

SIGHTINGS

EARLY NOVEMBER TO EARLY DECEMBER 2006

Twelve Times a Year

For nearly 20 years, the birding community has reached to the "Sightings" column in *Winging It* for the latest news of rarities. Beginning with this issue, "Sightings" will appear in both *Winging It* and in *Birding*, bringing ABA members rumors, reports, and records from throughout North America.

Our method in compiling these summaries will remain unchanged. Reports are collected from online discussion groups and online RBAs, with valuable additions submitted by our growing network of volunteer contributors. And we are grateful that two of North America's foremost experts on bird distribution, Jon Dunn and Paul Lehman, will continue to assist us in the preliminary sifting and sorting of reports.

Inevitably, "Sightings" will include some reports that are eventually rejected by local and regional rarities committees, and it will no doubt overlook others. The North American birding community is fortunate to have a quarterly journal that provides thorough analysis and deliberate evaluations of all significant records: In *North American Birds* <aba.org/pubs/nab/index.html>, Ned Brinkley and his team of regional editors compile and carefully assess thousands of reports for each quarterly issue, a must-read for all serious birders.

We hope that you enjoy reading "Sightings" every month, and that you find it as timely, as useful, and as exciting as we do.

— Rick Wright and Ted Floyd

Compiled by Rick Wright, with thanks to Jon Dunn and Paul Lehman

Phenomena: Single **Redwings** arrived on Newfoundland and in Nova Scotia in late November; representing 10th and 2nd provincial records, respectively, both were still present in December. Even more exciting was a **Song Thrush** (*Turdus musicus*) 11–17 November in Québec, a potential first for the ABA Area; although the species is kept in captivity in PQ, European experts identified photos as of a first-winter individual of the Scottish race *hebridensis*, the most likely age class and subspecies for a genuine vagrant.

Southeast: Common Eiders were found in GA and FL. 2 Cinnamon Teal and a female-plumaged **Masked Duck** lingered in Brevard Co., FL. Single Western Grebes were in VA and on the GA/AL border. A Red-necked Grebe was on the GA/FL border. A Swainson's Hawk was in VA. A Black-legged Kittiwake visited GA. Prince William Co., VA, hosted a Franklin's Gull. An **Inca Dove** photographed in Prince George's Co., MD, in early November will be a state first pending acceptance. Single **Calliope Hummingbirds** were in GA, FL, and NC, the latter 2 banded.

A female Vermilion Flycatcher in GA was outdone by an adult **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** in Indian River Co.,

FL, in mid-November. A Cave Swallow was at GA's Altamaha WMA. A Harris's Sparrow visited a VA feeder in early November.

Northeast: At least 2 Swainson's Hawks lingered into November at Cape May. An Eared Grebe was far



Masked Duck. Viera Wetlands, Brevard County, Florida; 7 November 2006. © Thomas J. Dunkerton.

north in NH. Single Western Grebes wandered to MA and ME. NI's 4th **Slaty-backed Gull**, an adult at St. John's in late November, was followed by a 3rd-winter individual at Niagara Falls. A Razorbill visited ON's Niagara River. A **Calliope Hummingbird** banded in CT in early December will be that state's first if accepted; another was on Cape Cod. 2 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in December were record late in NS.

A November Great Crested Flycatcher in south coastal Maine was late. A **Hammond's Flycatcher** pho-

tographed and recorded in NY was that state's second. A **Gray Kingbird** lingered in PQ through the period for a first provincial record if accepted. A Fork-tailed Flycatcher spent 3 mid-November days in NH. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was on Cape Cod. Single **Bell's Vireos** were on Cape Cod and in NS in early December. Coastal sites from NH to DE, and inland to upstate NY and central PA, recorded 1–10 Cave Swallows each. Western parulids included single Black-throated Gray Warblers in MA and PQ and a female Townsend's and an "Audubon's" Warbler in NS. An adult male Painted Bunting was in NS. The MA Green-tailed Towhee was still present in mid-November. Single Le Conte's Sparrows were in RI, MA, and PA, while a Henslow's Sparrow visited NJ's Sandy Hook.

A **Golden-crowned Sparrow** photographed in early December was a first for St. Pierre et Miquelon.

Midwest: Single King Eiders strayed to IN and OH. A Common Eider in mid-November would be IA's 3rd if accepted. Rare larids included an adult **Slaty-backed Gull** in MN, 2 first-winter Iceland Gulls in ND, and a Black-legged Kittiwake in NE. An apparent female **Black-chinned Hummingbird** banded in Gibson Co., IN, in December will be a state first if accepted.

A Vermilion Flycatcher lingered to

December in MI. A Curve-billed Thrasher was in western MT; one present in MN since August was last seen in early December. A Townsend's Warbler in Houghton Co., MI, in early November will be a 4th state record if accepted. An "Audubon's" Warbler was notable in northeastern MO. A Yellow-throated Warbler was late in Clinton Co., IA, in November. Single Summer Tanagers were in MN and MI, and a Western Tanager in OH. A Green-tailed Towhee lingered in Marquette Co., MI, into early December. Single Hoary Redpolls were in IL and MT. Three *tephrocotis* Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches were in St. Louis Co., MN, in late November.

Texas: A Greater Flamingo, banded on the Yucatan, returned to Calhoun Co. for a second winter. The mid-continent Whooping Crane flock has grown to a record 238 birds. The Weslaco Northern Jacana was last seen in mid-November. An adult Little Gull was in Hunt Co. A Hermit Warbler in Hidalgo Co. was accompanied by a Townsend's and a Black-throated Blue Warbler.

Southwest: A Fulvous Whistling-Duck arrived in Maricopa Co., AZ, for a second winter. A "Black" Brant was in CO in early November. 24 Tundra Swans paused at AZ's Whitewater Draw. Surf and Black Scoters, particularly conspicuous in CO this year, penetrated as far south as AZ and NM. 3 Long-tailed Ducks were near Tucson. NM birders found a Yellow-billed Loon, while at least 4 were in CO; CO also had multiple Red-throated Loons, and 1 was in AZ in early December. CO's long-staying Brown Pelican sur-

vived several snowstorms. Red-necked Grebes included 2 in AZ and 2 in CO. A Gyrfalcon was in north-central CO. Vagrant gulls included a first-winter Glaucous-winged in CO, an adult Mew in NM, and 1-2 Black-legged Kittiwakes in CO and NM. An apparent **Iceland Gull** in southern NM in early December will be a state first if accepted.

A possible **Least Flycatcher** was in southeastern AZ in late November. A



Gray Kingbird. L'Anse-à-Beaufils, Gaspé Peninsula, Québec; 10 November 2006. © Olivier Barden.

Thick-billed Kingbird returned for its 6th winter in Yuma. Single Rufous-backed Robins arrived at 3 AZ sites. Notable warblers included Prothonotary and Worm-eating in UT and a Worm-eating, 2 Tennessees, a Black-throated Blue, a Magnolia, and a Palm Warbler in AZ. The Phoenix area hosted a Lapland Longspur, while a Common Grackle was in AZ's Chiricahuas. Gilbert, AZ's, returning Streak-backed Oriole was joined by a female Orchard Oriole.

California: 3 Emperor Geese arrived in Mendocino Co.; the same county welcomed a Laysan Albatross for the 13th winter, a rare chance to see this species from land. A Blue-footed Booby was at the Salton Sea in late November. Single

adult Brown Boobies were at the Tijuana River mouth, La Jolla Point, and Del Norte Co.; an immature in Humboldt Bay was joined by an adult female. Up to 5 Roseate Spoonbills were at the Salton Sea, where a Piping Plover was seen sporadically through November. A late-November Rock Sandpiper in Los Angeles Co. was southern CA's first in 40 years. California's first **Ross's Gull** was an adult at the Salton Sea in mid-November. Up to 2 Black-legged Kittiwakes were at the Salton Sea; a juvenile at Mono Lake was a first for the east side of the Sierra. A Thick-billed Murre in Del Norte Co. is thought to have died.

A Thick-billed Kingbird returned to Los Angeles Co. A Red-throated Pipit provided a late record in Orange Co. A wintering Painted Redstart was in Santa Barbara. A Yellow-throated Warbler, perhaps of the nominate race, was in Orange Co. A Common Grackle was at the Salton Sea.

Northwest: The **Falcated Duck** returned to Coburg, OR, for the 4th winter. A Yellow-billed Loon lingered in MT. Single Iceland Gulls were reported from Grant Co., WA, and southern BC. An adult Slaty-backed Gull was in Calgary; a Black-legged Kittiwake visited ID. Notable alcids were an Ancient Murrelet in Yakima Co., WA, and 3 Xantus's Murrelets and a Parakeet Auklet off OR. 2 Barn Owls were noted in southern AB.

A Tropical Kingbird visited Seattle. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was in BC's Kootenay Mountains in mid-November. A basic male Indigo Bunting was in Calgary, where "good numbers" of finches including Hoary Redpolls were reported.