

# Twelfth Report of the Alberta Bird Record Committee

BY JOCELYN HUDON, RICHARD KLAUKE, M. ROSS LEIN, JOHN RIDDELL, BRIAN RITCHIE, GERALD ROMANCHUK AND RAY WERSHLER

Since publication of its Eleventh Report (Hudon et al. 2014), the Alberta Bird Record Committee (hereafter the Committee) considered 21 records of species of extreme rarity (fewer than 3 records) for the province. With this review, the Official List of the Birds of Alberta grows by 5 species: Broad-billed Hummingbird, Crested Caracara, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Lesser Goldfinch and Great-tailed Grackle. The provincial list now stands at 426 species.

Additions to the list since reaching the 400-species milestone come from a variety of biogeographical areas. Although a majority of species originate from the south (see below), species have also been added from the north (Rock Ptarmigan, Ivory Gull), the east (Purple Sandpiper, Eastern Wood-

Pewee), even Eurasia (Black-headed Gull, Siberian Accentor). Southern elements have come from both the east (American Woodcock, Red-bellied Woodpecker, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Prothonotary Warbler and Yellow-throated Warbler) and the west (Broad-billed Hummingbird, Acorn Woodpecker, Caracara, Pinyon Jay, Pygmy Nuthatch, Lucy's Warbler, Hermit Warbler Great-tailed Grackle and Lesser Goldfinch), or from either (Black Vulture, Common Gallinule and Least Tern), or the far south (Fork-tailed Flycatcher). Finally, some additions have resulted from the split of polytypic taxa (Pacific Wren, Cackling Goose).

The provincial list is also amended to bring it in line with the 55th, 56th and 57th supplements to

the AOU's "Check-list of North American Birds" (Chesser et al. 2014, 2015 and 2016) which have appeared since publication of the Committee's Eleventh Report. These supplements include sweeping changes to the linear sequence of orders between Galliformes and Trogoniformes based on new information on their phylogenetic relationships, the creation of a new order (Cathartiformes) for New World vultures, a change in position of several families of passerines (Motacillidae, Prunellidae, Passeridae and Fringillidae), changes to the linear sequence of species in Columbidae, Vireonidae and *Buteo*, and generic reassignments of Sandhill Crane to *Antigone* and American Tree Sparrow to *Spizelloides*. Finally, *Colibri thalassinus*, formerly the Green Violetear, becomes the Mexican Violetear.

## RECORDS ACCEPTED

**Broad-billed Hummingbird** (*Cyananthus latirostris*): Beaver Mines; 27 September 2012; detailed field notes with illustration (Peter Sherrington) **CODE 3 RECORD. First documented occurrence in the province.**

**Little Stint** (*Calidris minuta*): Cooking Lake; 27 September 2015; written report with 4 images (Gerald Romanchuk). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

**Pomarine Jaeger** (*Stercorarius pomarinus*): Glenmore Reservoir, Calgary; 23 – 24 September 2015; brief description posted on Yahoo! Albertabird discussion group (Andrew Slater), photos (Brian Elder [1], Ray Wershler [2] and Dennis Burns [1]). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

**Flammulated Owl** (*Psiloscopus flammeolus*): one found dead near Nose Hill, Calgary; 19 October 2016; 3 images of specimen, first buried then dug out (Karl Hentze); specimen donated to Royal Alberta Museum, to be prepared as a skeleton. **CODE 1 RECORD.**

**Western Screech-Owl** (*Megascops kennicottii*): Watertown town site, Waterton Lakes National Park; 18 June 2015; written report and recording on Xeno-Canto [<http://www.xeno-canto.org/253190>] (Ian Cruickshank); spectrographic analysis of tempo of call (Ross Lein). **CODE 1 RECORD.** On acreage in Foothills Co, south-west of Calgary; seen intermittently between mid-September and early November 2016, and on 19 February 2017; written report with 2 images (Diane & Bob Ramsay). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

## RECORDS ACCEPTED...continued

**Crested Caracara** (*Caracara cheriway*): near turnoff to Snaring River Campground, Jasper National Park; 15 – 20 July 2015; written report with several images (Dale Wilde and Elaine Roberts); single images (Ann Carter, Malcolm & Joan McDonald) posted on Yahoo! Albertabird website. **CODE 1 RECORD. First documented occurrence in the province.**

**Eastern Wood Pewee** (*Contopus virens*): near Cremona; 6 – 30 June 2015; 1 image and recording (Malcolm McDonald); written reports with spectrograms of additional song recordings (Ross Lein & Val Haines). **CODE 1 RECORD. First documented occurrence in the province.**

**White-eyed Vireo** (*Vireo griseus*): near Beaverlodge; 17 – 19 July 2015; written report with brief description (Jeanne Smith, Joan Kerr) video recording on cell phone with vocalizations (Jeanne Smith) and spectrographic analysis of song on video (Ross Lein). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

**Yellow-throated Vireo** (*Vireo flavifrons*): migration monitoring station on Elkwater Lake, Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park; 28 September 2014; photo of bird in hand (Colton Prins and Kim Wetten). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

**Lesser Goldfinch** (*Spinus psaltria*): Nacmine, E of Drumheller; 23- 27 April 2014; written report and several images (Jim McCabe), written reports (Ray Wershler, John Riddell, Val Haines and Ross Lein) and 2 images (Ray Wershler). **CODE 1 RECORD. First documented occurrence in the province.** In Cochrane; 15 May 2016; written report and 3 images, 2 posted on Yahoo! Albertabird website (Linda Vick). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

**Golden-winged Warbler** (*Vermivora chrysoptera*): Griffiths Woods Park, Calgary; 26 July 2015; written report with several images (George Best). **CODE 1 RECORD.**

**Great-tailed Grackle** (*Quiscalus mexicanus*): farm in Hill Spring, S Alberta; 21 May – 6 June 2015, although may have been there earlier and stayed longer; written report with 6 images (Todd Boland) and several images (Nick Parayko [1], Brian Elder [1], Daniel Arndt [3], Gerald Romanchuk [2]) **CODE 1 RECORD. First documented occurrence in the province.**

## IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED

**Broad-tailed Hummingbird** (*Selasphorus platycercus*): Beaver Mines; 11 September 2013; written report and detailed field notes with illustration (Peter Sherrington).

2 juvenile **Long-toed Stints** (*Calidris subminuta*): near Cowley; 6 August 2014; written report with 3 images (Peter Sherrington).

**Laughing Gull** (*Leucophaeus atricilla*): Castle River Public Recreation Area, along the lower Castle River; 13 August 2014; written report with 1 image (Peter Sherrington).

**Western Gull** (*Larus occidentalis*): Centenary Park, Calgary; 4 April 2006; detailed description with image (Terry Korolyk).

**Eastern Wood Pewee** (*Contopus virens*): near Park Lake Provincial Park; 13 June 2015; brief description of response to song of this species after having heard the bird (Neil Denton).

**Eastern Meadowlark** (*Sturnella magna*): acreage about 10 km W of Medicine Hat; 29 May - 1 June 2015; written report (Dan Schiebelbein, Ben Velner, Milton Spitzer, Robert Frew and Phil

Horch) and 2 images posted online [at <http://danschiebelbeinnaturephotography.zenfolio.com/p307993556> (Dan Schiebelbein)]. Cypress Hills Provincial Park; 8 and invalidated by brief description of appearance on Yahoo! Albertabird 27 June 2016; video at <https://youtu.be/XVcu4FQ9ArUv> (Michael Sveen), forum (Richard Klauke) and spectrographic analysis of song on video (Ross Lein).

## CRESTED CARACARA; SNARING RIVER, JASPER NATIONAL PARK.

DALE WILDE

HILL SPRING GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE. GERALD ROMANCHUK



LESSER GOLDFINCH. JIM MCCABE



## CORRIGENDUM

The dates of observation of the Mexican (formerly Green) Violetear at Peter Lougheed Provincial Park in 1993 were recorded erroneously as 13 August - 18 December in the First Report of the Committee (Slater 1997). The dates should have been 13 August - 18 September. [The correct date appears in Howell et al. (2014).]

**Acknowledgements**

The ABRC would not exist without the cooperation of birders and ornithologists throughout Alberta. We especially want to thank the following individuals for contributing leads or observations for records included in this report: Daniel Arndt, George Best, Todd Boland, Dennis Burns, Ann Carter, Ian Cruickshank, Neil Denton, Brian Elder, Robert Frew, Val Haines, Karl Hentze, Reed Hentze, Phil Horch, Joan Kerr, Richard Klauke, Terry Korolyk, Ross Lein, Jim McCabe, Joan McDonald, Malcolm McDonald, Nick Parayko, Colton Prins, Diane & Bob Ramsay, John Riddell, Elaine Roberts, Jason Rogers, Gerald Romanchuk, Dan Schiebelbein, Peter Sherrington, Andrew Slater, Jeanne Smith, Milton Spitzer, Michael Sveen, Ben Velner, Linda Vick, Ray Wershler, Kin Wetten, and Dale Wilde. Wiecekowsky, Gus Yaki, Colin Young and Joe Zarowski.

**Literature Cited**

- Chesser, R.T., R.C. Banks, C. Cicero, J.L. Dunn, A.W. Kratter, I.J. Lovette, A.G. Navarro-Sigüenza, P.C. Rasmussen, J.V. Remsen, Jr., J.D. Rising, D.F. Stotz, and K. Winker. 2014. Fifty-fifth supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union *Check-list of North American Birds*. Auk 131:CSi-CSxv.
- Chesser, R.T., R.C. Banks, K.J. Burns, C. Cicero, J.L. Dunn, A.W. Kratter, I.J. Lovette, A.G. Navarro-Sigüenza, P.C. Rasmussen, J.V. Remsen, Jr., J.D. Rising, D.F. Stotz, and K. Winker. 2015. Fifty-sixth supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union *Check-list of North American Birds*. Auk 132:748-764.
- Chesser, R.T., K.J. Burns, C. Cicero, J.L. Dunn, A.W. Kratter, I.J. Lovette, P.C. Rasmussen, J.V. Remsen, Jr., J.D. Rising, D.F. Stotz, and K. Winker. 2016. Fifty-seventh supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union *Check-list of North American Birds*. Auk 133:544-560.
- Howell, S.N.G., I. Lewington, and W. Russell (2014) *Rare Birds of North America*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Hudon, J., R. Klauke, R. Knapton, M.R. Lein, J. Riddell, B. Ritchie, and R. Wershler (2014) Eleventh Report of the Alberta Bird Record Committee. *Nature Alberta* 43 (4): 38-41.
- Slater, A. (1997) First Report of the Alberta Bird Record Committee. *Alberta Naturalist* 27 (2): 40-41.



## THE CODE DEFINITIONS REPORTED ARE:

**ACCEPTED, CODE 1.** Records supported by material evidence, i.e. specimens, identifiable body parts, identifiable photographs or sound recordings, whose origin from within the borders of Alberta is in no doubt, that are accompanied by written reports of the circumstances of the observation.

**ACCEPTED, CODE 2.** Sight records (without supporting material evidence) by multiple observers that are supported by independent written descriptions that leave no doubt as to the species identity. A Code 1 or 2 sighting must receive four favourable votes and no more than one dissenting vote to be accepted.

**ACCEPTED, CODE 3.** Sight records by one or more observers that are supported by a single written description that

leaves no doubt as to species identity, and which receive five favourable votes and no dissenting vote. A Code 3 is the minimum for inclusion in the official provincial list.

**ACCEPTED, CODE 4.** Sight records by single observers that receive four favourable votes and no more than one dissenting vote. For record adjudication purposes, such a record is acceptable, but does not pass the more stringent requirements for inclusion on the official provincial list. A list of species that have no higher than a Code 4 record may be published as an appendix to the official list.

**IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED.** Records supported by material evidence or written descriptions that are not detailed enough to eliminate all other possibilities, or to

support conclusively the identification of the species as presented. Placement in this category should in no way be interpreted as a reflection on the veracity of the observation, but should be looked upon as an encouragement to substantiate occurrence of the species in the province more fully.

**ERROR IN IDENTIFICATION.** Records where the documentation available to the committee runs counter to the stated identification, whether it identifies another species or not.

**QUESTIONABLE ORIGIN.** Records that concern species that are of questionable origin, possibly escapees, and whose wild status cannot be determined accurately.