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Volume 25 1997 Number 4

THE NEW MEXICO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.
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NEW MEXICO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 1996

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The New Mexico Bird Records Committee (hereinafter NMBRC or Committee) was established to evaluate and archive records of unusual bird species that occur in New Mexico. The first report of the Committee (Williams 1995) discussed the history, purpose, procedures, and membership of the NMBRC, provided an initial Review List of species for which complete documentation is requested, and treated 55 records circulated to the Committee in 1994. The second report (Williams 1996) treated 42 records circulated or recirculated to the Committee in 1995. The present report, the third for the NMBRC, treats 127 records of 74 species that were circulated or recirculated to the Committee in 1996 and on which decisions were reached. This report also contains a revised Review List, the first major revision since the establishment of the NMBRC.

The records in this report span the period 1989-1996, with the great majority from 1995 and 1996. Included in this treatment are details on the **first confirmed New Mexico records for five species: Red-necked Grebe, Black Vulture, Curlew Sandpiper, Prairie Warbler, and Eastern Towhee**. Other highlights include the state's second through fifth Yellow-billed Loons, third recent Aplomado Falcon to be photo-documented, second accepted Arctic Tern and Eastern Wood-Pewee records, and second recent Buff-breasted Flycatcher plus American Woodcock, Long-tailed Jaeger, Heermann's Gull, Black Skimmer, Pine Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Canada Warbler, none of these latter with more than seven previous records. Questions over origin led to non-acceptance of the first New Mexico records for Green Jay and Blue Mockingbird, while the Committee was not yet ready to accept the arrival of the Eurasian Collared-Dove.

The Committee's first report contained extensive background information on the objectives, organization, and workings of the NMBRC; that information is not repeated here. Reprints of the first, second, and this third report, as well as copies of the revised Review List plus blank forms for reporting rare birds, may be obtained from me at the above address.

Committee News. Members of the NMBRC at the close of 1996, who participated in decisions summarized in this report, were: Sartor O. Williams III (Secretary), Alan M. Craig, William H. Howe, John E. Parmeter, Christopher M. Rustay, Barry R. Zimmer, and Dale A. Zimmerman. The addition of Howe increased the membership from six to seven in mid-1996.

Throughout 1997, the Committee has continued its efforts to process maximum numbers of records. To date during the year, 158 records have been circulated, including 144 new circulations.

State List. By September 1997, the State List stood at 493 species verified by specimen, photograph, or tape-recording, with this total including the five new species detailed below plus the addition of two "new" vireos resulting from the recent Blue-headed (*Vireo solitarius*), Cassin's (*V. cassinii*), and Plumbeous (*V. plumbeus*) vireo taxonomic split as well as two additional species (Fulvous Whistling-Duck and Piratic Flycatcher) recently photo-verified but still being processed by the Committee (Williams 1997). An updated field checklist of New Mexico birds was published in November 1997.

As indicated above, for a species to be fully accepted to the list of New Mexico birds, the Committee has decided that it must have at least one record supported by either 1) a specimen, identified by a recognized authority, with convincing evidence that it was taken in New Mexico, or 2) one or more photographs or voice recordings that demonstrate definitive characters and with convincing evidence that the photo or tape was obtained in New Mexico. In addition, the record must be reviewed and accepted by the NMBRC.

Report Format. The 127 records treated in this third report are divided into Accepted Records (110) and

Unaccepted Records (17). Within each of the two categories, records are arranged taxonomically following the *AOU Check-list* (6th Edition) through its 41st Supplement, which anticipates the forthcoming 7th Edition. Within each species, records (if more than one) are arranged chronologically. Each record is identified by a NMBRC file number--this number is in parentheses and consists of the year the record was originally circulated to the Committee (*not* the year in which the record occurred), followed by a dash and a number. Also given is the location (with county in *italics*), the accepted date(s) of the record, and the initials of the observer(s). Only observers who submitted documentation are listed. Observers are not listed for records not accepted. If photographs, videotapes, or audiotapes are on file with the NMBRC, the New Mexico Photo/Tape File (NMPTF) number is given; this number references all photos and tapes that are on file for each individual record, referenced by the year the record occurred. If a photo was published, a brief citation is given. Abbreviations found herein, in addition to the ones given above, are NM (National Monument), NWR (National Wildlife Refuge), SP (State Park), ph. (photograph), vt. (videotape), and spec. (specimen).

ACCEPTED RECORDS

Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*). One (1996-21) in winter (basic) plumage at Heron Reservoir, *Rio Arriba*, 13-14 October 1995: JRO, JEP, CMR, PRS. One (1996-22) winter-plumaged individual at Santa Rosa Reservoir, *Guadalupe*, 17 February 1996: CMR. These two reports constitute county firsts.

Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*). One (1996-1) in winter plumage near the dam on Navajo Reservoir, *San Juan*, 4-23 February 1993: BG, DWS, JEP, CMR, LPG, PRS. One (1996-23) in winter plumage at Storrie Lake SP, *San Miguel*, 14 November-10 December 1993: PRS, LPG (ph. 27 November), BRF, CMR; possibly present through 15 December but additional details lacking; NMPTF # 1993-8. One (1996-24) winter-plumaged probable immature at Stubblefield Reservoir, *Colfax*, 11 November 1995: JEP. One (1996-25) in winter plumage at Ute Lake SP, *Quay*, 27 December 1995: JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 1995-7. Following the state's first at Conchas Reservoir, *San Miguel*, 15 December 1991-14 March 1992, these four represented the second through fifth state records.

Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*). One (1996-27) first-winter individual on the west side of Caballo Reservoir at and near Caballo Lake SP, *Sierra*, 23 December 1995-12 January 1996: DAE, BDN, CIS, JRO (ph. 29 December), JEP, BRZ, JNP, WHH; NMPTF # 1995-8. Discovered by DAE and BDN, and photographed by JRO, this constitutes the first verified New Mexico record, although unverified reports stretch back over half a century. What was believed to be the same bird "attaining breeding plumage" was reported in the same area 3 May 1996: LS. With renewed interest from birders, the grebe was seen again there, in breeding (alternate) plumage, on various dates 16 June-27 July 1996: BDN, DAE, CIS, JEP, JRO (ph. 21 June), JLD, CMR; NMPTF # 1996-1a. Continued interest resulted in additional reports in each month 11 August-3 October 1996: JRO (ph. 11 August), JEP, JNP, GJE; NMPTF # 1996-1b.

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*). One (1996-28) probable sub adult at Caballo Reservoir, *Sierra*, 8 December 1995: JRO; reported by others without details 14 December. One subadult (1996-70) in upper Elephant Butte Reservoir, *Sierra*, 19 June 1996: TJH, CWP (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-2; what was presumably the same sub adult was seen at the same site 12 September 1996: TJH. This coastal species was reported annually in New Mexico 1990-1996.

Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*). One immature (1996-71) on the Rio Grande at the mouth of Alamo Canyon, Bandelier NM, *Sandoval*, 21 June 1996: MLTA (sketch). This represents the first *Sandoval* report.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*). One (1996-53) probable subadult at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 11-14 May 1996: BDN, DAE, JNP, JRO (ph. 14 May); NMPTF # 1996-3. The brownish cast to the wings, back, and belly suggested a second-year bird, not a full adult. The species was reported annually in New Mexico during the eight-year period 1989-1996, and at Bosque del Apache NWR in seven of those eight years.

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*). One (1996-77) on a power pole beside New Mexico Highway 80 ca. 12 miles N of Rodeo, *Hidalgo*, 21 July 1996: JLD (ph.), WR; NMPTF # 1996-4. This record, supported by a

series of seven slides showing the bird both perched and in flight, constitutes a first for New Mexico. A photo of this individual was published in *Audubon Field Notes* 50:980.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*). One adult (1996-73) at the marsh at Lordsburg, *Hidalgo*, 19-21 & 26 July 1996: SW, JEP, JRO (ph. 20 July), JLD; NMPTF # 1996-5.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*). One male (1996-2) at Las Palomas marsh, *Sierra*, 19 March, 1 April, and 9 April 1995: JRO, JEP. One male (1996-3) at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 1, 5, & 8 April 1995: JEP, JRO, PRS, SW. One male (1996-54) at Farmington Lake, *San Juan*, 23 March 1996: TR (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-6. The species was reported in New Mexico each year 1991-1996.

Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*). One immature male (1996-75) 1 mile SE of Bingham, *Socorro*, 12 April 1996: TM (spec., to Museum Southwestern Biology). One (1996-76) immature, probably a female, capable of strong flight, on the Animas River at Flora Vista, *San Juan*, 5-6 June 1996: D&ML (ph. 5 June), TR; NMPTF # 1996-7. The species is rare anytime but especially so in spring and previously was unreported in summer.

Oldsquaw (*Clangula hyemalis*). One (1996-4) probable female of uncertain age was at Maxwell NWR, *Colfax*, 11 December 1992: CMR. One (1996-74) probable female actively feeding at Stinking Lake, *Rio Arriba*, on the late date of 5 June 1996: WFW.

Applomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis*). One (1996-5) probable subadult in the southern Animas Valley near Cloverdale, *Hidalgo*, 8 February 1994: FBG, HBT. One (1996-78) apparent juvenile at Isaack's Lake NE of Las Cruces, *Dona Ana*, 19-25 July 1996: PJK (ph. 20 July); NMPTF # 1996-8. The latter, supported by a series of three slides, was the third photo-documented New Mexico record since 1991; a photo of this bird was published in *Audubon Field Notes* 50:981. Taken together, these records have raised optimism that natural recolonization of historic range (from breeding populations in northern Chihuahua only 160 miles from the New Mexico line) may be underway.

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryla martinica*). One adult (1996-55) found dead on a road by T. J. Hines at Carlsbad, *Eddy*, 13 May 1996: SW (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-9; spec. to Museum Southwestern Biology. This was the first *Eddy* record since 1966.

American Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*). One (1996-56), molting from winter into breeding plumage at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 26-28 April 1996: CMR, BDN, DAE. Taken together, the written descriptions eliminated Pacific and Greater golden-plovers.

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*). One (1996-57) at Bitter Lake NWR, *Chaves*, 8 May 1996: JEP. One (1996-58) photographed at Tohatchi, *McKinley*, 11 May 1996: DJC (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-10.

Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*). One (1996-59) adult in breeding plumage at Stubblefield Reservoir, *Colfax*, 28 May 1996: WFW. One (1996-80) in "nonbreeding" plumage at the NW corner of Lake Avalon, *Eddy*, 13 July 1996: SW. Details for the latter, seen in company with Marbled Godwits, eliminated other species, including Black-tailed Godwit; the July date is unusual, but not unprecedented, for New Mexico.

Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*). Four (1996-62a) at Bitter Lake NWR, *Chaves*, 21 April 1996: CMR, BDN; the grayish wash on the breast indicated winter plumage. Five (1996-62b) also at Bitter Lake NWR but on 6 May 1996: JEP, JLD; the breast streaking indicated these birds were in breeding plumage. Two (1996-61), including one with a deformed bill, at Morgan Lake, *San Juan*, 15 May 1996: JRO (ph. & vt.), TR; NMPTF # 1996-11. Two were also reported from the same locale the previous day, but the submitted photograph was of two Western Sandpipers and two Sanderlings. The species is rare in New Mexico west of the Pecos River valley.

White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*). One (1996-11) on Ute Creek arm of Ute Reservoir,

Harding, 29 May 1995: JRO. Seven (1996-65) at Las Vegas NWR, *San Miguel*, 22 May 1996: CMR. Two (1996-63) on Ute Creek arm of Ute Reservoir, *Harding*, 25 May 1996: JEP, JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-12. Three (1996-64) at Clayton Lake, *Union*, 26 May 1996: JEP, JRO. At least 14, possibly 16, (1996-81) at Maxwell NWR Lake 13, *Colfax*, 1 June 1996: JEP, JRO. At least two, and possibly five more, (1996-82) at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 8 June 1996: JEP. Two (1996-83) at Bitter Lake NWR, *Chaves*, 14 June 1996: WHH, where others had been reported without details 6-7 June 1996. This species is now recognized as a regular late spring-early summer migrant in eastern New Mexico.

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*). One (1996-60), molting into breeding (alternate) plumage, at Bitter Lake NWR, *Chaves*, 4-5 May 1996: BDN, DAE, JRO (vt. 5 May), JEP; NMPTF # 1996-13. Discovered by BDN and DAE, the videotape footage by JRO--supported by excellent written descriptions--confirmed this species for the New Mexico list; there are no previous reports.

American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*). One (1996-29) at Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*, 27 January 1996: DAE, BDN. This constitutes New Mexico's sixth well-detailed report, and the first since 1991.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*). One (1996-39) apparent juvenile at Pescado Reservoir, Zuni Indian Reservation, *McKinley*, 5 August 1995: DJC (ph.); NMPTF # 1995-9. Only the fifth New Mexico report, but the second photo-documented for *McKinley*.

Heermann's Gull (*Larus heermanni*). One first-winter bird (1996-66) nicely photographed at Rock Canyon Marina, Elephant Butte Reservoir, *Sierra*, 30 March 1996: JEP, JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-14. This constitutes the fourth well-detailed (third verified) record for New Mexico and the *first* since 1985; all four were within the period 20 March-1 April.

Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*). One (1996-6) first-winter individual at Ute Reservoir, *Quay*, 10 December 1994: JEP, JRO, CMR.

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*). One adult in breeding plumage (1996-84) at North Monticello Point, Elephant Butte Reservoir, *Sierra*, 21 June 1996: JEP, JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-15. The species is unexpected in June.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*). Two (1996-40), an adult and a juvenile, at Maxwell NWR, *Colfax*, 28 September 1995: JEP, JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 1995-15. Although the single slide was inconclusive, the written details were sufficient to eliminate similar species. Together, these two individuals furnished the second New Mexico record; the first represented by a specimen from Santa Rosa Reservoir 23 September 1991.

Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*). One adult (1996-68) at Morgan Lake, *San Juan*, 14 May 1996: TR (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-16. This was the second overall and third verified New Mexico report. A photo of this bird was published in *Audubon Field Notes* 50:316.

Common Ground-Dove (*Columbina passerina*). One male (1996-42) singing at the "Headquarters" (Clanton) Cienega, southern Animas Valley, *Hidalgo*, 6 July 1995: JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 1995-10. One male (1996-85) at Mangas Springs, *Grant*, 25-26 April 1996: RAF. One male (1996-86) singing in Guadalupe Canyon ca. 2 miles NE of the state line, *Hidalgo*, 5 & 20 July 1996: JEP, JRO (ph. 5 July); NMPTF # 1996-17. Although other dove species seem to be thriving and expanding their ranges, this species apparently is now excessively rare in New Mexico, where it seems to have disappeared as a breeding species. Observers are cautioned to carefully distinguish this species from Ruddy Ground-Dove.

White-eared Hummingbird (*Hylocharis leucotis*). One adult male (1996-43) in the Manzanita Mountains 12 miles SSE of Tijeras, *Bernalillo*, 14 July-12 October 1995: JEDM (ph. 20 & 21 July), HRS; NMPTF # 1995-11. This individual, banded 30 July 1995, documented the species' occurrence at this northerly locale for the second consecutive year.

Blue-throated Hummingbird (*Lampornis clemenciae*). One adult male (1996-30) at Ruidoso, *Lincoln*, 20 July & 22 August 1995: ALP. The status of this species in the mountains of southeastern New Mexico deserves especially close scrutiny. This report was the first for *Lincoln*; elsewhere in the Sacramento Mountains, there is at least one credible report for *Otero*, at Cloudcroft in the fall of 1978. Apparently, there are but two well-detailed reports for the Guadalupe Mountains, *Eddy*, the last in 1989, although the species now may be regular(?) across the line at Guadalupe Mountains NP, Texas. Observers are cautioned to carefully distinguish this species from Magnificent Hummingbird; the proliferating, undetailed reports of "female" and "immature" Blue-throateds do little to further our understanding of the true occurrence of either species.

Lucifer Hummingbird (*Calothorax lucifer*). One male (1996-88) in the Gila River valley at Gila, *Grant*, 17-30 June: RAF (ph. 18 June); NMPTF # 1996-18. This bird represented a local *first*, and the third for *Grant*.

Costa's Hummingbird (*Calypte costae*). One adult male (1996-12) displaying in Guadalupe Canyon, *Hidalgo*, 8 April 1995: JRO, JEP, was the first there since the influx of 1993. One adult male (1996-89) at a feeder 5 miles E of Las Cruces, *Dona Ana*, 17-19 April 1996: TL, GJE, BDN, DAE. One adult male (1996-90) in an arroyo on the east side of the San Andres Mountains, on White Sands Missile Range, *Dona Ana*, 23 April 1996: MEW (ph.); NMPTF# 1996-19. This latter record, the third for these mountains but following the second by only one year, provided the easternmost yet for New Mexico,

Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*). One (1996-91), described as "calling spontaneously," and eventually singing full song, at Boone's Draw, *Roosevelt*, 25 May 1996: BDN, DAE, CMR. Although one Member expressed concern that premature tape playing may have stimulated the eastern song, this becomes only the second accepted New Mexico record.

Buff-breasted Flycatcher (*Empidonax fulvifrons*). One (1996-92) in Clanton Canyon, Peloncillo Mountains, *Hidalgo*, 30 June 1996: BDN, JNP. This bird, seen and heard in the same general area where one was photographed in 1995, could not be relocated by others; it represents only the second "modern" state record.

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*). One (1996-93) silent individual seen briefly in Guadalupe Canyon ca. 1.5 miles NE of the state line, *Hidalgo*, 13 July 1996: CIS, could not be relocated later that same day. This was the first New Mexico report since 1992.

White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*). One (1996-97) silent bird at Boone's Draw, *Roosevelt*, 4 May 1996: JEP, JRO, provided about the sixteenth record overall for the state and the second for Boone's Draw.

Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*). One (1996-98) silent, somewhat dull individual at Boone's Draw, *Roosevelt*, 20-21 April 1996: JEP, CMR, BDN, DAE, JRO (ph. 21 April); NMPTF # 1996-20, and another (1996-99) bright individual singing at Boone's Draw 18 May 1996: JRO. One (1996-100) banded at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 7 May 1996: DLH (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-21. The species was reported in New Mexico each year 1988-1996; this total of three in a single season was near the recent annual average.

Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*). One (1996-101) silent individual at Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*, 19 May 1996: BDN. Seen at 15 feet for two minutes, the written description eliminated other likely species, although one Member suggested Yellow-green Vireo was not entirely eliminated.

Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*). One (1996-102) seen and heard at Washington Ranch near Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*, 6 May 1996: JLD, JEP. At least two (1996-103) seen and heard 1 mile W of the Oklahoma line on Corrumpa Creek (Beaver River), *Union*, 26 May 1996: JEP, JRO. One (1996-104) banded at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 28 May 1996: DLH (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-22. New Mexico reports have averaged over six birds per year during the five-year period 1992-1996.

Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*). One (1996-94) banded at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 9

May 1996: DLH (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-23.

Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). One (1996-8) in upper Frijoles Canyon, Bandelier NM, *Los Alamos*, 3 June 1995: JEP, JRO, was in the general area where one or two had been reported without details 13 & 19 May 1995. This represented New Mexico's second reliable summer record, the first being a singing bird carrying nest material in nearby Pajarito Canyon June-July 1987 (Travis 1992).

Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*). One (1996-33) at White Sands NM, *Otero*, 26 October 1995: JM. This provided the second local report and the sixteenth overall for New Mexico, these evenly divided between spring (21 April-18 June) and fall (30 September-17 November).

Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*). At least five (1996-34) along New Mexico Highway 506 on Otero Mesa, *Otero*, 5-14 December 1995: RAM. Whether these individuals were late fall migrants or were wintering birds is uncertain; regular wintering by this species in New Mexico is unproven.

Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora pinus*). One (1996-106) probable male at Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*, 9 May 1996: JEP. One (1996-107) probable female at a roadside grove 6 miles N of Roswell, *Chaves*, 14 May 1996: CMR. One (1996-108) possible male banded at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 22 May 1996: DLH (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-24; a photo of this bird was published in *Audubon Field Notes* 50:317. These three represented the twelfth through fourteenth records overall, half of which occurred during the three-year period 1994-1996.

Northern Parula (*Parula americana*). One female (1996-13) at Boone's Draw, *Roosevelt*, 29-30 April 1995: JEP, JRO. One female (1996-14) at Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*, 10 May 1995: RAM, and a male (1996-15) at Rattlesnake Springs 12 May 1995: DAE.

Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*). One (1996-16) probable male at the vagrant trap 10 miles W of Melrose, in north *Roosevelt*, 6 May 1995: JEP. One adult male (1996-17) at Boone's Draw, *Roosevelt*, 13 May 1995: JEP, JRO. One (1996-18) probable female at Boone's Draw 17 May 1995: CMR. One (1996-19) probable female at Sumner Reservoir, *De Baca*, 21 May 1995: JRO. One female (1996-109) banded at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 31 May 1996: DLH (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-25. One (1996-110) probable male at the White Sands NM residential area, *Otero*, 31 May 1996: JM. The species was reported in New Mexico annually 1992-1996 (averaging nearly 5 birds/year), and in nine of the 10 years 1987-1996; there are now reports for 23 of the state's 33 counties.

Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*). One (1996-112) probable second-year male banded at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 24 May 1996: DLH (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-26. The species was reported annually in New Mexico 1990-1996, primarily in spring and in the east.

Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*). One adult male (1996-113) at Bitter Lake NWR headquarters, *Chaves*, 6 May 1996: JEP, JLD (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-27, was erroneously reported in *Audubon Field Notes* 50:317 as 5 May.

Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*). One adult male (1996-20) at Brantley Lake SP, *Eddy*, 20 December 1994: CMR. This furnished the seventh overall--but third *Eddy*--record, all seven occurring during the period 9 September-20 December.

Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*). One (1996-46), possibly an immature female, at the north *Roosevelt* vagrant trap 10 miles W of Melrose, 29 October 1995: JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 199512. Supported by a series of seven slides, this record provided the first verification for the species from New Mexico. One adult male (1996-114) banded at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 28 May 1996: DLH (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-28; a photo of this bird was published in *Audubon Field Notes* 50:317. This latter record was, chronologically, the *third* to be verified, as a second was nicely photographed by JRO 13 January 1996 at Percha SP, *Sierra*, the photo published in *Audubon Field Notes* 50:205 but the record not yet processed by the NMBRC.

Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*). One adult male (1996-115) seen and heard in a residential yard at Santa Fe, *Santa Fe*, 29 April & 1 May 1996: CMR. The earliest yet (by one day) for New Mexico, this was the third *Santa Fe* report, all of which have been in spring.

Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*). One (1996-116), probably a male, at Bosque Redondo Lake, *De Baca*, 8 May 1996: WFW. This provided a local first and the second for *De Baca*; the species was reported annually in New Mexico each year during the 10-year period 1987-1996.

Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorus*). One (1996-117) seen and heard at Washington Ranch near Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*, 5-6 May 1996: JEP, BDN, DAE, JLD (ph. 6 May); NMPTF # 1996-29). One silent bird at the New Mexico State University Experiment Station ca. 13 miles N of Clovis, *Curry*, 7 May 1996: WFW, JEP. One (1996-120) seen and heard at Percha SP, *Sierra*, 10 May 1996: DAE.

Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*). One (1996-47) at Washington Ranch near Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*, 3 September 1995: JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 1995-13. One (1996-122) at a feedlot pond ca. 1 mile E of Canon AFB, near Clovis, *Curry*, 27-28 April 1996: JRO (ph. 27 April), JEP, BDP; NMPTF # 1996-30. These records, representing only the eighth and ninth overall, were the third and fourth to be photo-documented. A photo of the *Eddy* bird was published in *Audubon Field Notes* 50:95.

Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*). One female (1996-123) at the north *Roosevelt* vagrant trap 10 miles W of Melrose 8 & 11 May 1996: WFW, JEP, JRO (ph. 11 May); NMPTF # 1996-31. One (1996-124), probably a male, at Quarai ruins N of Mountainair, *Torrance*, 12 May 1996: HRS. The latter record provided a county first. The species was reported annually in New Mexico during the eight-year period 1989-1996.

Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*). One male (1996-127) seen and heard at Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*, 27 April 1996: JEP, BDP. One male (1996-128) seen and eventually banded at Ropes Spring, San Andres NWR, *Dona Ana*, 30 April-1 May 1996: MEW (ph. 1 May), WHH; NMPTF # 1996-32; photo published in *Audubon Field Notes* 50:317. One male (1996-129) at Boone's Draw, *Roosevelt*, 4 May 1996: JEP, BDN, DAE, JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-33. One (1996-130) apparent female heard and possibly seen at Rattlesnake Springs 5-6 May 1996: JEP, JLD. One male (1996-131) at the north *Roosevelt* vagrant trap 10 Miles W of Melrose 8 May 1996: WFW. One female (1996-132) at a grove 6 miles N of Roswell, *Chaves*, 10 & 13 May 1996: JEP, CMR; one Member believed these sightings could represent two birds. One female (1996-133) at Ramon, *Lincoln*, 12 May 1996: JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-34. One female (1996-134) at the turf farm E of Moriarty, *Torrance*, 17 & 26 May 1996: JRO (ph. 17 May), CMR, BDN, DAE; NMPTF # 1996-35; one Member believed these sightings could represent two birds. One male (1996-135) banded at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 23 May 1996: DLH (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-36. The records for *Lincoln* and *Torrance* provided county firsts. Although increasingly one of the more frequently reported of the "eastern" warblers, the occurrence of nine records in a single season is unprecedented; a tenth bird reportedly was banded and photographed at Albuquerque 20 May, but details were not received.

Canada Warbler (*Wilsonia canadensis*). One adult male (1996-136) banded at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 22 May 1996: DLH (ph.); NMPTF # 1996-37. This record provided the sixth overall, the third to be photo-documented, the second for the Rio Grande valley, and the first for *Socorro*.

Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*). One winter subadult male (1996-48) at the north *Roosevelt* vagrant trap 10 miles W of Melrose 7 October 1995: JEP, JRO (ph.); NMPTF # 1995-14. Discovered by Louis Cuellar, this was the first reported from *Roosevelt* since 1975.

Eastern Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*). One male (1996-137) banded 22 miles NE of Orogrande, *Otero*, present 14-28 April 1996: JMK (ph. 21 April); NMPTF # 1996-38. Captured, banded, and definitely photographed 21 April, this bird had been seen repeatedly in the area and was heard to give the "che-wink" call. This record provided the first New Mexico verification for this recently resurrected species. There are at least four previous New Mexico reports--October 1964, November 1978, December 1982, and December 1991-January 1992-- all unverified; fixation on species-level reporting may have obscured other reports.

Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*). One (1996-9) breeding-plumaged adult near Cuba, but in *Rio Arriba*, 4 May 1995: CAC. One (1996-138) "drab immature" at Shady Lakes near Alameda, *Bernalillo*, 3 March 1996: CMR, PRS. One (1996-139) second-year bird banded at Ropes Spring, San Andres NWR, *Dona Ana*, 1 May 1996: MEW (ph.) WHH; NMPTF # 1996-39. Each of these records provided local firsts for this now regular, increasingly frequent winter visitor, which has been found in New Mexico annually since 1986 and, since 1992, has averaged over 10 birds/year.

Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*). Two males (1996-10) at the mouth of Las Animas Creek at Caballo Reservoir, *Sierra*, 17 May 1995: SS. The species is notably rare in New Mexico away from its Los Ojos, *Rio Arriba*, breeding locale.

Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*). One first-spring male (1996-40) seen and heard singing at Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*, 6 May 1996: JLD (ph.), JEP; NMPTF # 1996-40. Accepted on a 6:1 vote, with the descending Member suggesting the bird may not have been a pure Baltimore. The Committee eagerly seeks documented reports, past and present, for this recently resurrected species.

UNACCEPTED RECORDS

Least Grebe (*Tachybaptus dominicus*). One (1996-26) at Bosque del Apache NWR, *Socorro*, 8 January 1996. Submitted as a "possible" by the experienced observer, the written details, while suggestive, were not considered to be conclusive by most Members; subsequent efforts to relocate the bird were unsuccessful. The record failed on a 2:4 second-circulation vote. The species remains unverified in New Mexico.

Gray Hawk (*Asturina nitida*). One (1996-36) described as an immature and photographed at Bitter Lake NWR, *Chaves*, 20 May 1995: NMPTF # 1995-16. The fine series of nine slides showed that the bird was not a Gray Hawk but was instead almost certainly an immature (spring subadult) Swainson's Hawk; structure, especially wing length, ruled out Gray. The record, which failed on a 0:7 second-circulation vote, illustrates the value of multiple photos of difficult species, and serves to emphasize the need for caution with Gray Hawks, especially those far out of range. When describing this species, New Mexico observers are cautioned to not focus strictly on Gray Hawk vs. Broad-winged Hawk, as that can lead to errors.

Pacific Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*). One (1996-37) photographed at Black Rock Reservoir, Zuni Indian Reservation, *McKinley*, 17 September 1989: NMPTF # 1989-74. Reported at the time as a Lesser Golden-Plover possibly of the (then) race *fulva*, the slides and written details were submitted to the Committee by the Secretary for evaluation. The bird was unquestionably a Golden-Plover, but the photos were inconclusive as to which species, and the written details did not rule out a molting (breeding to non-breeding) American Golden-Plover. There are no additional New Mexico reports.

Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*). One (1996-38), described as an adult female, at Holloman Lake, *Otero*, 7 September 1993. The written details, which lacked some important features, were indeed suggestive of Ruff, but the Committee felt that Pectoral and Sharp-tailed sandpipers were not conclusively eliminated. A male Ruff had been photographed the previous day 70 miles to the south at Fort Bliss, Texas. All in all, an intriguing report that failed 0:7 on the second circulation. There is one verified New Mexico Ruff, photographed 30 April 1994 at Bosque del Apache NWR.

Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*). Up to three (1996-41) photographed at Roswell, *Chaves*, in September 1995: NMPTF # 1995-17. The birds appeared at a backyard feeding station that was already hosting other dove species, including Mourning and White-winged doves as well as Ringed Turtle-Doves (*Streptopelia 'risoria'*). The photos clearly distinguish the Eurasian Collared-Doves from the Ringed Turtle-Doves. Nevertheless, as these represented the first recent reports for this species, most--but not all--Members questioned natural origin; the birds' association with Ringed Turtle-Doves was especially troubling. The species has subsequently been recognized as undergoing an explosive expansion of its range, spreading from established populations in Florida westward and northward across North America, with (natural?) occurrences very recently at several locales in the Texas Panhandle (including on the New Mexico line at Farwell) and in eastern Colorado. This should be a continuing story; Eurasians continue to persist at

Roswell and there has since been a photo-documented occurrence elsewhere in eastern New Mexico. The Committee encourages New Mexico observers to familiarize themselves with the characteristics, including vocalizations, of these birds, which are not well-covered in available North American guides; useful references include Smith (1987) as well as the European literature.

White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*). One (1996-87) in a Las Cruces, *Dona Ana*, yard 18 May 1996. Briefly described several days after the event, the details appeared to most Members to fall short of eliminating other dove species. The uncertainty of the identification, together with the possibility that the bird--whatever the species--may have been an escapee, led to the report's nonacceptance by a 1:6 first circulation vote. There are no previous reports for this south Texas and Mexican lowland species, which is not noted for vagrancy, although there are sight reports for Midland and Big Bend NP, Texas (Texas Ornithological Society 1995). Unfortunately, the illegal cage-bird traffic in the border cities complicates New Mexico reports from that area.

Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*). One (1995-10) silent individual flushed several times and subsequently photographed perched at the vagrant trap in north *Roosevelt* 10 miles W of Melrose 11 May 1995: NMPTF # 1995-18. The two prints plus the written description were examined and compared to specimens at Louisiana State University by Steven W. Cardiff and Donna L. Dittmann, who concluded the bird was not a Chuck-will's-widow (nor a Buff-collared Nightjar) but instead a female Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*), a species hitherto unreported from *Roosevelt*. Determination of the subspecies of Whip-poor-will was not attempted.

Red-breasted Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus ruber*). An intriguing individual (1996-31) photographed in Clanton Canyon, Peloncillo Mountains, *Hidalgo*, 17 January 1996: NMPTF # 199641. The two prints, which unfortunately were not accompanied by written details, do not show the entire bird; they strongly suggest *S. r. daggetti*, but do not rule out an intergrade Red-breasted X Red-naped. The material was examined by Jon L. Dunn, Kimball L. Garrett, and R. Guy McCaskie, none of whom could fully endorse it as a pure Red-breasted. As the record left too many unanswered questions, it was unanimously judged inadequate on a second-circulation vote. The species remains unverified in New Mexico.

Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*). One (1996-45), seen briefly by a single observer 4 miles N of Burnham, *San Juan*, 7 October 1995, may have been this species, but the Committee felt that the written details did not eliminate Warbling Vireo; the record failed 0:6 on the first vote.

Green Jay (*Cyanocorax yncas*). One (1996-51) in a suburban yard at Las Cruces, *Dona Ana*, 20-21 May 1995: NMPTF # 1995-19. This bird, which was unquestionably a Green Jay, was well documented with photographs and videotape, but the likelihood of its being an escaped cage-bird overruled acceptance on a 0:6 first circulation vote. The species is resident from extreme south Texas southward, where it shows no pattern of extralimital occurrence; it is a colorful species that is found in the illegal cage-bird trade, and that trade may be thriving in the Las Cruces-EI Paso-Ciudad Juarez corridor.

Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). One (1996-7) in rabbitbrush habitat W of La Plata, *San Juan*, 13 May 1995. The report failed on a 2:4 second circulation vote, the majority believing the brief details did not eliminate other species, especially House Wren. One (1996-32) at Monjeau Lookout, Lincoln National Forest, *Lincoln*, 1 August 1995. The brief description was not conclusive, while the early date and southerly location added to the majority's (1:5 against) unease.

Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Catharus minimus*). One (1996-96) at White Sands NM, *Otero*, 7 June 1996. The available details for this bird, seen late in the day and under less than ideal light conditions, were suggestive, but the Committee felt that they did not satisfactorily rule out other, more likely thrushes, such as the western race of the Veery or a dull Swainson's Thrush. Gray-cheeked Thrush is New Mexico's rarest *Catharus*, and all records require rigorous documentation.

Rufous-collared Robin (*Turdus rufitorques*). One (1996-44) in the Rio Grande Gorge NW of Taos, *Taos*, 24 September 1995. The brief description, which did not mention the rufous collar, was much more

suggestive of an American Robin than of a Rufous-collared. It seems doubtful that this endemic of the mountains of Chiapas and Guatemala could reach northern New Mexico on its own.

Blue Mockingbird (*Melanotis caerulescens*). One (1996-52) in a suburban yard at Las Cruces, *Dona Ana*, 7-8 August 1995: NMPTF # 1995-20. Beautiful videotape footage leaves no question that the bird was a Blue Mockingbird, apparently an adult, but 4 of 6 Members questioned its origin. Because the bird occurred in the same yard as had a Green Jay only two months earlier, suspicions were heightened that someone in that vicinity may have been trafficking in illegal cage birds. The Committee is aware of two apparently acceptable southeastern Arizona records, but notes those were in winter and were relatively removed from likely captive sources, while the origin of a Tucson bird is questionable (Tucson Audubon Society 1995).

Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorus*). One (1996-35) at Artesia, *Eddy*, 30 April 1996, may have been this species, but most Members (2:4 against) believed the details were inadequate for acceptance.

Mourning Warbler (*Oporornis philadelphia*). One (1996-125) silent individual seen intermittently and in shade for 20 seconds near the Burro Mountains SW of Silver City, *Grant*, 8 May 1996. The Committee felt that the available details were not sufficient to conclusively identify this species nor to eliminate the more likely MacGillivray's Warbler.

CONTRIBUTORS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to the above listed contributors for taking the time to document their New Mexico observations, and to my fellow NMBRC Members--Alan Craig, Bill Howe, John Parmeter, Chris Rustay, Barry Zimmer, and Dale Zimmerman--for their unflagging efforts with Committee work. Howe and Parmeter provided helpful comments on an earlier draft of this report. In addition, Steven W. Cardiff and Donna L. Dittmann provided valuable input on the Chuck-will's-widow report, Jon L. Dunn, Kimball L. Garrett, and R. Guy McCaskie did the same for the Red-breasted Sapsucker report, Bruce D. Neville was most helpful regarding the Eurasian Collared-Dove situation, and Brian A. Locke was instrumental in obtaining details for the Eastern Towhee record.

APPENDIX. The NMBRC Review List

In 1997, the Committee revised the Review List, the first such revision since the initial Review List was established in 1994. The revised list includes 134 species for which the Committee requests documentation for New Mexico records. In addition, the Committee requests documentation for New Mexico records for species not currently on the official State List and, hence, potentially new to the state. Documentation may be in the form of written details, copies of field notes, sketches, photographs (slides [preferred], prints, and/or videotape), voice recordings, and/or information on (and the location of) specimens. Submission of records by e-mail is discouraged.

Review List species are those that have been accepted to the State List but, in general, have been recorded on average four or fewer times per year over the previous ten-year period. Also included, however, are

certain species that pose significant identification problems as well as certain locally distributed species that may be encountered away from their established ranges. The Review List is intended to be dynamic, with species added or removed as knowledge of their status warrants; 20 species from the initial Review List were deleted from this revised version. The NMBRC provides standardized reporting forms, which may be obtained from the Secretary; these forms are intended as an aid in providing documentation.

The Editor(s) of *Audubon Field Notes* and *NMOS Field Notes* may require some level of documentation on additional scarce or difficult to identify species, as well as for commoner species when found away from their normal ranges or out of season. Presently, these include all 19 of the species recently deleted from the Review List: Brown Pelican, Tricolored Heron, Eurasian Wigeon, Oldsquaw, White-tailed Kite, White-rumped Sandpiper, Sabine's Gull, Caspian Tern, Common Tern, Boreal Owl, Yellow-throated Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Winter Wren, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Hooded Warbler, and Golden-crowned Sparrow.

Concerning documentation--observers are reminded that several excellent articles are available to help them document and report sightings (e.g., *Birding* 24:145-159, 1992). The Committee asks observers to include their full name, including middle initial, and to avoid using nicknames. Location of records should include the county and be given as distance from the nearest mapped town; highway mile-markers and exit numbers should be avoided, as these are difficult to map and tend to change over time (in fact, the location of highways can change over time). Concerning submission of photographs--records consisting solely of a photo, with no written documentation, tend to be viewed with disfavor by the Committee. Any photographic material should *at least* have a cover sheet providing the basics of the observation (what, where, when, by whom, circumstances of the event).

The Review List. Red-throated Loon, Pacific Loon, Yellow-billed Loon, Red-necked Grebe, Least Storm-Petrel, Anhinga, Magnificent Frigatebird, Reddish Egret, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, White Ibis, Glossy Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, Wood Stork, Black Vulture, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Fulvous Whistling-Duck, Brant, Trumpeter Swan, Garganey, Harlequin Duck, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Black Scoter, Barrow's Goldeneye (outside *San Juan*), Swallow-tailed Kite, Gray Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Crested Caracara, Aplomado Falcon, Sage Grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Yellow Rail, Purple Gallinule, American Golden-Plover, Piping Plover, Whimbrel, Hudsonian Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Semipalmated Sandpiper (west of Pecos Valley), Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Ruff, Short-billed Dowitcher, American Woodcock, Red Phalarope, Pomarine Jaeger, Long-tailed Jaeger, Laughing Gull, Little Gull, Heermann's Gull, Mew Gull, Thayer's Gull, Western Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Glaucous Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Arctic Tern, Black Skimmer, Ancient Murrelet, Common Ground-Dove, Ruddy Ground-Dove, Black-billed Cuckoo, Groove-billed Ani, Whiskered Screech-Owl (outside Peloncillo Mts), Short-eared owl, Chuck-will's-widow, Buff-collared Nightjar, White-eared Hummingbird, Berylline Hummingbird, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Blue-throated Hummingbird (outside *Catron, Grant, & Hidalgo*), Lucifer Hummingbird (outside Peloncillo Mts), Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Costa's Hummingbird (outside *Grant & Hidalgo*), Elegant Trogon (outside Peloncillo Mts), Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Acadian Flycatcher, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Great Crested Flycatcher (west of Pecos Valley), Great Kiskadee, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Piratic Flycatcher, Couch's Kingbird, White-eyed Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Philadelphia Vireo, Yellow-green Vireo, Carolina Wren, Sedge Wren, Veery (outside Penasco area), Gray-cheeked Thrush, Wood Thrush, Rufous-backed Robin, Varied Thrush, Long-billed Thrasher, Sprague's Pipit (west of Pecos Valley), Bohemian Waxwing, Blue-winged Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Palm Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Canada Warbler, Slate-throated Redstart, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee, Botteri's Sparrow (outside Animas Valley), Worthen's Sparrow, Baird's Sparrow, Le Conte's Sparrow, Snow Bunting, Bobolink (outside Los Ojos area), Rusty Blackbird, Baltimore Oriole, Purple Finch, White-winged Crossbill, Lawrence's Goldfinch.

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GRAY VIREO (*VIREO VICINIOR* COUES) NESTING IN SAN JUAN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

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During 1997 surveys for Gray Vireo (*Vireo vicinior* Coues) in San Juan and Rio Arriba counties, New Mexico, several pairs of Gray Vireos were located, one nest was found and fledgling(s) observed, and an adult was observed feeding a fledgling believed to be from a second nest.

This is apparently the first report of a Gray Vireo nest discovered in San Juan County although Gray Vireos have been considered a breeding species in the county and/or San Juan River Valley for many years with reports in White & Behle (1961), Hubbard (1971), Schmitt (1976), and Nelson (1976). White & Behle state in their article on birds of the Navajo Reservoir Basin (prior to the construction of Navajo Dam and the creation of Navajo Lake): "Vireo vicinior Coues .. Gray Vireo. Several, presumably a family unit, were seen in Bancos Canyon about 2 mi. up from the mouth on July 12, 1960. Summer resident." Examination of USGS 7.5 minute series topographical maps shows that this site is in Rio Arriba County. Hubbard (1971) states "Discovery was made of a flourishing colony of Gray Vireos in the Navajo Lake area in May, and the birds were present there during the summer. This may be the largest known concentration of these local vireos in the state." and "Gray Vireo Up to 11 in the Navajo Lake area 6/26-7/13 (GS [= Greg Schmitt]) where the species undoubtedly occurs as a breeder in pinyon-juniper woodland; previous records here in 1960 and during May 1971." In addition to citing the White & Behle report, Schmitt (1976) records his collection of two specimens of adult male Gray Vireos on 29 June 1972 at Archuleta (San Juan County, San Juan River about 5.5 air miles west of Navajo Lake). Hubbard (1978) does not state that breeding is known in San Juan County but does indicate that a specimen has been collected along the San Juan River and the species apparently is regular in summer near Navajo Lake.

The Gray Vireo is listed as threatened in the state of New Mexico. The Bureau of Land Management, Farmington District, funded this survey to improve understanding of the species on BLM lands.

STUDY AREA AND METHODS

Twenty-four survey trips were made to eleven known, suspected, or newly located Gray Vireo sites in north central and northeastern San Juan (8) and western Rio Arriba (3) Counties, New Mexico, between 7 May and 8 August 1997 to survey for Gray Vireo nests on BLM Farmington District lands with suitable habitat.

The survey protocol followed suggestions by H. R. Schwarz based on his 1990 and 1991 Gray Vireo nest observations in the Bernalillo Watershed Research Natural Area in the foothills of the Sandias in Sandoval County, NM (Schwarz, 1991). Additional ideas were gleaned from Martin and Geupel (1993) and Ralph, et al. (1993). Other methodologies came from U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1987) and Arizona Game and Fish Department (1994).

Surveys were conducted by walking through sites listening for Gray Vireo calls and songs. I carried a tripod-mounted camera with 500mm lens and a tape recorder. The tape recorder was used to record Gray Vireo vocalizations. I rarely played the Gray Vireo tape to attempt to get a bird to respond for several reasons: Gray Vireos sing all day and for extended periods and Schwarz (1991) cautioned about excessive (or any) tape use to avoid upsetting the birds. I found that it is important to walk quietly throughout the study area since the birds' songs do not carry very far and simply listening 'to the whole area' from a single vantage point does not work. Great care was taken not to damage the nest, nest tree, or nest site or to disturb the parent birds more than is absolutely necessary. I found the nest at the Section 12 site by slowly walking around the tree looking carefully from various angles without touching the tree. This did not work on 17 June when Bamey Wegener and I observed the pair of birds in this and other trees but did work on 4 July, the day I found the nest. Reports containing additional detail on my observations are on file with BLM, Farmington District and Albuquerque office, and with NM Game and Fish.

RESULTS

Status in San Juan and western Rio Arriba Counties

This survey detected three pairs of Gray Vireos on BLM land in the Farmington District, one pair each at a Rio Arriba County site and two San Juan County sites, Coalbank Canyon and north of Hwy 574. The nest was found at the 574 site.

Nest site: Nest 1: Barney Wegener, BLM Farmington District, accompanied me on 17 June 1997 to a site where I discovered Gray Vireos in 1994. This site is located in north central San Juan County, north of NM 574 (173 of maps) between Aztec and La Plata east of Farmington Glade at 6240 - 6360 feet elevation. We found a pair of birds quickly, hearing the male singing almost immediately upon arrival at the site. A nest was later discovered at 6270 feet elevation. Presumed Nest 2: On 4 July two male Gray Vireos were heard calling simultaneously along the east boundary of the original nest territory. On 6 August an adult was observed feeding a fledgling in the eastern and second territory belonging to a second pair of birds.

Two additional sites with a pair of Gray Vireos: Site 1. The Rio Arriba County site, located in the northwestern portion of the county southeast of Navajo Lake at 6400 - 6500 feet elevation, was discovered by the author in 1996. A Gray Vireo was heard singing briefly on 20 May 1997. On 15 June 1997 I found a pair of Gray Vireos (singing male and quiet female with it) a short distance from the original and 1996 site in a separate canyon (another portion of the same major canyon system). On 5 July the pair was again observed, the male still singing in the same place but the female mostly not seen except once when both flew across the area. I suspect the female was sitting on eggs at the time but found no nest. Site 2. On 7 June 1997 I found a Gray Vireo in Coalbank Canyon west of La Plata on the western edge of the La Plata River valley in north central San Juan County. The bird was singing further up the canyon on 13 June 1997. This represents a previously unknown location for this species and is on BLM land at 6060 - 6240 feet. It is also the westernmost county location with two former locations found on the eastern edge of the same river valley.

Three additional sites with single Gray Vireos: On 22 June 1997 I heard and watched a Gray Vireo singing and foraging on the steep, north-facing rocky slopes above the Bureau of Reclamation building on NM highway 511 below the spillway of Navajo Dam at 5800 - 6000 feet elevation (not BLM land). On 24 July, I heard Gray Vireos singing at two sites in Rio Arriba County, one on the east side of Navajo Lake at 6370 feet elevation, and one southeast of the lake at 6750 feet elevation.

Previous reports for San Juan County found in NMOS Field Notes include Snider (1992) "Gray Vireo - on

surveys in San Juan Co. 3 to 5 on 5/31 were recorded in Reese Canyon and 4 were seen or heard in North Thomas Canyon 7/2 (Bill Falvey)." I visited the Reese Canyon site which is on the northwest side of Navajo Lake on 11 June 1997 but found only Plumbeous Vireos (*Vireo plumbeus*), as was the case on my visits there in 1996. Hubbard (1972) "Gray Vireo 2-5 near Navajo Lake 6/29-7/24 (GS [=Greg Schmitt])"; Hubbard (1976) "Gray Vireo sum/rec--1-2 near Navajo Lake 7/29 (AN, HL [=Alan Nelson, =H. "Les" Lesperance])"; Hubbard (1979) "Gray Vireo: sum/rec-1 near Nageezi 6/17 (JH [=John Hubbard])." An additional Rio Arriba County site is reported in Snider (1992): "1 on Counselor BBS 6/26 (GS [=Greg Schmitt])." I also visited three other known Gray Vireo sites in San Juan County during this survey without finding vireos: a site near Shovel Spring north of Mount Nebo discovered by the author and John and Jan Reese in 1994 and two sites on the east side of the La Plata River valley near the Colorado border, one near Coyote Springs reported to the author by Alan Nelson, and one west of the upper Farmington Glade near the Horton 10 gas well found by the author. The distribution of the species in the local four corners portions of adjacent states is as follows: Arizona - Jacobs (1986) reports the species as an "uncommon summer resident of lower pinyon-juniper forest from early May to early October" on the Navajo and Hopi Reservations; Utah - Hayward, et al. (1976) do not report the species from San Juan County, UT, but do report breeding in adjacent Grand County at Arches National Park and in the La Sal Mountains; Colorado - Andrews & Righter (1992) map the species as a confirmed breeder in Montezuma and La Plata Counties and state it is an "Uncommon and very local summer resident on mesas and low foothills."

Habitat Summary

All but one of the Gray Vireos sites are in upper elevation pinyon-juniper woodland, in rather broad-bottomed canyons (i.e., flat or gently sloped valleys) below or near the ridge-top/rock outcrop/steep badlands/cliff head wall of the canyon. The nest site is basically a "rather flattish but gently sloped 'bowl' of pinyon-juniper surrounded on several sides by steep badlands slopes and/or cliff-like, ridge-top outcroppings." The exceptional site is the extremely steep, boulder strewn slopes at Navajo Dam above the San Juan River.

The Gray Vireo sites are at elevations between 5800 - 7150 feet with the majority of sightings between 6200 and 6600 feet. The pinyons (*Pinus edulis*) and Utah junipers (*Juniperus osteosperma*) tend to be mature old trees but vary from 12 to 15 feet in height in some areas to 20 to 25 feet in height in other areas. Sometimes the woodlands are quite dense creating a "canopied woods" while other sites have widely spaced trees making for an "open park land." The nest site with trees near the smaller size range is closer to the open park situation with trees about 10m apart around the nest tree. Mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*), Utah serviceberry (*Amelanchier utahensis*), Antelope brittlebrush (*Purshia tridentata*), and big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) are typical associated shrubs. There is usually considerable open bare soil between herbaceous plants forming the ground cover.

Proposed Gray Vireo Phenology (see Ehrlich, et al., 1988 for incubation and nesting periods).

First Nest (based on strong evidence)

| | |
|--|---|
| est. 20 May 1997 | Arrival prior to this date (bird singing, Rio Arriba County site) |
| est. 1 June 1997 | Beginning of nest building allowing ca. 2 weeks to complete |
| est.12-15 June 1997 | Eggs laid, beginning of incubation |
| 17 June 1997 | Pair of birds first observed |
| est.26-28 June 1997 | Eggs hatched |
| 2 July 1997 | Both adults observed at 12:27 pm carrying food in nest tree |
| 4 July 1997 | 2 young observed in nest, female on nest, male fed young |
| 8 July 1997 | 2 adult-like immature birds seen in nest and parents w/food 6 pm |
| est. 9-10 July 1997 Fledging date | |
| 10 July 1997 | Nest empty, undamaged, no evidence of disturbance, 5:05 pm |
| 16 July 1997 | 1 - 2 fledglings being attended and fed by parents in nest territory |
| est. 20 July 1997 | 1 st pair 2 nd nest built using materials from first nest |
| 21 July 1997 | Nest gone, birds in different portion of territory, suspect feeding fledglings |

and est. begin laying eggs new 1st pair (2nd) nest

Second nest (based on weak data)

4 Jul 1997 2 male Gray Vireos singing simultaneously on opposite sides of small knoll NE of the 1st nest. 1st pair birds never seen beyond knoll. 2nd singing male believed to represent a 2nd breeding pair & territory

est. 3-5 Jul 1997 Eggs laid, begin incubation

est. 17-18 Jul 1997 Eggs hatched

est. 31 Jul 1997 Fledging date

6 Aug 1997 Observed adult Gray Vireo feeding begging fledgling, 2nd territory

DISCUSSION

Courtship and Nesting

See Harrison (1979) and Schwarz (1991) and phenology above. Nest 1: The first pair of vireos was already apparently tending a nest with eggs when Barney and I found them on 17 June at what would later be the site of the nest discovery. The male was singing from the nest tree and the female was nearby but not singing. On 4 July, when I found the nest (fig. 1), the female was sitting on it. The nest was 2 1/2 inches in diameter and 2 and 15/16 inches deep in outside dimension (based on careful observations and sketches made on 12 July after the young fledged). The nest was a woven cup suspended from twigs on outer branches 8 inches from the nearest perimeter and 6 feet above the ground. The nest materials were grass stems, plant fibers, and juniper bark. While I watched from about 20 feet away the male, who was singing as he carried food in the nest tree, moved to the nest portion of the tree, gave a scolding noise which seemed to signal the female to leave the nest so he could feed the nestlings. These I discovered as he feed one of them. As she left the nest the female did a quick fly-catching 'loop' and then flew off. The male left with a fecal sac after feeding the young. I left the area when the parents did not return in a timely manner. I saw both parents on 8 July and the female was bringing food (fig. 2) to the nest containing two adult-like young. I left the area after the female ate the food she was carrying because she was apparently uncomfortable with my presence. The empty nest was found on 10 July and no birds were seen or heard. The pair was observed again on 12 July, the male singing to the east of the nest but still in the same territory and the female was seen chasing Western Scrub Jays, I suspected in defense of fledglings (fig. 3). On 16 July the male was again observed singing in the eastern portion of the nest territory and the female was observed carrying food to at least one fledgling (fig. 4). The nest was found to be missing on 21 July with no obvious damage to the tree or area and remnants of the nest's attachment to the supporting twig fork were observed. The male was observed singing at the northeast edge of the territory and the female was heard scolding. I suspected the vireos had torn up the original nest to use the materials in a new nest. I found no nest and saw no fledglings. On 6 August I found Gray Vireos to the east (see below) and still cannot account for the first pair of birds or their possible second nest. I did once observe the male flying from the northeast portion of the territory up and over the badlands/mesa to the north possibly suggesting that they moved up there for their second nest. Ehrlich, et al., (1988) state that two broods are normal for Gray Vireos. I followed the arroyo near the nest to its head and onto the top of the badlands without finding any Gray Vireos. I estimate the nest territory to comprise about 40 acres.

Nest 2: On 6 August I observed and followed a singing and scolding adult Gray Vireo to the east of the nest territory (where a second singing male was heard earlier in the summer on 4 July). An adult was seen feeding a large insect to a begging fledgling Gray Vireo estimated to be one week out of the nest. This suggests that it fledged on 31 July and hatched about 17-18 July and this egg laid about 3-5 July. This is believed to represent a second pair of birds and a second successful Gray Vireo nest for the season in this area. This proposed phenology for this second nest (subject to fairly large possible error since the fledgling could be older or younger) strongly suggests a second pair of Gray Vireos rather than a second nest for the original pair. I also consider it unlikely that this was a fledgling from the first nest still being tended after nearly a month.

Comparison to Results in other Gray Vireo Studies

Schwarz (1991, 1995, 1996) proposed Gray Vireo nesting phenologies for first and second nests based on his observations in the Sandia Mountains: Early nesting - start of incubation 5 June, hatching 18 June, fledging 1 July; Late nesting - start of incubation 11 July, hatching 24 July, fledging 6 August. Among the factors that might affect the timing of nesting I observed is the fact that this year was especially lush early with abundant winter and especially spring rains leading to tremendous plant, flower, seed, and insect abundance, which suggests an especially good breeding season.

Schwarz (1995) reported that a cowbird fledged on 10 July 1995 from the only Gray Vireo nest found that year on the DOD Military Withdrawal. Brown-headed Cowbirds are a known threat to Gray Vireo reproductive success (Stokes & Stokes, 1997; Ehrlich, et al., 1988; Kaufman, 1996). I observed no cowbirds in the vicinity of the nest despite numerous lengthy visits but did see them at the 1996/1997 Rio Arriba County site.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I acknowledge the Bureau of Land Management, Farmington District, for providing the funding necessary to conduct this work. I thank especially Barney Wegener for supplying maps of known Gray Vireo locations and for skillfully accompanying me in the field on several occasions. I thank Alan P. Nelson for sharing his knowledge of Gray Vireos in the study area.

Gray Vireo Nest Site Photographs



Fig. 1. Nest on 4 July 1997 soon after discovery. Two young birds sit too low in nest to be seen.



Fig. 2. Female parent (note shaggy nape) carrying food for nestlings 8 July 1997.



Fig. 3. Parent bird (believed to be the female) immediately after chasing immature Western Scrub-Jay 12 July 1997.



Fig. 4. Fledgling awaiting female parent bringing food on 16 July.

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Received 26 August 1997

TIM REEVES' Second Abstract from the 1997 Annual Meeting

At the 1997 Annual Meeting Tim Reeves gave two papers, but inadvertently only one abstract was published in the Bulletin (Vol. 25, #2). The text of his second abstract appears below.

DOCUMENTED AVIAN RARITIES IN SAN JUAN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO. PART III: LOONS - FINCHES 1996.

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Sightings during 1996 (and January 1997) of accidental, rare, and uncommon birds in San Juan County, NM, are documented by color slides (parts I and II presented at 1995 NMOS annual meeting). Choice of species treated is based on Rare and Unusual Birds of New Mexico (Huntington & Huntington, 1983) and those species shown in light face type in Field Checklist of New Mexico Birds (NMOS, 1995). Additional species were chosen due to lack of previous documentation in the county. Locations and dates on which the documenting photographs were taken are listed. Site names follow The New Mexico Bird Finding Guide (Zimmerman, et al., 1992) and as follows: Farmington Lake, near E limit of Farmington, N of US 550 (Beeline Reservoir of maps); NAPI Sewage Pond -located E of NM 371, 0.25 miles S of 3003; and Ojo Amarillo Sewage Pond - located ca. 9 miles SW of Farmington, S of Navajo 36, 1 mile W of 3005. Sightings brought to my attention by other birders have initials listed after the date and birders accompanying me when slides were taken are listed after the date with "w/" (BC = Bob Carr, CLUB = Four Comers Bird Club field trip participants, VE = Virginia Edens, LL = Les Lesperance, LVL = Les & Vicki Lesperance, DML = Dwayne & Marge Longenbaugh, NEM = Nell Mahon, SNM = Scott & Nell Mahon, AN = Alan Nelson, JO = Jerry Oldenettle, HR = Harris Richard, LR = Linda Reeves, AS = Alan Schmierer, HV = Helen Volkerding). Slides are shown of the following species (copies of selected slides are on file with NMOS): BITTERNs, HERONs: American Bittern (Morgan Lake, 21 APR 1996, w/LR); Great Egret (Morgan Lake, 21 APR 1996, w/LR; 6 MAY 1996); Eurasian Wigeon (Farmington Lake, 23 MAR 1996); SWANs, GEESE, DUCKs: Bufflehead, partial albino female (Navajo Darn, 1 NOV 1996); PLOVERs: Black-bellied Plover (Morgan Lake, 26 APR 1996); SANDPIPERs, PHALAROPES: Semipalmated Sandpiper (Morgan Lake, 14 & 15 MAY 1996, w/JO; NAPI Sewage Pond, 15 AUG 1996); Pectoral Sandpiper (NAPI Sewage Pond, 14 & 21 SEP 1996, 12 OCT 1996, w/LL); Dunlin (Morgan Lake, 12 OCT 1996, w/LR); Stilt Sandpiper (NAPI Sewage Pond, 15 AUG 1996, 14 SEP 1996); Red-necked Phalarope (Ojo Amarillo Sewage Pond, 14 MAY 1996; Morgan Lake, 15 MAY 1996, w/JO); TERNs, SKIMMERs: Common Tern with Forster's Tern (Morgan Lake, 26 APR 1996); Least Tern (Morgan Lake, 15 MAY 1996, w/JO); Black Skimmer (Morgan Lake, 14 MAY 1996, AN); TYPICAL OWLs: Long-eared Owl (Morgan Lake, 8 MAR 1996, 1 MAY 1996); TYRANT FL YCATCHERs: Olive-sided Flycatcher (B-Square Ranch, 22 AUG 1996); WOOD-WARBLERs: Prothonotary Warbler (Westland Park, 20 SEP 1996, BC, w/BC); SPARROWs: American Tree Sparrow (NIIP/NAPI, 6 JAN 1996; Ojo Amarillo Sewage Pond, 13 JAN 1996, VE); FINCHES: Red Crossbill (Farmington, 15 DEC 1996, DML, w/DML, LVL; 25 & 26 JAN 1997, w/LR); Lawrence's Goldfinch (Bloomfield, 17 OCT 1996, NM, w/NEM).