

# Sightings



“Sightings” appears monthly, alternating between *Winging It* and *Birding*, with the latest news, reports, and rumors from the ABA Area. Sightings are compiled from online discussion groups and RBAs, with valuable contributions from a growing network of informants continent-wide. All birders are urged to submit documentation of significant sightings to the appropriate state or provincial records committees. For full analysis of these and other important bird records, subscribe to *North American Birds*, the richly illustrated journal of ornithological record published by the ABA ([americanbirding.org/pubs/nab](http://americanbirding.org/pubs/nab)).

MICHAEL RETTER AND NICHOLAS BLOCK, WITH THANKS TO RICK WRIGHT

## MID-DECEMBER 2007 TO EARLY JANUARY 2008

**SOUTHEAST:** *Brevard*, FL, hosted a Pacific Loon and White-faced Ibis. Alabama's 5<sup>th</sup> state record of Western Grebe was in *Marshall*. A Snowy Plover in *Glynn*, GA, provided the state's second record. A probable adult Glaucous-winged Gull was a surprise in *Baldwin*, AL, and could furnish a 1<sup>st</sup> state record. A Black Guillemot in *Georgetown*, SC, through 5 Jan. was far south for that species. The *Laurens*, GA, **Green-breasted Mango** was still present as of 9 Jan. At least three Calliope Hummingbirds were in the region, with singles in *Jefferson* and *Baldwin*, AL, and *Gwinnett*, GA. FL hosted three rare hummingbird species, with a male Broad-billed Hummingbird in *Calhoun*, a female Anna's Hummingbird in *Walton*, and a Broad-tailed Hummingbird in *Okaloosa*.

A Say's Phoebe was present in *Lake*, FL through 7 Jan., and another was in *Sumter*, GA through 6 Jan. A Cassin's Kingbird was in *Hendry*, FL, 23–30 Dec., and a Western Kingbird was photographed in *Colleton*, SC, on 5 Jan. A Bell's Vireo was in *Sarasota*, FL, 5–8 Jan. A Varied Thrush was discovered in *Spartanburg*, SC, on 29 Dec. A Townsend's Solitaire continued in *Williamsburg*, VA, through 8 Jan. A Western Tanager was reported in *Horry*, SC, on 26 Dec., and two were present in a yard in *Leon*, FL. The state's first **Smith's Longspur** was in *Macon*, GA, through 8 Jan. Evidence of the northern finch invasion were a Common Redpoll and Evening Grosbeak in *Catawba*, NC, and another Evening Grosbeak in *Blount*, TN.

**NORTHEAST:** At least two Barnacle Geese were in *Hunterdon*, NJ, and another was in *Cape May*, NJ, through early Jan. Two Barnacle Geese and the **Pink-footed Goose** continued into early Jan. in *Suffolk*, NY. Barrow's Goldeneyes were widespread this season, with birds in NH, NJ, NS, ME, and RI. Pacific Loons turned up in *York* and *Cumberland*, ME, as well as *Cape May*, NJ. A Western Grebe was in *Chautauqua*, NY, on 2 Jan., and Eared Grebes were in *Monmouth*, NJ, and *Rockingham*, ME. An adult Yellow-legged Gull was at Newfoundland's Quidi Vidi Lake in early Jan. There was a noted influx of **Slaty-backed Gulls** across the northern half of the continent. Three were in MA; two were in NF; and yet another was reportedly joined by a Mew Gull in *Bucks*, PA. Two first-cycle Thayer's Gulls were in *Essex*, MA. An **Ivory Gull** was present in *Newport*, RI, 7–8 Dec. Another **Ivory Gull** was discovered on the

*Canso* CBC in *Guysborough*, NS. Another southerly Black Guillemot was in *Cape May*, NJ, on 22 Dec. A **Long-billed Murrelet** was discovered in *Bucks*, PA, on 14 Dec. A White-winged Dove was in *Cape May*, NJ, on 30 Dec. A female Black-chinned Hummingbird was banded in *Lynchburg*, VA.

Four Ash-throated Flycatchers were in *Cape May*, NJ, and another was in *Sussex*, DE. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was in *Suffolk*, NY, on 14 Dec. Townsend's Solitaires were in MA, NH, NJ, NS, and NY, and a Varied Thrush was in NS. Bohemian Waxwings, some in flocks of hundreds, were across ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, and VT. A Yellow-breasted Chat was a surprise on the *Bedford* CBC in NS, as were two more in one yard in *Halifax*, NS. A Le Conte's Sparrow was found in *Sussex*, DE, on 30 Dec. A Painted Bunting was observed in *Cape May*, NJ, 7–12 Dec. The northeastern Bullock's Orioles continued, with the bird in *Juniata*, PA, present through 9 Jan. and one on Prince Edward Island through 20 Dec. Another Bullock's Oriole, discovered 18 Dec., provided a first record for NF. The finch invasion continued, with flocks numbering up to 20 Pine Grosbeaks seen across CT, NJ, NY, MA, NH, ME, RI, PE, and VT. A testament to the intensity of the movement, 154 were tallied on the *Quabbin* CBC in CT on 29 Dec. Common Redpolls were as far south as *Sussex*, DE, and Hoary Redpolls were in CT, NH, NS, NY, ME, MA, and VT. Evening Grosbeaks were reported to *New Castle*, DE, and *Cape May*, NJ.

**MIDWEST:** A Barnacle Goose was at *Niagara*, ON, on 6 Jan. A drake Harlequin Duck found on 16 Dec. shared time between WI and MN on the Mississippi River. A Western Grebe continued in



Hoary Redpoll © Mark Szantyr – 4 Jan. '08 in Coventry, CT



Pine Grosbeak © Mark Szantyr – 29 Dec. '07 in Norfolk, CT

Walworth, WI, through 9 Jan. A Northern Gannet was seen in Cuyahoga, OH, 28–30 Dec. Lee, IA, hosted a Brown Pelican on 18 Dec. A California Gull was reported in Cuyahoga, OH, 8–9 Dec. An adult **Slaty-backed Gull** was discovered at Lake Carlyle, in IL, on 16 Dec., and an adult Glaucous-winged Gull persisted at the same location. Another **Slaty-backed Gull** was in Douglas, WI, on 23 Dec. An adult **Ross's Gull** furnished a 3<sup>rd</sup> state record at St. Paul, MN, on 15 Dec. Another MN one-day wonder, an **Ivory Gull** was in St. Louis on 7 Jan.

The movement of Townsend's Solitaires continues, with sightings in IL, IN, MI, MN, ON, and WI. A male Varied Thrush was discovered in a Boone, IN, backyard on 17 Dec, and others were in St. Louis, MN, and Muskegon, MI. Bohemian Waxwings were reported from OH and IN. The Midwest experienced its share of the northern finch invasion. On 2 Dec., a Pine Grosbeak was still in Lucas, OH, where it was joined by a flock of 11 Evening Grosbeaks. White-winged Crossbills were in IL, IN, and IA. There was a Hoary Redpoll in Porter, IN, 5–6 Dec., and another in Lake, OH, on 27 Dec. Multiple Hoary Redpolls were also in ON.

**SOUTHCENTRAL:** **Masked Ducks** continued to be seen on the King Ranch in Kleberg, TX. A Little Gull was seen in Cameron, LA, on 6 Jan. A Ruddy Ground-Dove was spotted in Hidalgo, TX, on 8 Jan. Vaux's Swifts were found wintering in Caddo, LA. A female Calliope Hummingbird continued at a Pulaski, AR, feeder through 31 Dec. Two Dusky-capped Flycatchers were found in Cameron, TX. A pair of Golden-crowned rarities was in TX, with a **Golden-crowned Warbler** in Hidalgo, and a Golden-crowned Sparrow in Coke. A male Orchard Oriole photographed in Hidalgo, TX, was a rare winter find on 29 Dec.

**NORTHCENTRAL:** A Common Moorhen was in Canyon, ID, 5 Dec. In mid-Dec., Davis, UT, hosted a Chestnut-collared Longspur. An Orchard Oriole was reported at feeders in Crook, WY, in early Jan. A Hoary Redpoll in Latah, ID, on 15 Dec. and a pair of Evening Grosbeaks in Dodge, NE, on 3 Jan. were the only evidence of the irruption occurring further east.

**Southwest:** The Pinal, AZ, **Northern Jacana** continued through 8 Jan. A Couch's Kingbird was discovered on 1 Jan. in Doña Ana, NM, and straddled the state line with El Paso, TX. Two Black-capped Gnatcatchers frequented Pima, AZ, and an unprecedented 5 individuals were in Santa Cruz, AZ. AZ hosted single Rufous-backed Robins in Madera Canyon and the Huachuca Mountains, while Madera also featured a male **Aztec Thrush** into early Jan. The Golden-winged Warbler in Madera Canyon continued into late Dec. Rare in winter was a Summer Tanager discovered in Fremont, CO, on 16 Dec. Colorado's first **Streak-backed Oriole** continued in Larimer, CO, and another was in Cochise, AZ.

**Pacific COAST:** Although not seen by birders, noteworthy was a drake **Baikal Teal** taken by a hunter in Lane, OR, on 31 Dec. A **Smew** was a one-day wonder in Tuolumne, CA, on 29 Dec. An Arctic Loon was still in Clatsop, OR, through early Jan. An immature frigatebird, likely a Magnificent, seen in Mendocino, CA, on 25 Dec., was probably the same bird rescued on 5 Jan., after being blown into a tree during a storm in Sonoma, CA. An immature Roseate Spoonbill continued in Orange and Riverside, CA, into mid-Dec. A Black-headed Gull was in Okanogan and Lincoln, WA, through early Jan. A 2<sup>nd</sup>-cycle **Slaty-backed Gull** was reported from San Mateo, CA, on 22 Dec., and two more Slaty-backed Gulls were in WA. A Parakeet Auklet was reported from Port Renfrew, BC, on 15 Dec. A Northern Hawk-Owl was photographed in Grant, WA. A Black-throated Blue Warbler was discovered in Nanoose Bay, BC, on 22 Dec. The Painted Redstart persisted in Los Angeles, CA. A Rusty Blackbird was in Kern, CA. Finally, multiple **Bramblings** are in AK this winter, with sightings in Homer, Anchorage, and Gustavus.



Slaty-backed Gull (foreground) © Phil Brown – 26 Dec. '07 in Niles Pond, Gloucester, MA