

"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: Snowy Owls and White-winged Crossbills continue to move south in large numbers in the North-Central, Northeast, and Mid-Atlantic regions. The annual northeastern Cave Swallow flight was impressive this November, with some as far north as Newfoundland and some lingering into December in the Mid-Atlantic region. The period's mega-rarity was a **Sungrebe** at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, NM. Questions of provenance were raised and reasonable cases can be made for both a wild and captive origin. Evidence does seem to favor a wild origin, however. If accepted, the Sungrebe would be the first ABA record. At least eight states and provinces garnered first records this period.

Southeast: A Great Cormorant has been present inland on the GA/AL state line since 11/17. It represents the 1st inland record for AL and the 2nd inland for GA. A Northern Goshawk was in *Shelby*, TN 11/29. A 1st-cycle Iceland Gull was found in *Marshall*, AL 11/22–23, representing the state's 9th record. A Buff-bellied Hummingbird frequented a feeder in *Brevard*, FL 11/24–12/2. Last month's Cassin's Kingbird was re-found 11/15 in *Hendry*, FL, and a Fork-tailed Flycatcher was at Pelican Island NWR, *Indian River*, FL 11/25–12/3. Alabama's 2nd Varied Thrush was on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, AL 11/16–20; the state's 1st was in 1992. A Hooded Oriole was

photographed in *McCracken*, KY 11/24, the state's 1st if accepted. A Clay-colored Sparrow was in *Cumberland*, TN 11/29. A Rusty Blackbird was observed s. of its normal winter range in Everglades NP, *Miami-Dade*, FL 11/14–15.

Mid-Atlantic: Cave Swallows staged an impressive invasion into the region. More than 100 were in *Cape May*, NJ 11/11–12 and nearly 200 were there 11/16 including 120 at a roost. Several dead birds were salvaged as specimens the following morning. To date, all fall

11/26. A Franklin's Gull was observed in *Wicomico*, MD 11/23. At least 10 Snowy Owls were noted on Long Island, NY in late November with others in NJ, PA, and MD. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird, very rare in late fall, was present in *Cape May*, NJ through 11/23 and an Ash-throated Flycatcher was present there 11/27–12/2. White-winged Crossbills were reported as far south as PA, NJ, and MD.

Northeast: Snowy Owls and White-winged Crossbills continue to occur in impressive numbers throughout the re-



Sungrebe. Previously unrecorded north of Mexico. *Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, New Mexico; 18 November 2008.* © Jerry R. Oldenettel.

specimens in the Northeast represent southwestern *pallida* Cave Swallows, not nominate *fulva* from the Caribbean. A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was in *Sussex*, DE 11/23–26 and a Barnacle Goose was in *Hunterdon*, NJ 11/27 through mid-Dec. A Gyrfalcon was caught at the Little Gap Raptor Banding Station in *Northampton*, PA

11/24. The annual Cave Swallow invasion was not limited to the Mid-Atlantic this fall. Of note was a Cave Swallow in *Northampton*, PA 11/24. One noteworthy record was a single-day tally of more than 20 Snowy Owls near Cape Race, NL 11/15. An astounding flight of 1,785 White-winged Crossbills was counted in 2½ hours on the Lake Ontario shore in *Monroe*, NY 11/24. The annual Cave Swallow invasion was not limited to the Mid-Atlantic this fall. Of note was a Cave

Swallow in Newfoundland 11/13–15, the northeastern-most record ever of this species. PEI also received its 1st provincial record 11/14–15, and more than a dozen were reported from coastal NB. Barnacle Geese were present in CT, MA, and ME. A **Northern Lapwing** was in Portugal Cove South, NL 11/29–12/6 for the 2nd consecutive year. As expected in late fall, larids put on a good show. A 1st-cycle Franklin's Gull, seen less than annually in the province, was at St. John's, NL 11/28–12/7. A "Common" Mew Gull was observed at Corner Brook, NL 11/28 and 2 lingered all month at St. John's. Another "Common" Mew Gull was photographed in *Cumberland*, ME 12/10, for the state's 2nd record and 1st documented with a photo. A **Yellow-legged Gull** lingered at St. John's, NL. A Slaty-backed Gull at Corner Brook, NL 12/1–2 was either the 9th or 10th record since the province's 1st in 2005. Another Slaty-backed Gull was photographed 11/28–12/1 in *Hartford*, CT. If accepted, it would be a 1st state record. A White-winged Dove was in its 2nd month in *Cumberland*, ME. The Broad-billed Hummingbird and Mountain Bluebird continue on Cape Cod, MA. A Calliope Hummingbird, CT's 2nd, was at a feeder 11/19 in *Hartford*. Apparently, it had been present since mid-October and continues as of 12/8. A Black-headed Grosbeak was in *Washington*, RI 12/7–8.

South-Central: A Red-throated Loon was observed in *Cleveland*, OK 12/2–7. A Purple Sandpiper was on South Padre Island, *Cameron*, TX 11/29. A disputed gull was photographed and tentatively identified as a Kelp Gull in *Brazoria*, TX 11/8–23; some experts raised the possibility that it could be a hybrid. A female Broad-billed Hummingbird, AR's 2nd, was photographed

in *Faulkner* 11/22–24. A Dusky-capped Flycatcher, reported in last month's "Sightings," continued at Sabal Palm Grove Sanctuary, *Cameron*, TX at least through 12/1. The imm. male Rose-throated Becard remained at Estero Llano Grande SP, *Hidalgo*, TX for most of November, while another imm. male was seen 12/7 at *Salineño*, *Starr*, TX. A Blue Bunting was found in *Hidalgo*, TX 12/6–9.

North-Central: Two Brant were in *Cerro Gordo*, IA 11/20–27. A Barrow's Goldeneye, IA's 11th, was seen in *Woodbury* 11/16–17 and a 2nd bird was seen in *Marion*, IA through 12/1. Another Barrow's Goldeneye was seen in *Hughes*, SD 11/16–17. This is SD's 6th Barrow's away from Rapid City, where it is a more regular winter visitor. A Northern Gannet was seen at *Grimsby*, ON 11/9. An American Avocet lingered through 12/4 in *Pickering*, ON. Snowy Owls were widely reported. MO's 1st Allen's Hummingbird, an imm., was banded 11/27 and remained through 12/4 in *St. Louis*. Northern Shrikes are staging an invasion throughout MO for the 2nd consecutive year, with at least 7 birds observed this fall. Single male and female Varied Thrushes visited feeders in *St. Louis*, MN 11/30–12/11. A Black-throated Gray Warbler remained until 12/4 in *Rondeau Provincial Park*, ON. A male Northern Cardinal was in *Cass*, ND 11/29–12/1. A Spotted Towhee, originally spotted 11/11 at *Point Pelee*, ON was re-found 12/7.

Southwest: The highlight this period was a **Sungrebe**, a 1st U.S. record, found at *Bosque del Apache NWR*, *So-*



Northern Lapwing. The species is casual ("Code 4") in the ABA Area. *Portugal Cove South, Newfoundland & Labrador*; 6 December 2008. © John Puschock.

corro, NM. Originally found 11/13, it was not identified correctly until 11/17, and it stayed only through the 18th. A **Red-throated Loon** in *Cochise*, AZ 12/8 was one of very few ever recorded in the state. A Yellow-billed Loon was in *Park*, CO 10/28–11/16. A light-morph Short-tailed Hawk returned to Tucson for a 2nd winter 11/20. A Gyrfalcon was observed in *Park*, CO 11/10. The returning **Northern Jacana** was in *Pinal* through the period. An Ancient Murrelet was seen 11/17 in *Pueblo*, CO. Colorado also hosted a probable Common Ground-Dove in *Bent* 12/2 and an Anna's Hummingbird in *Larimer* 11/5. A Northern Shrike was photographed at *Mormon Lake*, AZ 11/16. A White-eyed Vireo was in *Santa Cruz*, CA 12/3; nearly as rare seasonally, single Bell's Vireos were in *Maricopa*, AZ 11/29 and *Mohave*, AZ 12/8. The *Patagonia*, AZ **Sinaloa Wren** was still present 12/6. Single Rufous-backed Robins appeared at 2 *Santa Cruz*, AZ sites 12/4 and 12/6. Rare warblers in s. AZ included a Tennessee in *Maricopa* 12/3–4, a Yellow-throated in *Pinal* through 11/16, a *Magnolia* in *Cochise* 11/15 and a Black-throated Green in Tucson through 12/10. An



Cave Swallow. A first provincial record and the northeastern-most occurrence of the species. *Long Beach, Newfoundland & Labrador; 15 November 2008.* © Jared Clarke.

adult male Orchard Oriole returned to *Maricopa* for a 3rd winter while another was discovered in Tucson 12/10.

West Coast and Northwest: A Whooper Swan has frequented *Gooding*, ID since 11/26. A Barrow's Goldeneye 11/28 was a county 1st and the 500th species for *Los Angeles*, CA. The Yellow-billed Loon found 11/8 in Bodega Bay, *Sonoma*, CA was still present. A Red-necked Grebe was a 1st for *Stanislaus*, CA 11/15. The Laysan Albatross returned 11/22 to Point Arena Cove, *Mendocino*, CA for at least its 16th year. A Greater Shearwater was photographed in *Monterey Bay*, CA 11/29 and 2 Manx Shearwaters were observed offshore at *Cordell Bank*, CA 11/17. A Brown Booby was seen in *San Diego*, CA 11/9 and 2 Neotropic Cormorants were present through 11/28 in *Imperial*, CA. Two Ruffs were noted in *Coos*, OR on 11/8 and 11/30. British Columbia's 1st confirmed Black-tailed Gull was seen on and off at *Vancouver Island* 11/18–12/1. There are 2 previous sight records for the province. A Lesser Black-backed Gull in *Lake*, CA 11/1–15 was a county 1st, while another was in *Orange*, CA. *San Luis Obispo's* 1st Broad-billed Hummingbird, discovered

10/31 remained into November. A Costa's Hummingbird was in *Creston*, BC 11/17–12/1. This was BC's 20th record, but only the 3rd outside the "normal" spring window of occurrence. A Dusky-capped Flycatcher was a 1st for *San Bernardino*, CA 11/17. This bird has lingered into December. *San Luis Obispo*, CA hosted single Gray Catbird and Blue-headed

Vireo during the period. Single Red-throated Pipits were seen in *Monterey* 11/12 and *San Diego*, CA 11/14. A Prairie Warbler, British Columbia's 5th, was near *Kamloops* 11/16–19. Farther south, a Cape May Warbler was in *Santa Cruz*, CA and several Worm-eating Warblers were noted in *Ventura*, *Riverside*, and *San Diego*, CA in November. Two Scarlet Tanagers were reported in southern California, 1 in *San Diego* through 12/9 and another in *Orange* in early December. Finally, Oregon's 1st Pyrrhuloxia continues to visit a feeder in *Linn*. It has been present since 11/11.

Mexico: A Zone-tailed Hawk and Summer Tanager were photographed near *Pescaderos*, Baja California 11/14 where a Harlan's Hawk was also present. Three Glaucous-winged Gulls were observed at the Mexicali dump, Baja California on the same day. Two Common Murres were noted offshore at *Coronado Canyon*, Baja California 11/22. An Olivaceous Woodcreeper was observed above *Cola de Caballo*, *Nuevo León* 12/3, which is north of its known range. Finally, a Brown Thrasher was observed and photographed in *Tecate*, Baja California 11/24–12/1, a 1st for the state.