrow into Bell's Sparrow (*Artemisiospiza belli*) and Sagebrush Sparrow (*A. nevadensis*) added one new species to the list. Both species are confirmed breeders in Nevada, and both winter in the state as well (Floyd et al. 2007, Cicero 2010). The Sagebrush Sparrow is a common breeder through much of the Great Basin, whereas subspecies *canescens* of Bell's Sparrow breeds in a limited area of southwestern Nevada. As discussed below, two species were removed from the list, the Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) and Pine Warbler (*Setophaga pinus*). These changes brought the count of species recorded in Nevada to 492.

REVISIONS TO THE NEVADA REVIEW LIST

At its September 2013 biennial meeting, the committee unanimously voted to remove ten species from the review list on the basis of total number of endorsed records, regularity of sightings, status in adjoining states, and the judgment of the members: the Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*), White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*) (previously exempt from review only in the Pahranaagat Valley), Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) (previously exempt from review only in the Goshute Mountains), Zone-tailed Hawk (*B. albonotatus*), Stilt Sandpiper (*Calidris himantopus*), Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*), Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*), Clay-colored Sparrow (*Spizella pallida*), and Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*). There are currently 156 species on the Nevada review list, of which five are exempt from review in some limited geographic area.

In addition, two subspecies are currently on the review list: the Mexican Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos diazi*) and the Eurasian Green-winged Teal (*A.*

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crecca crecca). The committee has reviewed (and endorsed) four records of *A. c. crecca*. The committee placed *A. p. diazi* on the review list in an effort to accumulate data on its occurrence, but we have not, as yet, reviewed any of the reports and have decided to wait to do so until there is more clarity on its taxonomic status and identification criteria.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

For each species, the format is English name, *scientific name*, and (total number of endorsed records of the species, number of records endorsed in this year's report). The total number of endorsed records includes those endorsed in this report. An asterisk preceding the species' name signifies that the species is no longer reviewed by the NBRC. Two asterisks after the total of records denote that the number of records refers to a restricted review period, usually signifying that the species is no longer on the review list, was placed on the review list as a result of a perceived drop in population, or is exempt from review in some locations. Note that the total number of records for a species is not necessarily the total number of individual birds reported.

After the heading for the species comes each record of that species reviewed in 2013, in the following format: NBRC record number. For endorsed records, the name of each submitter. For non-endorsed records, "NOT ENDORSED." Continuing for all records: date or range of dates of observations submitted to the NBRC, and location (county in parentheses). If the record involved multiple birds, the number follows the county designation. "(P)," "(V)," or "(A)" following a submitter's name indicates that he or she provided a photo, video, or audio recording, respectively. A pound sign (#) indicates a specimen record; this is followed by the abbreviation of the institution housing the specimen, followed by the specimen's catalog number; in the case of a specimen, a "(P)" indicates that the specimen was photographed and that the photograph(s) are included in the documentation; the photographer in such cases, typically a representative of the committee or the housing institution, is not credited in the report. Discussion of a particular record follows that record's data. If there are multiple records of the species, the records are ordered by date of first sighting. Any discussion of the species in general, not specific to a record, concludes the account.

Museum collections housing specimens cited in this report or otherwise cited are the Marjorie Barrick Museum at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (MBM), Burke Museum at the University of Washington, Seattle (UWBM), and Nevada State Museum, Carson City (NSM). The MBM collection has recently been relocated to UWBM—abbreviation and catalog numbers for both institutions are listed for specimens studied at MBM.

Certain records are noted as "establishing records," designating the first NBRC-endorsed record of a species. Early in its history, the NBRC adopted an existing checklist (Titus 1996) based on numerous sources that constituted the most reliable information available at the time. All but 20 of the species on the review list now have at least one endorsed record. (That number was 28 at the conclusion of 2012.) The committee continues to pursue documentation of the remaining 20. After all sources of documentation available to us have been exhausted, we will reevaluate the status of those remaining species.

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BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK *Dendrocygna autumnalis* (6, 2). 2013-028, Elizabeth Wells, 17 April 1993, Overton Wildlife Management Area (WMA) (Clark), 2 birds.

2013-029, Marian Cressman (P), Paul Lehman, 11 April–31 May 1994, Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve (Clark).

Previous records 2012-042 (18–31 May 1993), 2013-029 (11 April–7 May 1994), 1995-07 (8 April 1995), and 1999-04 (30 May 1999), all endorsed, are also of single Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks at the Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve. At the committee's September 2013 meeting, we considered whether any or all of these records should be marked as repeat visits by the same bird but concluded the evidence for this inference was insufficient.

FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK *Dendrocygna bicolor* (2, 2). 2013-032, Bob Poole (P, #MBM 176, UWM 97483), 2 December 1962, Pahrangat National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) (Lincoln).

2013-033, Vincent Mowbray, 9 April 1991, Corn Creek (Clark).

This species was reported on multiple occasions through the 1960s, sporadically into the 1970s (Alcorn 1988), but it has not been reported at all in recent years. Since 2010 it has disappeared entirely from the Salton Sea area in southeastern California, where it nested at least until 1999 (Hamilton 2008). For the establishing record, the committee reviewed the specimen collected in 1962.

TRUMPETER SWAN *Cygnus buccinator* (2**, 1). 2013-010, Martin Meyers (P), Aaron Ambos (P), 19–21 January 2013, Overton WMA (Clark). This swan, with three Tundra Swans, flew past many observers looking for the Common Crane (2013-007) that visited Overton WMA in early 2013. At the time, the observers commented on the bright orange legs and feet of this Trumpeter, and several excellent photographs were obtained (Figure 1). McEneaney (2005) discussed this variation.

2013-025, NOT ENDORSED. 16 March 2013, Overton WMA (Clark). Some of the features of this photographed bird suggested a Tundra rather than a Trumpeter Swan.

The long-established introduced resident population of the Trumpeter Swan in the Ruby Valley is exempt from review, but the NBRC reviews reports of birds away from that location.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK *Anas rubripes* (0, 0). 2012-092, NOT ENDORSED. 19 November 2012, Stillwater NWR (Churchill). The NBRC received a single photograph that did show a bird with characteristics of the American Black Duck, but the committee was troubled by the lack of any dark feathers on the underwing coverts and the appearance of curved central tail feathers—suggesting possible hybridization with a Mallard, with which the American Black Ducks hybridizes regularly in the East. The photo did not show the upperwing, preventing the committee from analyzing the speculum coloration. On the second round, the members unanimously agreed that this documentation was insufficient for such an extreme rarity in Nevada. This species is on the state list on the basis of Alcorn's (1988) report of an adult female recovered near Fallon (Churchill) 4 November 1963. According to Alcorn, the bird was banded by the New York Conservation Department at Wilson Hill, New York on 2 September 1962. The American Black Duck remains one of those 20 species on the Nevada list for which there is still no NBRC-endorsed record.

HARLEQUIN DUCK *Histrionicus histrionicus* (3, 1). 2012-083, Rose Strickland, Dennis Ghiglieri (P), Martin Meyers (P, Figure 2), Greg Scyphers (P), 6–15 November 2012, south end of Pyramid Lake (Washoe). Twenty years had passed since the last Harlequin Duck was documented in Nevada (Meyers 2010), making this cooperative bird a welcome find for many of the state's birders.

RED-THROATED LOON *Gavia stellata* (6, 1). 2013-004, Greg Scyphers (P),



Figure 1. On 19 January 2013, many birders were assembled at Overton W.M.A., looking for the Common Crane reported two days earlier. Accompanied by three Tundra Swans, this Trumpeter Swan flew over and was instantly identified by the obvious size difference. The orange rather than the typically black legs and feet are a variation documented in the Trumpeter Swan.

Photo by Aaron Ambos

Martin Meyers, 3-4 January 2013, south end of Pyramid Lake (Washoe). This is the first endorsed record of Red-throated Loon from northern Nevada.

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* (2, 1). 2012-056, Andrew Lee (P), Martin Meyers (P), Randall Micha l(P), Greg Scyphers (P), B. J. Stacey (P), 26 August 2012–13 February 2013, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark). This second endorsed record for the state was of a bird seen intermittently for almost six months, unlike the first record (1998-02), which involved a bird observed for only three days (Eidel 2000). The range expansion of this species through the southwestern U.S. is illustrated by the rapidly growing number of records endorsed by the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC), which removed the species from its review list in January 2014. California's first Neotropic Cormorant was found in April 1971 (Jones 1971), and as of February 2014, the CBRC had endorsed more than 50 records, many involving multiple individuals (www.californiabirds.org/cbrcdb.html). Most of those records are from extreme southeastern California. In western Arizona, the Neotropic Cormorant has become "more regular ... with every season, north to Lake Havasu" (Harter and Vander Pluym 2014). Lake Havasu is less than 60 km from the southern tip of Nevada. And the Utah Bird Records Committee removed the Neotropic Cormorant from its review list in 2013—the species is now somewhat regular in that state's southwest corner (around St. George) and along the Wasatch

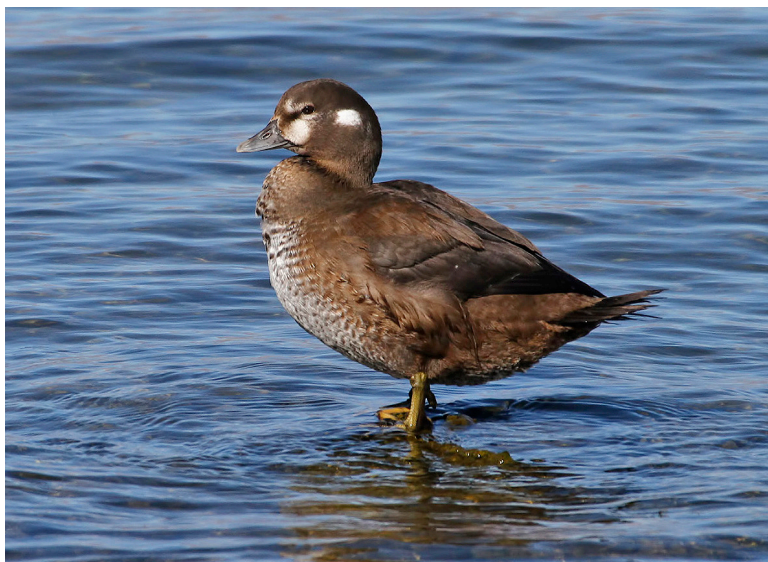


Figure 2. It had been 20 years since the last documented Harlequin Duck in the state, so many Nevada birders appreciated this bird's remaining around Pyramid Lake for at least 10 days (6–15 November 2012, photo taken 7 November).

Photo by Martin Meyers

front, mostly at urban freshwater ponds from Utah Lake north along the Great Salt Lake (R. Fridell pers. comm.) In 2013, the NBRC received two more reports of the Neotropic Cormorant, one of which appears to be a repeat visit involving 2012-056. Those records will be reviewed in 2014. Considering the status in adjacent states, one must assume that sightings in Nevada will increase, perhaps dramatically, over the next few years.

BROWN PELICAN *Pelecanus occidentalis* (7, 2). 2012-036, Andrew Lee (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 19 July–15 December 2012, Las Vegas Bay, Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NRA) (Clark), 2 birds.

2012-082, Bill Henry, Rose Strickland, Dennis Ghiglieri (P), 30–31 October 2012, multiple locations on west shore of Pyramid Lake (Washoe). This is the first endorsed record of the Brown Pelican from northern Nevada.

The Brown Pelican's most recent major incursion into Nevada was in July 2004, when 23 live birds (plus an uncounted number of dead ones) were observed in Las Vegas Bay, Lake Mead NRA (Meyers 2008). Along the lower Colorado River, the species is nearly annual, sometimes in flocks, north to Lake Havasu, primarily in late summer and fall (D. Vander Pluym pers. comm.)

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON *Nyctanassa violacea* (1, 1). 2013-035, Robert Rucker, 13 September 1992, Pahrnagat NWR (Lincoln). This species has been on the Nevada list, but with NBRC endorsement this pre-committee record serves as the establishing record.

WHITE IBIS *Eudocimus albus* (0, 0). 2013-012, NOT ENDORSED. 13 December 2012, I-15 and Valley of Fire Highway (Clark). The written details by a single observer

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suggested this species, but the brevity of sighting of a bird flying overhead resulted in the failure to endorse.

*WHITE-TAILED KITE *Elanus leucurus* (17**, 5). 2013-051, Dave DeSante, 8 June 1976, Highway 395 between Reno and Carson City (Washoe).

2013-050, James and Marian Cressman (P), 12 April 1993, Overton WMA (Clark).

2013-008, Norman Parrish (P), Rick Fridell (P), 15–17 January 2013, Overton WMA (Clark).

2013-009, Jim Lane (P), Ken Drozd (P), Rob Lowry, Meg Andrews, Martin Meyers (P), Fred Welden (P), 19–23 January 2013, Damonte Ranch Wetlands, Reno (Washoe).

2013-023, Tim Almond (P), Babette d'Amours (P), 9–10 March 2013, Clark County Wetlands Park (Clark).

COMMON BLACK-HAWK *Buteogallus anthracinus* (9, 1). 2012-040, NOT ENDORSED. 31 July 2012, Pahrnat NWR (Lincoln). This record was submitted by an experienced observer surveying for the Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Unfortunately, the sighting was brief and, on the second round of review, the committee decided that similar species, particularly the Zone-tailed Hawk, had not been adequately eliminated.

2013-042, Jennifer Ballard (P), 22 April 2013, the Southern Nevada Water Authority's Warm Springs Natural Area (not open to the public; Clark).

*BROAD-WINGED HAWK *Buteo platypterus* (8**, 3). 2012-103, Greg Scyphers (P), 26–27 May 2012, Dyer (Esmeralda).

2012-069, Justin Streit (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 23–24 September 2012, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark).

2012-079, Greg Scyphers (P), Scott Krammer (P), Robert Dobbs (P), 27–28 September 2012, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark).

*ZONE-TAILED HAWK *Buteo albonotatus* (16**, 3). 2013-084, C. S. Lawson, 21 April 1975, Mormon Farm, Las Vegas (Clark). Reported to Lawson as having been first seen 19 April 1975 by John and Kay O'Connell. The NBRC does not have the original documentation of that initial sighting, but it is published (Lawson 1977a).

2013-046, Samuel Flake (P), 13 May 2013, Gold Butte (Clark), 2 birds.

2013-078, Anne Pellegrini, 2 August 2013, Pahrnat NWR (Lincoln).

COMMON CRANE *Grus grus* (2, 2). 2013-014, Scott Barnes, Linda Mack (P), 29 September 2008, Halleck (Elko). Feeding with Sandhill Cranes (*G. canadensis*) in an agricultural field. Comparisons with photos from elsewhere of known hybrids, plus opinions provided by European birders, convinced the committee of the identification. The question of provenance was, of course, raised, but the previous NBRC endorsement of 2013-007 (below), as well as the earlier endorsement of a Common Crane in northwestern California by the CBRC (Nelson et al. 2013) as the first for that state and for the west coast south of Alaska, helped to convince all NBRC members that natural occurrence should not automatically be ruled out. Although reviewed (and unanimously endorsed) by the committee after it had endorsed 2013-007, this earlier record becomes Nevada's first of the Common Crane.

2013-007, Norman Parrish (P), Andrew Lee (P), Donna Crail-Rugotzke (P), Rick Fridell (P), David Vander Pluym (P), Rose Strickland, Dennis Ghiglieri (P), Lauren Harter, Martin Meyers (P), Ryan O'Donnell (P), Greg Scyphers (P), Randall Michal (P), Aaron Ambos (P, Figure 3), Curtis Marantz (P), 15–31 January 2013, Overton WMA (Clark). Although 31 January was the date of the last documentation submitted to the NBRC, sightings continued until at least 5 February (Fridell 2013). Like 2013-014 above, this Common Crane was immature. As to provenance, this bird's traveling with Sandhill Cranes (including Lesser Sandhill Cranes), the skittish behavior described by several observers, the CBRC's endorsement of California's first record, and the lack of any visible signs of captivity helped to convince the NBRC to endorse



Figure 3. First reported 15 January 2013, this Common Crane provided fine viewing opportunities for birders from many states during its stay, during which it was in the company of a small group of Greater and Lesser Sandhill Cranes. This photo was taken 21 January 2013.

Photo by Aaron Ambos

the record unanimously. Another factor considered, and bolstering the committee's decision, was the occurrence of a second California Common Crane, this one in Modoc County, in the northeastern corner of that state, 27 December 2012 (Pike et al. 2014). In fact, there was considerable conjecture that the cranes at Modoc and Overton might be the same bird. Photos were not conclusive in this regard, but the birds appeared very similar and seemed to be traveling with a very similar group of Greater and Lesser Sandhill Cranes.

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER *Pluvialis dominica* (6, 3). 2012-073, Jill Callin (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 14–24 September 2012, private property at Silver Peak (Esmeralda).

2012-071, Randall Michal (P), 1 October 2012, Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve (Clark).

2013-021, Greg Scyphers (P), 3 November 2012, the private Ponderosa Dairy, Amargosa Valley (Nye), 2 birds.

Fourteen years passed between Nevada's first endorsed record in 1997 (Baepler et al. 1999) and the next two, in 2011 (Meyers 2014)—followed by three more in 2012.

MOUNTAIN PLOVER *Charadrius montanus* (8, 3). 2012-102, Greg Scyphers (P), 12 August 2012, Amargosa Valley (Nye).

2012-059, Rene Laubach (P), 18 August 2012, Corn Creek (Clark).

2012-077, Richard Saval (P), Tyler Stuart (P), 20–23 October 2012, El Dorado Dry Lake (Clark).

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus* (1, 1). 2013-052, Vincent Mowbray, C. S. Lawson, 16–19 August 1975, Clark County Wetlands Park (Clark). Establishing record. This species was already on the Nevada list on the basis of this sighting, which had been published by Kingery (1976) but until recently not reviewed by the NBRC. The original documentation was reviewed and the record endorsed.

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HUDSONIAN GODWIT *Limosa haemastica* (1, 1). 2013-086, Vincent Mowbray, C. S. Lawson (P, #NSM 1616), H. G. Stevenson (P), 15–24 May 1976, Clark County Wetlands Park (Clark), 5 birds. Establishing record. This species was on the Nevada list on the basis of this sighting (Lawson 1977b). Original photos by Stevenson plus photos of the one specimen were reviewed, and the record was unanimously endorsed.

*STILT SANDPIPER *Calidris himantopus* (11**, 4). 2012-108, Greg Scyphers (P), 10 September 2011, Amargosa Valley (Nye).

2012-058, Randall Michal (P), Babette d'Amours (P), 29 August 2012, Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve (Clark).

2012-063, Aaron Ambos (P), 7 September 2012, El Dorado Dry Lake Bed (Clark).

2013-073, Timothy Fennell (P), 18–21 July 2013, Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve (Clark), 2 birds present 18 July, one present 21 July.

This species had been exempt from review in southern Nevada from the founding of the NBRC (1994) until September 2009, when the exemption was removed. Eight records in the ensuing four years were enough to convince the committee to remove the species from the review list entirely in 2013.

PARASITIC JAEGER *Stercorarius parasiticus* (6, 1). 2012-065, Michael J. San Miguel, Jr., Greg Scyphers, Martin Meyers (P), 13–14 September 2012, south end of Pyramid Lake (Washoe).

LONG-TAILED JAEGER *Stercorarius longicaudus* (10, 2). 2012-072, Amy Seaman (P), Martin Meyers (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 13 September–1 October 2012, private property at Silver Peak (Esmeralda).

2012-070, Aaron Ambos (P), Deb Vogt (P), Randall Michal (P), Babette d'Amours (P), 27 September–2 October 2012, El Dorado Dry Lake Bed (Clark). Additional reports not submitted to the committee place the bird's last date at 4 October (Fridell 2013).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla* (6, 1). 2012-089, Andrew Lee (P), 17 November 2012, Las Vegas Bay, Lake Mead NRA (Clark).

RED-LEGGED KITTIWAKE *Rissa brevirostris* (1, 1). 2013-090, C. S. Lawson (P, #NSM B-1671), 3 July 1977, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark). Establishing record. This astounding record was at the time only the third for North America away from the Bering Sea or coastal Alaska (Kingery 1978). The bird was found alive by 13-year-old Sandra Feldman and given to park personnel. It died the same day. More than a year later, it was given to C. S. Lawson, who prepared the specimen (Figure 4). The committee was able to photograph and study the specimen and endorsed the record unanimously.

*MEW GULL *Larus canus* (8**, 1). 2012-052, Rita Schlageter, 13 January 1994, Hemenway Harbor, Lake Mead NRA (Clark). In 2007, the NBRC exempted this species from review in northwest Nevada and removed it from the review list entirely in 2009 but continues to review sightings prior to 2009. Several other pre-committee records await review.

SLATY-BACKED GULL *Larus schistisagus* (1, 1). 2013-011, Martin Meyers (P, Figure 5), Greg Scyphers (P), Meg Andrews, Carolyn Titus, Richard Titus (P), Rose Strickland, Dennis Ghiglieri (P), 18–24 January 2013, Walker Lake (Mineral). This first for the state appeared to be in its third cycle. Nevada's gull enthusiasts had been predicting this one for a while, but it was nonetheless a nice surprise when found standing on the shoreline of Walker Lake.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus* (11, 3). 2012-099, Martin Meyers (P), Rob Lowry (P), 15 December 2012–6 February 2013, Sparks Marina (Washoe).

2013-018, Chuck Coxé (P), Martin Meyers (P), 30 January–6 February 2013,

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Sparks Marina (Washoe). On at least one occasion, 2013-018 and 2012-099 were together on the same set of marina floats.

2013-019, Dennis Ghiglieri (P), Rose Strickland, 16 February 2013, north of Pelican Beach, Pyramid Lake (Washoe). Photos of 2013-018 and 2013-019 showed the two birds to be very similar in plumage, although those of 2013-019 were not adequate for detailed comparison. The two locations are approximately 30 miles apart. Gulls that frequent Sparks Marina are often seen flying up and down the Truckee River, most presumed to be heading for the Lockwood dump just a few miles downstream. Pyramid Lake is the terminus of the Truckee River, and birds flying downstream from the Reno/Sparks area could easily end up at Pyramid Lake. The committee was divided on the question of whether these records represented a single individual.

*LEAST TERN *Sternula antillarum* (19**, 4). 2013-057, David Parmelee (P), 17 June 1995, Overton WMA (Clark).

2013-045, Andrew Lee (P), 15 May 2013, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark).

2013-075, Randall Michal, Tim Almond (P), 30 June–1 July 2013, Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve (Clark).

2013-077, Randall Michal (P), Tim Almond (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 3–4 August 2013, Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve (Clark).

Eighteen of Nevada's endorsed records of the Least Tern involve birds observed between 29 April and 20 July. The August record above (2013-077)—later than most records for the interior Southwest—raised the question as to whether 2013-075 had remained continuously in the area since 30 June. The Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve, however, is one of the most heavily birded in Nevada, so it seemed unlikely that the bird had remained at that location for a month without having been reported. There is other suitable, but more remote, habitat within a few miles, so it is possible that the bird remained in the vicinity during that time. Only one member, however, voted to consider it a “continuing” bird.

BARRED OWL *Strix varia* (1, 1). 2012-098, Janice Vitale (P), Jacque Lowery (P, Figure 6), Greg Scyphers (P), 11–21 December 2012, Spanish Springs (Washoe). First state record, although perhaps not the most welcome one. The Barred Owl, confined to eastern North America until the mid-1900s, has now expanded its range throughout the entire range of the Northern Spotted Owl (*S. occidentalis caurina*) and into the northern part of the range of California Spotted Owl (*S. o. occidentalis*) (Gutiérrez et al. 2007). As a result, this first documented occurrence of the Barred Owl in Nevada was not unexpected, but the location, a residential neighborhood in the northeastern part of the Reno/Sparks area, was a bit surprising. There is a very small population of California Spotted Owls in the Carson Range on the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe (Floyd et al. 2007). So far, there have been no reports of Barred Owls in that area.

ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD *Selasphorus sasin* (0, 0). 2013-072 (#MBM 3991), NOT ENDORSED. 15 August 1954, Boulder City (Clark). NBRC member Greg Scyphers took 26 photos of a museum specimen purported to be an immature male Allen's Hummingbird (Figure 7), which the committee then reviewed. All members commented that the shapes of the rectrices did not support the identification as Allen's, and, in fact, indicated the Rufous Hummingbird (*S. rufus*). The record received no votes for endorsement. Attempts to find other specimens of Allen's Hummingbird from Nevada have been unsuccessful.

1996-19, NOT ENDORSED. 11 September 1996, Carpenter Canyon (Clark). This record was reviewed by the NBRC in 1996/1997 and received four votes for endorsement (Cressman et al. 1998). Under the bylaws in place at that time, a vote of 4–2 was sufficient for acceptance. In 2012, the committee decided to reevaluate this record under the bylaws clause that permits recirculating a completed record “if and only if there becomes available new and substantial documentary evidence that might affect the decision” (<http://gbbo.org/nbrc>). The membership believed that a

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better understanding of the variability in the back color of the Rufous Hummingbird, and specifically that even a small percentage of adult male Rufous Hummingbirds have completely green backs, qualified as “new and substantial.” The identification of 1996-19 was based primarily on the completely green back of an adult male. The description also added some other comments about observed behavior, which the committee did not consider relevant to the identification. Overturning a previously endorsed record requires that there be no more than one vote against overturning the decision. In the case of 1996-19, the vote to overturn was unanimous.

Because acceptance of record 1996-19 was reversed and the identification of MBM 3991 as an Allen's Hummingbird was in error, the NBRC removed the species from the Nevada list.

GILA WOODPECKER *Melanerpes uropygialis* (1, 1). 2013-031, George Austin (P, #MBM 1504, #UWBM 97993), 10 July 1966, near Davis Dam (Clark). Consideration of this record is another example of the committee's continuing efforts to pursue reviewable documentation of species on the state list but for which there are no NBRC-endorsed records. Searches of museum collections revealed this specimen and a few others covered in this report. As late as 1976, C. S. Lawson stated that the Gila Woodpecker “occurs only in the extreme southern tip of southern Nevada in the Fort Mohave area. In its very limited habitat it is a common resident and you can find it any time of the year” (Alcorn 1988). During surveys for Nevada's breeding bird atlas from 1997 to 2000, however, no Gila Woodpeckers were found in that area, and the species is presumed extirpated in the state (Floyd et al. 2007) because of loss of habitat. It still occurs as far north as Havasu National Wildlife Refuge, just 15 miles south of the Nevada border (D. Vander Pluym pers. comm.)

*YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER *Sphyrapicus varius* (12**, 5). 2013-037, Greg Scyphers (P), 18 January 2011, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark).

2012-085, Rick Fridell (P), Tom Graham (P), 5 October 2012, Corn Creek (Clark).

2013-038, Andrew Lee (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 11–12 November 2012, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark).

2013-013, Sundee Meyer (P), 3 January 2013, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark).

2013-020, Meg Andrews, 14 February 2013, Cottonwood Park, Reno (Washoe).

On the basis of the number of endorsed records and the status of the species in adjacent states, the NBRC decided at its 2013 meeting to remove this species from the review list. The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is not reviewed by committees covering Arizona, Oregon, or California, although it remains on the Utah review list.

CRESTED CARACARA *Caracara cheriway* (3, 2). 2012-096, Wade Rose (P), Rose Strickland, Dennis Ghiglieri (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 15–16 December 2012, Pahrangat NWR (Lincoln).

2013-017, Carl Bullock (P), 3 February 2013, Moapa (Clark). The two records are separated in space by ~50 miles and in time by 49 days. The committee wrestled with the question of whether they represented a single bird. In California some caracaras have been documented moving up to a few hundred miles (Nelson and Pyle 2013). In the case of the Nevada records, the photographic evidence was not conclusive, and differences in molt suggested they were of different individuals.

GYRFALCON *Falco rusticolus* (2, 1). 2013-005R, Bill Henry (P), 5 January 2013, Stillwater NWR (Churchill). This bird was found and photographed at the same site as Nevada's first NBRC-endorsed record of the Gyrfalcon, 13–16 January 2012 (Meyers 2014). The committee was unanimous in considering the 2013 sighting as representing a return visit of the 2012 bird. In such cases, the letter “R” appended to the record's number specifies a return.

LEAST FLYCATCHER *Empidonax minimus* (9, 3). 2012-105, Greg Scyphers (P), 8 October 2011, Dyer (Esmeralda).



Figure 4. Certainly one of the most astounding species recorded for Nevada, this Red-legged Kittiwake (top) was found alive but injured on 3 July 1977 at Floyd Lamb State Park in Las Vegas. It died the next day. The carcass remained on ice for over a year, during which time the bill was broken, but eventually the specimen got to C. S. Lawson, who was able to prepare it successfully. Ultimately it was deposited in the Nevada State Museum, Carson City. Black-legged Kittiwake (bottom) included in photo for comparison.

Photo by Greg Scyphers



Figure 5. This third-cycle Slaty-backed Gull was discovered by Scyphers and Meyers as they were driving past Walker Lake on 18 January 2013, on their way to Overton W.M.A. to look for the Common Crane (2013-007). The first of this species for Nevada, it remained until at least 24 January.

Photo by Martin Meyers



Figure 6. This Barred Owl was first reported from a back yard in Spanish Springs in the northeast portion of the Reno/Sparks area on 11 December 2012. Two Reno birders were given access to the private residence to photograph the bird, the first to be documented in Nevada. It is not likely to be the last.

Photo by Jacque Lowery

2012-106, Greg Scyphers (P), 23 September 2012, Miller's Rest Stop (Esmeralda).
2013-097, Greg Scyphers (P), Meg Andrews, 15 September 2013, Dyer (Esmeralda).

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER *Myiarchus tuberculifer* (1, 1). 2012-095, Justin Streit (P, V), Greg Scyphers (P, A), Deb Vogt (P, Figure 8), Rose Strickland, Dennis Ghiglieri (P), 11–15 December 2012, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark). Establishing record. This bird was initially reported to www.eBird.org as "*Myiarchus* sp." on 5 December. Streit observed the bird and confirmed the identification as a Dusky-capped Flycatcher on 11 December. Besides multiple photographs, the documentation for this record included audio and video recordings of the bird calling. The late fall or early winter date fits well with the many records of the Dusky-capped Flycatcher from western Arizona (D. Vander Pluym pers. comm.) and California (Hamilton et al. 2007).

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER *Myiarchus crinitus* (2, 1). 2012-074, Robert Dobbs (P), Rick Fridell (P), Martin Meyers (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 4–5 October 2012, Dyer (Esmeralda). Excellent photographs accompanied the documentation for Nevada's second Great Crested Flycatcher.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER *Tyrannus forficatus* (7, 1). 2012-093, Randall Michal (P), 4 December 2012, Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve (Clark).

BLUE JAY *Cyanocitta cristata* (2, 1). 2012-080, Sara Wittenberg (P), 22 October 2012, Ruby Lake NWR (Elko).

RUFOUS-BACKED ROBIN *Turdus rufopalliatus* (1, 1). 2012-104, Greg Scyphers (P), Rick Fridell (P, this issue's cover photo), 14–15 November 2012, Williams Ranch (Lincoln). This first for Nevada was found at a well-watered private ranch—a green patch in the middle of many, many miles of dry desert in the southeastern part of the state.

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CURVE-BILLED THRASHER *Toxostoma curvirostre* (2, 1). 2012-078, Tyler Stuart, Jim Boone (P), G. Scott Clemson, 15 September–13 October 2012, Walking Box Road (Clark). The first report of this bird, from Stuart, was of a bird heard calling “woot wheat,” but not seen, on 15 September. On 13 October, Stuart and Clemson had extended views of presumably the same bird, and both provided detailed written descriptions. Meanwhile, on 30 September, Boone, unaware of the 15 September occurrence, photographed an apparent Curve-billed Thrasher at essentially the same location. Although the photographs alone were not conclusive, the combination of written descriptions of the bird’s appearance, written descriptions of the characteristic call, and suggestive photos were enough to convince the NBRC to support the identification. The habitat in this area is dominated by Joshua Trees (*Yucca brevifolia*), and care must be taken in differentiating the Curve-billed from Bendire’s Thrasher, which also frequents Joshua Tree habitat. Considering the rarity of the Curve-billed Thrasher in Nevada and the proximity of all three observations, the committee also unanimously voted to consider all documentation as referring to the same bird. The only other NBRC-endorsed record of this species is from a private yard in Las Vegas, 11 August 1997 (Baeppler et al. 1999).

***BROWN THRASHER** *Toxostoma rufum* (18**, 6). 2013-055, C. S. Lawson, Vincent Mowbray, 4 April 1970–31 March 1971, Corn Creek (Clark). This Brown Thrasher, the earliest recorded in Nevada, appears to have remained at Corn Creek, a frequently birded desert oasis near Las Vegas, for an entire year. For example, in his fall 1970 report to *American Birds*, Lawson wrote, “This bird is apparently the one we initially observed last spring and summer. It is apparently resident. We have not observed more than one, and the residents at CC [Corn Creek] tell us they see the bird from time to time.”

2013-062, C. S. Lawson (P), Vincent Mowbray, 1 November–30 December 1972, Corn Creek (Clark). Two members voted to consider this Brown Thrasher to represent a repeat visit of the bird present at this same location through 31 March 1971 (2013-055 above), but four members were convinced that it was a new individual. As Corn Creek is birded so heavily, it is unlikely that the bird was present during the



Figure 7. This hummingbird was collected by Lynn Peterson on 15 August 1954 at Boulder City. It was identified as an immature male Allen’s Hummingbird and is currently housed at the Lake Mead N.R.A. storage and office complex. The committee concluded unanimously that the nipple-shaped tips of rectrix 2 and the relatively wide rectrix 5 do not support the identification as Allen’s but are typical of the expected Rufous Hummingbird.

Photo by Greg Scyphers

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Figure 8. This Dusky-capped Flycatcher at Floyd Lamb State Park, Las Vegas, was apparently present as early as 5 December 2012, when a report to eBird listed a “*Myiarchus* sp.” This photo was taken 14 December, and the bird was last seen 15 December. The rufous edges to the secondaries and nearly complete lack of rufous in the tail were sufficient for committee endorsement, but the audio recordings by Justin Streit and Greg Scyphers made it a “slam dunk.”

Photo by Deb Vogt

year and a half between the sightings, and the Brown Thrasher occurs regularly in Nevada and elsewhere in the Southwest.

2013-053, Richard Castetter (P), 28 September 1975, Mercury (Nye).

2013-054, Marian Cressman (P), 20 September 1995, Miller’s Rest Stop (Esmeralda).

2012-068, Maureen J. Kammerer (P), 26 September 2012, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark).

2013-066, Greg Scyphers, 18 May 2013, Tonopah (Nye).

SPRAGUE’S PIPIT *Anthus spragueii* (1, 1). 2012-054, Paul Lehman, 26 November 1999, agricultural field of Bermuda grass near Avi Resort, extreme southern Nevada (Clark). Establishing record. Besides describing the bird’s structure, plumage, flight style, and call, Lehman mentioned that “the site is only two or three miles north of a series of large alfalfa fields just inside California (north of Needles) that supported multiple Sprague’s multiple years back in the 1980s” (corroborated by McCaskie 1987 in reference to fall 1986).

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH *Parkesia motacilla* (2, 1). 2012-067, Greg Scyphers (P, Figure 9), Martin Meyers (P, V), Jon Dunn, Rose Strickland, Dennis Ghiglieri (P), 16–21 September 2012, Lida (Esmeralda). This exciting find was at one of the regularly birded migrant/vagrant traps in southwestern Nevada.

CONNECTICUT WARBLER *Oporornis agilis* (3, 0). 2012-097, NOT ENDORSED. 3 September 2012, Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve (Clark). The writ-

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Figure 9. This second Louisiana Waterthrush for Nevada was found and photographed at Lida on 16 September 2012 by Scyphers and Meyers and remained until at least 21 September.

Photo by Greg Scyphers

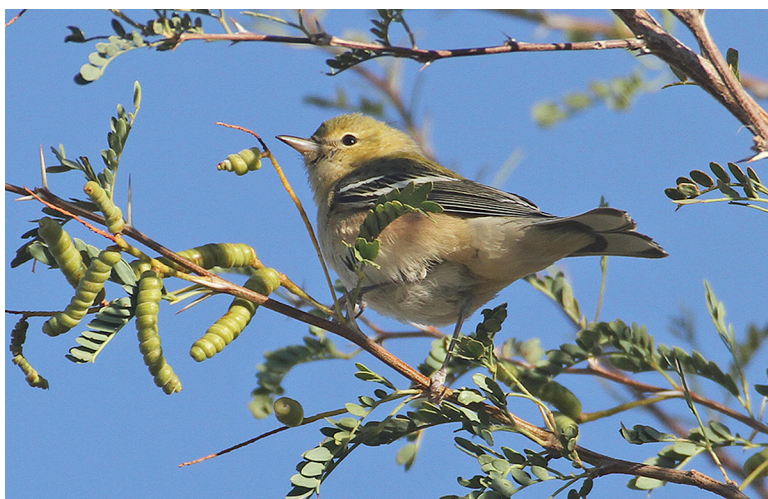


Figure 10. Found by Kathy Kuyper at Ash Meadows N.W.R. 10 November 2012 and photographed by Scyphers 11 November, this third Bay-breasted Warbler the NBRC has endorsed for Nevada was the first to be reported in the state since 1995.

Photo by Greg Scyphers

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ten documentation described behavior not characteristic of the species and physical features that did not eliminate other similar, and more likely, species.

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER *Setophaga castanea* (3, 1). 2012-084, Kathy Kuyper, Greg Scyphers (P, Figure 10), 10–11 November 2012, Ash Meadows NWR (Nye). This is the first record of the Bay-breasted Warbler the NBRC has endorsed since 1995 (Cressman et al. 1998).

PINE WARBLER *Setophaga pinus* (0, 0). 2013-027, NOT ENDORSED. 15 September 1987, Corn Creek (Clark).

2013-026, NOT ENDORSED. 7 October 1994, Blue Diamond (Clark).

This species was on the Nevada list on the basis of three early records. One of two mentioned by Alcorn (1988) is 2013-027, and the committee was able to obtain original documentation of it plus the 1994 record from Blue Diamond. We have been unable to find documentation for Alcorn's other record, from September 1973. The September dates are earlier than virtually all of the many records for California and Arizona, where the species does not typically arrive until October or later (Hamilton et al. 2007, Rosenberg et al. 2011). The September dates suggest possible confusion with similar species such as the Blackpoll or Bay-breasted warblers. As a result of these decisions, the committee, the NBRC removed the Pine Warbler from the state list.

PRAIRIE WARBLER *Setophaga discolor* (8, 1). 2012-101, Greg Scyphers (P), 8 September 2012, Bonham Ranch (Washoe).

***CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** *Spizella pallida* (14**, 3). 2013-064, NOT ENDORSED. 23 September 1977, Pahranaagat NWR (Lincoln).

2012-088, Robert Dobbs, 3 October 2012, Pahranaagat NWR (Lincoln).

2013-043, Andrew Lee (P), 1 May 2013, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark).

2013-044, Andrew Lee (P), 12 May 2013, Sunset Park, Las Vegas (Clark).

***SWAMP SPARROW** *Melospiza georgiana* (19**, 5). 2013-040, Greg Scyphers (P), 28 September 2012, Miller's Rest Stop (Esmeralda).

2013-039, Greg Scyphers (P), 5 October 2012, Dyer (Esmeralda).

2012-075, Andrew Lee (P), 13 October 2012, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark).

2012-081, Alan de Queiroz, Dennis Ghiglieri (P), Rose Strickland, Martin Meyers, 24 October–7 November 2012, Rancho San Rafael Park, Reno (Washoe).

2012-087, Robert Dobbs (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 12 November–16 December 2012, Pahranaagat NWR (Lincoln), 2 birds.

PAINTED BUNTING *Passerina ciris* (9, 1). 2012-107, Greg Scyphers (P), 26 September 2012, Corn Creek (Clark). Nevada has four endorsed records for May and five for September. Two of the May records (2002-05 and 2008-037) involved adult males. All other Nevada records have been of birds in female or immature plumage. In California, the overwhelming majority of CBRC-endorsed records are from the fall. The few spring records are from May, and the only three adult males endorsed by the CBRC occurred in May (Hamilton et al. 2007). Escapes from captivity are also known from many states, and they often involve adult males, sometimes showing abnormal pigmentation.

DICKCISSEL *Spiza americana* (6, 1). 2012-064, Andrew Lee (P), 9 September 2012, Floyd Lamb Park (Clark).

***COMMON GRACKLE** *Quiscalus quiscula* (19**, 5). 2013-063, Ed Harper (P), 31 May 1987, Dyer (Esmeralda), 2 birds. One of the photos accompanying this submission shows a Common Grackle carrying nesting material, although the success or failure of the attempt was never documented. Nesting has never been confirmed in Nevada, although other attempts have been suspected (Floyd et al. 2007).

2013-056, Graham Etherington, 27 October 1994, Nellis Air Force Base (Nye).

2012-091, Rick Fridell (P), 24 May 2012, Corn Creek (Clark).

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2012-090, Robert Dobbs (P), Rick Fridell (P), Martin Meyers (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 15 November–16 December 2012, the private Williams Ranch (Lincoln).

2013-068, Frank Hall, 7 June 2013, West Wendover (Elko).

PURPLE FINCH *Haemorhous purpureus* (4, 2). 2012-076, Martin Meyers (P), Meg Andrews, Greg Scyphers (P, V, Figure 11), 15–21 October 2012, The Willows, northwest side of Pyramid Lake (Washoe), 2 birds.

2012-086, Chuck Coxe (P), 3 November 2012, Rancho San Rafael Park, Reno (Washoe).

The Purple Finch has, over the years, been one of the most over-reported species in Nevada. Many reports appear to be erroneous identifications of Cassin's Finch (*H. cassinii*), which breeds commonly in the mountains through much of the state (Floyd et al. 2007) and also sometimes visits lowland oases, particularly in spring. Although the Purple Finch nests as close as the west slope of the Sierra Nevada in California, it is known to breed on the east slope at only two locations, around Susanville (Lassen Co.) and Markleeville (Alpine Co.), both in California (Beedy and Pandolfino 2013). With only four NBRC-endorsed records, the two occurrences in the fall of 2012 were a welcome surprise. Rutt et al. (2014) summarized the status of the two subspecies of the Purple Finch in the interior West, including Nevada.

COMMON REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea* (12, 8). 2013-034, Ken Voget (P, #MBM 7923), 21 May 2000, the Nature Conservancy's Torrance Ranch (Nye), found recently dead near a banding station.

2001-35, John Anderson, 17 December 2001, Reno/Sparks (Washoe). The first-round review of this record, completed in 2004, resulted in it being accepted as an unidentified redpoll. Two members were not convinced that the Hoary Redpoll (*A. hornemanni*) could be eliminated from the written description (Cochran 2004). At the September 2013 biennial meeting, the committee decided the record should have received a second review, as the bylaws specify that a record with two or three votes against endorsement (out of six) requires a second round. On the second round (in 2013), the committee voted 5–1 to endorse the identification as a Common Redpoll.

2013-001, Carol and Mike Amos (P), 27 November 2012, Fallon (Churchill).

2012-094, John Rogers (P), 5 December 2012, Caliente (Lincoln).

2012-100, Pete Bradley (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 24 December 2012–12 January 2013, Spring Creek (Elko), 3 birds.

2012-109, Kristen Frantzen Orr (P), 28 December 2012–8 February 2013, Spring Creek (Elko), 26 birds.

2013-003, Dennis Serdehely (P), 2–28 January 2013, Fernley (Lyon).

2013-002, Dennis Serdehely, Martin Meyers (P), Greg Scyphers (P), 3–5 January 2013, Sutcliff area, Pyramid Lake (Washoe).

Brinkley (2013) described the winter 2012–2013 irruption of the Common Redpoll as a “superflight.” That was certainly true in Nevada. Half of all NBRC-endorsed records are from that winter alone, and the total number of individual Common Redpolls documented that winter was 33. The six NBRC-endorsed records preceding the 2012–2013 invasion represent only nine individuals.

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Figure 11. There are now four NBRC-endorsed records for the Purple Finch, one from southern Nevada and three from northwest Nevada. On 15 October 2012, Meyers found and photographed a single Purple Finch at “The Willows” at Pyramid Lake. When Scyphers refound the bird on 21 October, two were present. Most reports of the Purple Finch from Nevada fail to eliminate Cassin’s Finch, which is found throughout the state.

Photo by Greg Scyphers

James Cressman, Marian Cressman, Babette d’Amours, Alan de Queiroz, Dave DeSante, Robert Dobbs, Ken Drozd, Jon Dunn, Graham Etherington, Timothy (Tim) Fennell, Samuel Flake, Rick Fridell, Dennis Ghiglieri, Tom Graham, Frank Hall, Ed Harper, Lauren Harter, Bill Henry, Ryan Hill, Maureen J. Kammerer, John Klicka, Scott Krammer, Kathy Kuyper, Jim Lane, Rene Laubach, C. S. Lawson, Andrew Lee, Paul Lehman, Jacque Lowery, Rob Lowry, Linda Mack, Sundee Meyer, Martin Meyers, Randall Michal, Vincent Mowbray, Michael Nicosia, Ryan O’Donnell, Kristen Frantzen Orr, David Parmelee, Norman Parrish, Anne Pellegrini, Lynn Peterson, Bob Poole, John Rogers, Wade Rose, Robert Rucker, Michael J. San Miguel, Jr., Richard Saval, Rita Schlageter, Greg Scyphers, Amy Seaman, Dennis Serdehely, Mark Sopko, B. J. Stacy, H. G. Stevenson, Justin Streit, Rose Strickland, Tyler Stuart, Carolyn Titus, Richard Titus, David Vander Pluym, Janice Vitale, Ken Voget, Deb Vogt, Fred Welden, Elizabeth Wells, Sara Wittenberg.

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