

SIGHTINGS

M I D - J U L Y T O E A R L Y A U G U S T 2 0 0 8

"Sightings" appears monthly, alternating between *Winging It* and *Birding*, with the latest news, reports, and rumors from the ABA Area and Mexico. Sightings are compiled from online discussion groups and RBAs, with valuable contributions from a growing network of informants continent-wide. Readers should note, however, that none of these reports has yet been vetted by a records committee. All birders are urged to submit documentation of rare sightings to the appropriate state or provincial committees. For full analysis of these and other bird observations, subscribe to *North American Birds*, the richly illustrated journal of ornithological record published by the ABA <aba.org/pubs/nab>. Italicized place names denote counties or parishes.

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with thanks to Paul Lehman
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Summary

An intriguing highlight of this reporting period has been an unusually massive and early irruption of White-winged Crossbills into ME as we go to press, coinciding with an unprecedented irruption of the species into northern Great Britain and widespread reports in UT and CO. It seems unlikely that these events would be linked, but it would also be quite a coincidence. Another large-scale irruption, this time northward, is occurring with immature White Ibises in the Mid-Atlantic region. Juvenile Horned Larks are out in full force across the continent by late summer, and inevitably, a few have been misidentified as Sprague's Pipits by birders unfamiliar with this plumage. Be careful! Rarity highlights include a Jabiru in LA and a pair of Common House-Martins at St. Paul Island in AK.

Southeast: A 2nd record for KY, 9 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were in *CalLOWay* on 7/28. A Roseate Spoonbill was reported from *Fulton*, KY on 7/28. Rare inland, especially in the absence of any obvious tropical weather factors, a Royal Tern was photographed in Memphis, TN on 7/27. Fort De Soto State Park, *Pinellas*, FL hosted a Tropic Kingbird on 7/17.

Mid-Atlantic: An egret photographed in *Lancaster* 7/29–8/1 would be PA's 1st **Little Egret** if accepted. DE's Little Egret continued through at least 7/21 at

Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge; a White-faced Ibis was there 7/19. A Reddish Egret was in Portsmouth, VA on 7/22. There is a large influx of immature White Ibises into the region as we go to press, with widespread reports of single birds in MD, PA, NJ, and DE. A remarkable



Jabiru. Iberville County, Louisiana; 31 July 2008. Courtesy of © Michael A. Seymour & Joshua T. Sylvest—Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries.

flock of 15 White Ibises was at Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge, DE on 7/27. A White-faced Ibis and a Ruff flew by Cape May Point, NJ on 7/21. A Eurasian Collared-Dove was reported from *Lancaster*, PA on 7/20.

Northeast: The 7/16 discovery of 13 juvenile Redheads in *Aroostook* may have been the 1st confirmed nesting in ME. A pelagic trip to Atlantis Canyon in MA waters turned up 4 Band-rumped Storm-Petrels and a Bridled Tern. A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was seen at Deschenes, QC on 8/5. Right on the heels of last month's NH birds, *Hartford* was host to CT's 1st breeding record of Mississippi Kite; these constitute the only 2 breeding records for New England. Two reports

of Swallow-tailed Kite came in from Quebec this summer: 1 at Sacré-Coeur-de-Tadoussac 7/30 and another above Quebec City 6/8. A **Red-necked Stint** was at Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge, NY 8/1–8/3; a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was at the same location 8/3–8/4. The summer presence of a Bonaparte's Gull in Renews, NL was notable; NL's 2nd Roseate Tern was discovered at the same location on 7/7. A Royal Tern was at Popham Beach State Park, *Sagadahoc*, ME on 7/30. A White-winged Dove was present on Monhegan Island, ME through at least 7/18; 2 more were in NL 7/20–7/25, and another was near Joliette, QC 6/13–6/15. A male Lark Bunting was photographed at Baie-Trinité, QC 6/7. Unfortunately for birders (and the bird), a Yellow-headed Blackbird's stay in *Franklin*, ME was cut short when it was nabbed by a raptor 7/24. The appear-



Least Grebe. Craig Fish Hatchery, Benton County, Arkansas; 3 August 2008. © Joseph C. Neal.

ance of flocks of hundreds of White-winged Crossbills in ME is especially interesting in light of the species' similar recent invasion of Great Britain.

South-Central: A Brown Booby was well-photographed on the North Packery Channel Jetty in *Cameron, TX* on 7/16. A Masked Booby was on the Port Aransas Jetty, *Nueces, TX* on 8/3. A Greater Shearwater was found on a pelagic trip out of South Padre Island, *Cameron, TX* on 7/19. A one-day-wonder Band-rumped/Wilson's Storm-Petrel on 7/24 was blown onto Lake Corpus Christi, TX by Hurricane Dolly; unfortunately, the 5 frigatebirds surveying the lake made the exhausted bird's survival unlikely. A Jabiru, LA's 1st, was photographed 7/31 in *Iberville*. AR's 1st Least Grebe was in *Benton*, mere miles from the MO border, 8/3–8/4. A Green Violetear (note the new unhyphenated form) frequented a backyard feeder in *Austin, TX* 7/15–7/16; another violetear was in *Magnolia, Montgomery, TX* on 7/30. A pair of Lucifer Hummingbirds was photographed in *Kingsville, Kleberg, TX* on 7/5. A female White-eared Hummingbird was observed at Boot Canyon in TX's Big Bend National Park 7/27–8/3; the same area was also hosting a male Hooded Warbler and up to 6 Painted Redstarts.

North-Central: Southeast MO hosted both Fulvous Whistling-Ducks and a White Ibis. Another White Ibis was at Horseshoe Lake SP, *Madison, IL* 8/4–8/7. Four early Red-throated Loons were reported from *Duluth, MN* on 7/14. A Little Stint was reported from *Hamilton, ON* on 7/27. A Ruff was at *Blenheim Lagoons, ON* the same day. A 1st-cycle Heermann's Gull was a one-day wonder in *Houghton, MI* on 7/18. Burrowing Owls successfully nested in *Minnehaha, SD* (nearly in IA and MN). *Scott, MN* hosted a White-eyed Vireo 7/22–7/28. A rare find in MI's Upper Peninsula, a male Yellow-throated Warbler was singing along the Dead River in *Marquette* on 7/19. A male



Neotropic Cormorant. *Ivin's Reservoir, Washington County, Utah; 31 July 2008.* © Rick Fridell.

Clay-colored × Chipping Sparrow was netted and confirmed in *Lorain, OH*; this bird likely represents only the 3rd known record of this hybrid. A female-plumaged Great-tailed Grackle was reported from *Henderson, IL* on 7/16; the eastward spread of this species seems to have slowed substantially since it reached the Mississippi River.

Southwest: Three Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were reported from *Maricopa, AZ* on 7/18. Tricolored Herons staged a mini-invasion in eastern Colorado, with sightings in four counties. Very rare on the lower Colorado River, a female Wood Duck was near *Cibola National Wildlife Refuge, AZ* on 7/12. UT's 2nd Neotropic Cormorant was present in *Washington* 7/31–8/7. A dark-morph Short-tailed Hawk in *Yavapai* on 8/4 would constitute AZ's northernmost record; additional reports from the Huachuclas and Chiricahuas now seem predictable. Up to 3 Buff-collared Nightjars were present at the Oro Blanco Mine, *Santa Cruz, AZ*. A Blue-throated Hummingbird was in *Mesa, CO* 7/31–8/1. At least 3 Berylline Hummingbirds continued in *Madera*

Canyon, AZ; another Berylline was in the *Chiricahuas* on 7/18. Now quite rare in summer, a Green Kingfisher was in *Cochise, AZ* on 7/31. Noteworthy vireos reported in AZ included a Red-eyed in *Madera Canyon* on 8/2 and a Yellow-throated in *Pima* on 8/5. Black-capped Gnatcatchers were reported from various locations across southeastern AZ. Seemingly a permanent summertime fixture in *Madera Canyon*, the male Flame-colored Tanager persisted over his 6th consecutive summer there. A Cassin's Sparrow near *Flagstaff, AZ* 7/13–7/16 was well north of the species' normal range. White-winged Crossbills were reported at various locations across UT and CO.

West Coast and Northwest: On 8/4 a Manx Shearwater was seen from *Point Vicente, Los Angeles, CA*. Potentially OR's 1st, a Greater Shearwater was reported 17 mi. southwest of *Newport* on 8/9. Three *Hawaiian Petrels* were noted on a pelagic trip off *Ft. Bragg, CA* on 8/8; 3 more were seen far off the OR coast in early Aug. There are 2 prior accepted records for OR. (Note that this bird is treated by the ABA as the indefinite "Galapagos/Hawaiian Petrel.") A White-tailed Kite was report-



Common House-Martin. *St. Paul Island, Alaska; 21 July 2008.* © Erin Kunisch.

ed from *Nanaimo, BC* on 7/21. A *Eurasian Hobby* reported on 7/19 in *Del Norte, CA* would be a 1st state record if accepted. A 1st-summer Yellow-billed Loon, likely the same indi-

vidual from this past winter, was videoed at Lake Havasu, *San Bernadino*, CA on 7/12. *San Diego*, CA's 1st **Red-necked Stint** was discovered on 7/22 and still present as we went to press. A **Little Stint** was reported from Port Renfrew, BC on 8/2. *Shasta*, CA's 1st record of Franklin's Gull occurred on 7/22; birders attending the AOU Convention in Portland found another "Frankie" in *Washington*, OR on 8/7. A pair of Long-billed Murrelets was photographed in Humboldt Bay, *Humboldt*, CA on 7/17. Two **Common House-Martins** were photographed at St. Paul Island, AK on 7/21.

Mexico: The list from a seawatching vigil at Punta Arena, Baja California Sur (BCS) 7/20–7/21 was full of goodies: 4 Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, 1 Buller's Shearwater, 7 Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrels, 1 South Polar Skua, and a remarkable 33 **Townsend's Shearwaters**. An adult Mississippi Kite at Miraflores, BCS 7/20–21 was suspected of summering. An early Swainson's Hawk was photographed near Perote, Veracruz on 7/10. A male Ruff had returned to the Lagunas de Chametla, BCS by 7/22; so had a pair of nesting Tropical Kingbirds. In early July an Amethyst-throated Hummingbird was noted near Alta Cima, Tamaulipas at the very northern reaches of the species' range. A Dusky-capped Flycatcher was noted in the Sierra de La Laguna, BCS 7/15–7/19. An out-of-range adult Fork-tailed Flycatcher was near La Ventosa, Oaxaca on 7/20; unfortunately, the subspecies was not determined. There were 2 reports of extraordinarily early Orange-crowned Warblers: 1 in Pátzcuaro, Michoacán on 7/20 and 1 near Perote, Veracruz the same day. An early Yellow-headed Blackbird was in the Sierra de Picachos of Nuevo León on 8/2.