

SIGHTINGS

M I D - N O V E M B E R T O E A R L Y D E C E M B E R 2 0 0 9

"Sightings" appears monthly, alternating between *Winging It* and *Birding*, with the latest news, reports, and rumors from the ABA Area, Mexico, and Hawaii. 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/nab>. Italicized place names denote counties or parishes.

compiled by MICHAEL L. P. RETTER
with special thanks to PAUL LEHMAN,
RICK WRIGHT, and STEVEN W. CARDIFF

Summary: A tantalizing **Common Shelduck** occurred in NL, and a subsequent report came from MA. Both are suggestive of wild origin. The species is now well established as a breeder in Iceland and is abundant on the British Isles. A Barrow's Goldeneye in KY, a Black-and-white Owl in Guerrero, an Allen's Hummingbird in OH, an Ash-throated Flycatcher in NL, and a **Rustic Bunting** in SK comprised the state and provincial firsts.

Southeast: A Thayer's Gull appeared in Guntersville, *Marshall*, AL 11/29. A dead **Flammulated Owl**, AL's 2nd record, was found on a front porch in Waverly, *Lee* 12/10. Two days later, a Burrowing Owl turned up on Dauphin I., AL. A White-winged Dove was in Charleston, SC 11/29, and a Western Tanager was there 11/1–11. Two Yellow-headed Blackbirds were in *Calhoun*, SC 11/26.

East-Central: *Suffolk*, NY continued to host a **Pink-footed Goose** and a Barnacle Goose. A drake "Common" Teal was

found in *Bucks*, PA 12/4. KY's 1st **Barrow's Goldeneye** turned up in *Marshall* 12/11. A female Common Eider was at Point Lookout SP, *Montgomery*, MD 11/29; there are few records of the species for the Chesapeake Bay. A Yellow-billed Loon was spotted off Montauk Point SP, *Suffolk*, NY 11/7. The *Sussex*, DE "Great White" Heron was present 11/7+. Perhaps destined to be even more celebrated that last year's Plymouth and Gloucester, MA birds, a ridiculously cooperative 1st-cycle **Ivory Gull** was present at Cape May, NJ 11/27–12/7. An Ash-throated Flycatcher was in *Lebanon*, PA 11/20–28. A Black-throated Gray Warbler was at Little Bennett Regional Park, *Montgomery*, MD 11/5. Palmyra Cove Nature Park in Burlington hosted a female Spotted Towhee, the 6th for NJ. A female-type Painted Bunting was present in Locust, *Monmouth*, NJ 11/9–11. A Bullock's Oriole was at Sycamore Landing, *Montgomery*, MD 11/24.

Northeast: Single Barnacle Geese were noted in Chambly and Leclercville, QC. Three **Pink-footed Geese** continued in *Cumberland*, ME through 12/6. A 1st-year **Common Shelduck** was photographed at St. John's, NL 11/17 before it flew south and out of sight; intriguingly, an individual in similar plumage was then seen at Little Nahant, MA 12/6–7. CT's 2nd Pacific Loon was in *New Haven* 11/10–26. A flock of 8 American White Pelicans was spotted up and down the coast, in



Ivory Gull. Cape May, New Jersey; 29 November 2009. © Richard Crossley.



Common Shelduck. *St. John's, Newfoundland; 17 November 2009.*
© Bruce Mactavish.



Baltimore x Bullock's Oriole. *New Haven County, Connecticut; 29 November 2009.* © Mark Szantyr.

ME, RI, CT, and NJ. CT's 3rd Northern Fulmar was found in *New London* 12/6. A Black Vulture visited *Rivière-au-Renard*, QC 12/2. A **Mew Gull** was photographed in *Essex*, MA 12/8. A Thayer's Gull was in *Lévis*, QC 2 Dec. A White-winged Dove was in *Quebec City* 11/30+. A Boreal Owl was photographed at *Acadia NP*, ME 11/22. NI's 1st **Ash-throated Flycatcher** was in *Ferryland* 11/14. A Yellow-throated Warbler was at *Saint-Joseph-de-Beauce*. Two Summer Tanagers turned up in QC backyards. A Black-headed Grosbeak was at *Cap Tourmente*, QC 11/22–12/1. A male Painted Bunting was in *Hancock*, ME 12/10; another Painted Bunting was on *Cape Cod*, MA. An adult male Baltimore x Bullock's Oriole hybrid was well photographed in *New Haven*, CT 11/29.

North-Central: An "Atlantic" Brant appeared 12/3 in *Peoria*, IL. A **Barnacle Goose** of unknown origin was discovered in *Will*, IL 12/12. Apparently a world record, 15,565 Bufflehead were recorded 12/7 on the *Mississippi R.* where IA, MN, and WI join. Lakewatching 12/12 at *Miller Beach*, IN produced a female eider. A Clark's Grebe continued at *Smithville L.*, *Clay*, MO. A Pacific Loon was at *Bear Butte L.*, *Meade*, SD 11/17. A Gyrfalcon was discovered in *Ashland*, WI 11/27. ON's **Black-tailed Gull** was seen again sporadically throughout Nov. at

Port Burwell. A 3rd-cycle Slaty-backed Gull continued to be seen sporadically near *Duluth* in both MN and WI. An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake was found at SD's *Lake Oahe* 12/11. Notable not only for the inland location but also the exceptionally late date for anywhere in North America, a 1st-cycle **Arctic Tern** frequented the *Three Oaks Wastewater Ponds* in *Berrien*, MI 11/28+. An **Ancient Murrelet** delighted 250+ birders who visited *St. Joseph*, *Berrien*, MI 11/14–24. Interestingly, a **Dovekie** carcass was salvaged not too far away, in *Van Buren* 11/23; it represents MI's 3rd record. OH's 1st **Allen's Hummingbird** was banded 12/11 in *Holmes*. Not reported to the birding community until it was too late, Fork-tailed Flycatchers were present in *Pine*, MN 11/18–25 and *Rock Island*, IL 11/25. WI's 3rd Cave Swallow was at *Wisconsin Pt.*, *Douglas* 11/14. A Northern Mockingbird was in *Wells*, ND. A **Phainopepla** in *Brampton*, ON continued into its 5th week. A male Hooded Warbler was in a *Bismarck*, ND backyard 11/19–23. SD's 7th Yellow-throated Warbler attended a feeder in *Sioux*



Rustic Bunting. *Creighton, Saskatchewan; 4 December 2009.*
© Harvey Schmidt.



Ancient Murrelet. *Tiscornia Park, St. Joseph, Berrien County, Michigan; 14 November 2009.* © John C. Kendall.

Falls 12/5–7. Two “Audubon’s” Warblers at Ludington Park, *Delta*, WI 11/18 were odd enough, but 2 more were found there 11/18; there were only 2 prior individuals accepted for MI. A Western Tanager was at Val Therese, ON 11/15–19. MO’s 2nd **Black-throated Sparrow** appeared in an *Andrew* backyard 12/3. A **Rustic Bunting** at Creighton, SK 12/4+ was apparently the 1st in the New World away from Alaska or the Pacific Slope. A Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch was a 1-day-wonder 11/21 in Moonbeam, ON.

South-Central: A pair of Masked Ducks was seen sporadically at Santa Ana NWR, *Hidalgo*, TX into mid-Nov. An adult Northern Goshawk was photographed in *Kerr*, TX 12/3. The *Acadia*, LA Harris’s Hawk continued through the period. An adult Little Gull was in *Dallas*, TX 12/12. Rose-throated Becards were at Bentsen SP, Estero Llano Grande SP, and Santa Ana NWR in TX’s Lower Rio Grande Valley. The first location also hosted a female-type **Crimson-collared Grosbeak** 12/13. An adult male Evening Grosbeak was in TX at Big Bend NP’s Boot Canyon 12/12.

Mexico: A Hook-billed Kite was photographed 11/4 in Patzcuaro, Michoacán, well inland from the species’ humid, coastal haunts. A **Black-and-white Owl** above El Paraíso in Guerrero’s Sierra de Atoyac provided yet more evidence that the species has set up shop on the Pacific slope. A “Western” Flycatcher and Plumbeous Vireo were noted 11/17 at Cañada el Cajón, on the east side of the Sierra San Pedro Martir, Baja California (BC). A White-throated Sparrow continued to be seen at Tecate, BC. A trip to the Mexicali Valley in BC 11/16 produced a Plumbeous Vireo, an American Redstart, 2 Yellow Warblers, and 12 Bronzed Cowbirds. A Hepatic Tanager was at Ojos Negros, BC 11/18.

Interior West: Long-tailed Ducks were noted in *San Juan* and *Sierra*, NM. *Washington*, UT hosted a Yellow-billed Loon in early Dec. A Red-throated Loon was at Elephant Butte Lake, *Sierra*, NM 11/26. A Red-necked Grebe was present 11/19 in Henderson, *Clark*, NV. NV’s 5th Lesser Black-backed Gull, an adult, was at Lake Mead NRA, *Clark* 11/29. A Black-legged Kittiwake was at Bosque del Apache NWR, NM 11/14. Another kittiwake, an adult, was at Antelope Island SP, *Davis* 11/6–13; it was UT’s 4th. The state’s 3rd Little Gull and a

Lesser Black-backed Gull were at the same location 11/7–11 and 11/8–11, respectively. A Mew Gull was at Elephant Butte Lake, *Sierra*, NM 11/21. Very rare in *Yuma*, AZ was a Lewis’s Woodpecker 11/22. Pahrump, *Nye*, NV hosted a Broad-billed Hummingbird in early Dec. A Rose-throated Becard continued on the upper Santa Cruz River, AZ. A Black-capped Chickadee discovered in *Mohave* 11/27 provided one of fewer than a dozen AZ records. A Wood Thrush was in Tucson 11/21–22. Patagonia, AZ’s **Sinaloa Wren** was heard in early December. Single Blackburnian Warblers were in *Maricopa*, AZ 11/8 and 11/16. A Bay-breasted Warbler was in Tucson 11/21–29, and a Blackpoll Warbler was there 11/14–17. A Prairie Warbler was at Bosque del Apache NWR, NM 11/28. Rufous-capped Warblers persisted in AZ’s Florida Canyon. A Rusty Blackbird was discovered in Tucson, AZ 11/19. Pancho Villa SP, *Luna*, NM hosted a Lawrence’s Goldfinch 11/14–15.



Little Gull. *Antelope Island, Great Salt Lake, Davis County, Utah; 10 November 2009.* © Rick Fridell.

Pacific Coast: In early Dec. a female Smew and 8 adult Whooper Swans were on Adak in AK’s Aleutians. “Al,” the Laysan Albatross, returned to Point Arena Cove, *Mendocino*, CA for its 17th year. Two Brown Boobies were in OR: The *Coos* bird continued, and a 2nd was seen in *Lincoln* 11/22. A Black Vulture seen in Santa Paula, *Ventura* 11/28–12/4 was a 1st county record and a 5th CA record; it was possibly the same bird as the Sep. *Santa Barbara* record. The best bird in HI over the period was a Merlin at Honouliuli, Oahu; it was the state’s 5th. A Bar-tailed Godwit continued in Upper Newport Bay, *Orange*, CA. A Lesser Black-backed Gull in *Kings*, CA 11/17 was a 1st county record, subsequently died, and became the 1st CA specimen of the species; additional birds were in *Imperial*, CA and *Grant*, OR. A Little Gull was found 12/6 in *Lane*, OR. *Imperial*, CA’s 1st Ancient Murrelet was found 11/18 at the south end of the Salton Sea. Ruddy Ground-Doves were noted in *Imperial* and *Riverside*, CA. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was in *San Diego*, CA 11/23–30. A Rufous-backed Robin was found at Black Meadow Landing, *Riverside*, CA 11/8. A Bay-breasted Warbler was at the Cactus City Rest Stop, *San Bernardino*, CA 11/6–10. A Blackburnian Warbler was in *San Diego*, CA 11/22+. A Hepatic Tanager continued in Imperial Beach, *San Diego*, CA. Rusty Blackbirds were found in *Humboldt* and *Santa Barbara*, CA. Two Purple Finches were attending a feeder in Ketchikan, AK.

GO BIRD!

~ • ~

2010 ABA Conference

Block Island

Providence, Rhode Island

~ • ~

3–8 October, 2010

~ • ~

Interested in these birds?

- Blue-headed Vireo •
- Black-throated Blue Warbler •
- Cory's Shearwater •
- Greater Shearwater •
- Great Cormorant •

And Possibly Some Rare
Western Vagrants!

~ • ~

For more information:

www.aba.org/events

800.850.2473

