

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).

MICHAEL RETTER AND NICHOLAS BLOCK, WITH THANKS TO PAUL LEHMAN

MID-FEBRUARY 2008 TO 10 MARCH 2008

What an incredible winter it's been! Certainly, the best find of the past month was the first ABA record of a Chilean breeder, **White-crested Elaenia**. All season, we've seen an impressive number of irruptive species across the continent, from the more-expected and better-understood winter finches, solitaires, and waxwings, to the less-understood northeast Asian gulls and northwest European geese. Slaty-backed Gull especially has staged an incredible irruption into northern North America from coast to coast. Also noted this past month were Black-tailed Gull and probable “Vega” and “Kamchatka” Gulls. Pink-footed and especially Barnacle Geese continue to be noted across the northeastern quarter of the continent with increasing frequency. Though not within the ABA area, a **Gray Gull** (another Chilean species) was discovered on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula on 23 Feb; this could have repercussions for us, though, as it has reopened the question of the origin of LA's Dec, 1987 bird. As always, italicized place names denote counties or parishes.

SOUTHEAST: The Great Lakes flight of White-winged Scoter (see below) spun off a few birds “inland” into KY and TN. Not surprisingly, a large chunk of the region's rarities comprised continuing “vagrant” hummingbirds: the *Laurens*, GA, **Green-breasted Mango**; *Cobb*, GA, Broad-tailed Hummingbird; *DeKalb*, GA, Calliope Hummingbird; and *Duval* and *Calhoun*, FL, and *Charleston*, SC, **Broad-billed Hummingbirds**. Another Calliope Hummingbird, an adult male, was discovered in *Escambia*, FL, on 9 Feb. Two Cave Swallows were found in *Jackson*, MS, on 13 Feb. A **Bananaquit** discovered on 12 Feb was enjoyed by many observers in *Broward*, FL, through the end of the month. Two different Lazuli Buntings were in FL. *Catawba*, NC's **Scott's Oriole** hung on into at least mid-Feb.

MID-ATLANTIC: Long Island, NY's wintering Barnacle and **Pink-footed Geese** persisted into early Mar. More Barnacle Geese were wintering in *Hunterdon* and *Cape May*, NJ. *Lancaster* was the place for rare waterfowl in PA this month, with Common Eider, “**Common**” **Green-winged Teal**, and Barrow's Goldeneye all being reported. A Pacific Loon continued in *Mecklenburg*, VA. Birders in *Cumberland*, PA, were surprised to find a **Prairie Falcon** on 23 Feb. There was still a Slaty-backed Gull in *Tompkins*, NY, as of 2 Mar. *Providence*, RI played host to an adult **Black-tailed Gull** 17–18 Feb. The *Monmouth*, NJ, Bohemian Waxwing persisted into late

Feb. A colorful male Painted Bunting added a festive touch to the scenery in *Anne Arundel*, MD, through early Mar. A **Scott's Oriole** continued sporadically in NY through late Feb. A Hoary Redpoll was observed in *Providence*, RI, 19–23 Feb. A White-winged Crossbill was in *Washington*, MD, on 1 Mar. **Pine Grosbeaks** were reported in *Chester*, PA, and *Atlantic*, NJ.

NORTHEAST: Single **Tufted Ducks** were found in *Grand Isle*, VT, *Providence*, RI, and at Pictou Causeway, NS. There was a late report of a photographed Northern Hawk Owl in *Worcester*, MA, 7–8 Feb. *Providence*, RI, played host to an adult **Black-tailed Gull** 17–18 Feb. Newfoundland continues to be an exciting place for gullers, with Slaty-backed and **Yellow-legged Gulls** both present this month. Yet more Slaty-backed Gulls were being seen in MA. A Varied Thrush was photographed in mid-Feb in *Lawn*, NL. Another lost thrush, a **Red-wing**, was discovered in *St. John's*, NL, on 8 Mar and was still present as we went to press. The **Townsend's Solitaire** irruption across the center of the country made it as far east as *Halifax*, NS, and *Essex*, MA. A **Western Tanager** was still frequenting *New Haven*, CT. Pine Grosbeaks continued in good numbers across the region, especially CT.

SOUTH-CENTRAL: A drake Barrow's Goldeneye brightened up *Sedgwick*, KS, 9–11 Feb. Masked Ducks continued to be seen in early Mar on the King Ranch in TX. A probable adult “**Vega**” **Herring Gull** was present in *Harris*, TX, on 12 Feb. Not to be outdone was a first cycle “**Kumliens**” Iceland Gull, also from *Harris*, TX, on 6 Mar. A **White-crested Elaenia** spent 9–10 Feb on South Padre Is., *Cameron*, TX; though it is a long-distance austral migrant, pending acceptance, it provided an astonishing and unforeseen first for the ABA area. A **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** in *Plaquemines*, LA, 17–23 Feb was a 2nd state record, and possibly the first non-TX, US record of the Mexican subspecies *monachus*. Also a first state record was the **Gray Flycatcher** still present in *Bossier*, LA. There were two panhandle **Clark's Nutcrackers** on the south plains. One, OK's first in decades, was well-photographed in *Cimmaron* on 2 Mar; another was next door, 22 Feb–8 Mar in *Carson*, TX. A Common Redpoll frequented a feeder in *Boone*, AR, 17–24 Feb.

NORTH-CENTRAL: A **Gyr Falcon** was reported sporadically from *Madison*, IL, 11–16 Feb. A **Common Crane** was discovered near Kearney, NE, on 7 Mar. A very intriguing and very large adult **Mew Gull**, possibly a “Kamchatka” Gull, was at Carlyle Lake, IL, 23–24 Feb; the site's Glaucous-winged Gull persists. A frustrating subadult **Ivory Gull** was present off-and-on 16–26 Feb at Lake Oahe, providing



White-crested Elaenia, South Padre Island, TX, 10 Feb.'08. © Erik Breden.



Bananaquit, Hollywood, FL, 23 Feb. '08. © Kirk Zufelt.



Ivory Gull, Oahe Reservoir, SD, 26 Feb. '08. © Doug Backlund.

SD with a long-overdue first state record. Though it's usually the scarcest of the scoters in the region, a surprisingly impressive flight of **White-winged Scoters** was taking place in the southern Great Lakes region as we went to press; a report of 90 birds in *Lake*, IN, on 5 Mar was unprecedented. Townsend's Solitaires were widespread across the entire region, occurring east in multiples to ON and MI. A small flock of Bohemian Waxwings was wintering in *Porter*, IN. The species was quite widespread in neighboring MI, being reported from at least ten counties. A very uncooperative Varied Thrush was seen in *Lake*, IL, throughout Feb. A Harris's Sparrow was found in *Coshocton*, OH, on 15 Feb.

SOUTHWEST: A pair of "**Bewick's**" **Tundra Swans** was in *Davis*, UT, on 24 Feb. An immature Mute Swan of unknown provenance was well-photographed in *Arapahoe*, CO, on 9 Feb; there are still no accepted state records. A Red-shouldered Hawk was present in *Davis*, UT, through at least late Feb. Another was observed in *Cochise*, AZ, 20–23 Feb. An **Aplomado Falcon** present on 3 Mar in *Socorro*, NM, was reportedly from an introduced population. The now famous *Pinal*, AZ, **Northern Jacana** was being seen as we went to press. A 2nd cycle bird found on 25 Feb at Lake Mohave, AZ, turned out to be AZ's second record of **Lesser Black-backed Gull**. An adult "Kumlien's" Iceland Gull was photographed in *LaRimer*, CO, on 1 Mar. A possible **Gilded Flicker** was photographed in

Washington, UT, on 10 Feb, and will be a first state record if accepted. Up to three Cave Swallows were in AZ. *Sierra*, NM, was still hosting a **Rufous-backed Robin**. The Madera Canyon, AZ, **Crescent-chested Warbler** was still present in mid-Feb. A pair of Lawrence's Goldfinches was visiting a feeder in *Washington*, UT, in early Mar.

WEST COAST AND NORTHWEST: Four **Whooper Swans** were present on Adak, AK, on 9 Feb, while a single "**Bewick's**" **Tundra Swan** was in *Skagit*, WA, on 24 Feb. A drake **Tufted Duck** photographed in *Sanders* on 6 Mar could provide MO with its first accepted record. **Arctic Loons** were present in *Humboldt*, CA, and *Clatsop*, OR. A pair of Glossy Ibis spent 16–17 Feb between *Placer* and *Sutter*, CA, providing a remarkable record for the area. A Crested Caracara was observed in *San Bernadino*, CA, on 28 Feb. Ponoka, AB's Red-bellied Woodpecker continued into the latter half of Feb. *San Diego*, CA, played host to a variety of wayward travelers in Feb: a Manx Shearwater on the 9th, a Wood Stork from 8–24 Feb, and the continuing winterers, Orchard Oriole, Lark Bunting, Painted Redstart, and that crazy Olive-sided Flycatcher. Slaty-backed Gulls, multiples even, are seemingly routine in *San Mateo*, but birds found in *Humboldt* and *Del Norte*, CA, likely caused a bit more excitement. Last, and almost certainly least, was a continuing pair of House Sparrows in Shishmaref, AK.

The Porch List - Tambopata, Peru

BRUCE A. SORRIE

The proposed competition to identify the world's best bird feeders (see *Winging It* Jan/Feb 2007 and succeeding issues) got me reminiscing about a morning I experienced at *Reserva Nacional Tambopata* in southeastern Peru. The date was 29 November, 1978; dawn—11 A.M. Back then this place was called Explorer's Inn (EI), a private conservation venture and ecotourism lodge, and I was a resident naturalist. In a few short years EI had earned a reputation as 'ground zero' for biological diversity on a global scale, a reputation that has not diminished over time.

This is not a list of feeder birds. EI did not have any feeders—



Red-and-green Macaw, Manu Wildlife Center, Peru, 11 August '02. @ Bill Maynard.

this is a list of birds that were seen or heard while I processed mist-netted birds on the porch of my *casita*, which faced a large clearing and the Tambopata River. It must be remembered that this was 1978 and the only field guides available were *Birds of South America*, de Schauensee (1970) and de Schauensee & Phelps (1978), the latter just published and, although outdated by today's standards, was a phenomenal leap forward in Neotropical bird identification. Moreover, auditory aids were practically non-existent and tended to cover widespread species. It was tough, but rewarding birding!

SPECIES OBSERVED - 104 species in 37 families

Little Tinamou	Ruddy Pigeon	Short-tailed Swift	Plain-crowned Spinetail	Social Flycatcher	Dusky-capped Greenlet
Undulated Tinamou	Gray-fronted Dove	Rufous-breasted Hermit	Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner	Gray-capped Flycatcher	Maggie Tanager
Bartlett's Tinamou	Ruddy Quail-Dove	Long-billed Starthroat	Olivaceous Woodcreeper	Great Kiskadee	White-shouldered Tanager
Speckled Chachalaca	Scarlet Macaw	Violaceous Trogon	Buff-throated Woodcreeper	Streaked Flycatcher	Silver-beaked Tanager
Blue-throated Piping-Guan	Red-and-green Macaw	Black-tailed Trogon	Great Antshrike	Tropical Kingbird	Blue-gray Tanager
Capped Heron	Chestnut-fronted Macaw	Amazon Kingfisher	Barred Antshrike	Eastern Kingbird	Palm Tanager
Greater Yellow-headed Vulture	Blue-headed Macaw	Rufous Motmot	Bluish-slate Antshrike	Short-crested Flycatcher	Black-faced Dacnis
Black Vulture	White-eyed Parakeet	Broad-billed Motmot	Goeldi's Antbird	Bright-rumped Attila	Orange-bellied Euphonia
Swallow-tailed Kite	Dusky-headed Parakeet	Bluish-fronted Jacamar	Black-throated Antbird	Masked Tityra	Lined Seedeater
Plumbeous Kite	Cobalt-winged Parakeet	Black-fronted Nunbird	Black-spotted Bare-eye	White-banded Swallow	Double-collared Seedeater
Roadside Hawk	White-bellied Parrot	Swallow-wing	Black-faced Antthrush	Southern Rough-winged Swallow	Yellow-browed Sparrow
Black Hawk-Eagle	Blue-headed Parrot	Chestnut-eared Aracari	Thrush-like Antpitta	Thrush-like Wren	Grayish Saltator
Black Caracara	Mealy Parrot	White-throated Toucan	White-browed Purpletuff	Moustached Wren	Buff-throated Saltator
Red-throated Caracara	Squirrel Cuckoo	Channel-billed [Yellow-ridged] Toucan	Bare-necked Fruitcrow	[Southern] House Wren	Bobolink
Bat Falcon	Smooth-billed Ani	Yellow-tufted Woodpecker	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Lawrence's Thrush	Epaulet Oriole
Starred Wood-Quail	Tropical Screech-Owl	Lineated Woodpecker	Drab Water-Tyrant	White-necked Thrush	Yellow-rumped Cacique
Plumbeous Pigeon	Spectacled Owl	Red-necked Woodpecker	Piratic Flycatcher	Violaceous Jay	Solitary Black Cacique
	White-collared Swift				Russet-backed Oropendola