

"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

### Summary

There were no potential 1st ABA Area records this month...unless you count a "Cinnamon-rumped" Seedeater of unknown origin in Arizona. This West Mexican nominate subspecies of White-collared Seedeater is geographically isolated and visually distinct from its eastern cousins (which are more familiar to many of us), and some authorities split the two populations. Rarity highlights came from the Far West: **Wandering Albatross** and **Wood Sandpiper** in Oregon, **Little Bunting** and **Northern Wheatear** in Baja California Sur, **Black-capped Vireo** in British Columbia, and **Bluethroat** in California. Hopes for widespread pelagic birds arriving across the southern Plains and Midwest with Hurricane Ike were largely unrealized. Still, a smattering of frigatebirds did appear in the Midwest and "interior East," but curiously, many of them were found well after the storm's passage. Thankfully, the aptly named birding Mecca of High Island, Texas was not heavily damaged. A small flight of Northern Wheatears was detected in the Northeast in mid-Sep. There are early indications that this could be a good winter for irruptions of Boreal Chickadee and Boreal Owl.

**Southeast:** A pair of **Least Grebes** has successfully nested in *Palm Beach*, FL, providing a 1st mainland breeding record for the Caribbean subspecies *dominicus*. Seven Roseate Spoonbills

were in *Shelby*, TN 9/28. A flock of up to 16 Wood Storks was discovered in *Fulton*, KY 9/13. KY's 1st **Sandwich Tern** was photographed in *Livingston* 9/5. A Long-tailed Jaeger on Reelfoot Lake, *Lake*, TN 9/14 may have been related to Hurricane Ike. No Name Key, FL hosted a LaSagra's Flycatcher on 10/8.

**Mid-Atlantic:** A Barnacle Goose was in *Burlington*, NJ 10/6. A White-cheeked Pintail of undetermined origin was discovered in the wake of Hurricane Hanna 9/15 in *Jefferson*, WV. A small number of Magnificent Frigatebirds showed up 9/20 in PA and NY. WV's 4th Glossy Ibis was found in *Wood* 9/22. An odd autumn flight of Swallow-tailed Kites occurred over the region. Hart-Miller Is. in *Baltimore*, MD hosted a Curlew Sandpiper 9/13 and a Piping Plover 9/8. A pair of Red Phalaropes, WV's 5th record, was found in *Wayne* 9/22. *Passaic*, NJ hosted a **Northern Wheatear** 10/4; another in *Cape May*, NJ 9/17-19 seems to have been related to the concurrent phenomenon farther north. New York City's Central Park hosted a Black-throated Gray Warbler 9/21. Le Conte's Sparrows were seen at Monmouth, NJ and Brooklyn, NY, both 10/8. A late report of a **Lesser Goldfinch** in *New Castle*, DE 8/3 was understandably a state 1st.

**Northeast:** Two "Richardson's" **Cackling Geese** were found in *Cumberland*, ME 10/2, providing one of only a handful of state records; they were later joined by a "Greenland" Greater White-fronted Goose and a **Barnacle Goose**. A male Tufted Duck arrived in NL on the early date of 9/15. Less than annual in NL, a juv. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Bellevue 9/13 was the 3rd record this year. A probable **European Golden-Plover** found 10/10 in *Cumberland*, ME could be the state's 1st. Biscay Bay, NL held a Curlew Sandpiper 9/11. MA's **Broad-billed Hummingbird** was still present through 9/22 in *Barnstable*. A truly re-



**Wandering Albatross.** *Perpetua Bank*, off Lincoln County, Oregon; 13 September 2008. © Greg Gillson.

markable flight of **Boreal Chickadees** was being observed at Saint-Fulgence, QC as we went to press; literally thousands are being reported migrating along the Saguenay River this fall. Four **Northern Wheatears** appeared over a short time span in mid-Sep: Singles were noted 9/17-18 in *Cumberland*, ME; 9/12 at Cape Bonavista, NL;



**Wood Sandpiper.** Lane County, Oregon; 29 September 2008. © John Sullivan.

9/10 in Hartford, CT; and 9/15 in Washington, RI. ME's 1st Hermit Warbler was photographed on Monhegan Is. 10/1.

**South-Central:** TX's Jabiru was present through mid-Sep in Willacy, where it was joined by a Ruff. Though hundreds of Magnificent Frigatebirds were reported along the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Ike, not many made it much farther inland than Baton Rouge. More notable Ike-related birds included a Sooty Tern in Van Zandt, TX and a Black Skimmer in Pulaski, AR 9/14. Birders found a juv. Little Gull in Yell, AR the same day. A Red Phalarope was photographed in Morton, KS 9/24. Both Plumbeous and Cassin's Vireos were noted in Morton, KS in mid-Sep. A Black-throated Gray Warbler was photographed in Cameron, LA 9/21. A Baird's Sparrow was found in Pawnee, KS 9/29.

**North-Central:** A Hurricane Ike-related Magnificent Frigatebird was seen in Stark, OH 9/16. Another frigatebird was found 9/24 in Leelenau, MI. Yet another was seen flying along the southern tip of Lake Michigan in Berrien, MI 9/26 and then in Porter and LaPorte, IN the next day. A flock of 4 Roseate Spoonbills frequented the Grand Tower Island area of Perry,

MO and Jackson, IL most of Sep. A Crested Caracara seen in Faulk 10/1 could be SD's 2nd accepted record. An astonishing potential 3 state firsts were found in IL on 9/13: a small flock of Cave Swallows in Clinton and a Mountain Plover and a probable Pacific Golden-Plover at a sod farm in Kankakee. A juv. Curlew Sandpiper rested at Ft. Erie, ON 10/5–8. A Long-billed Murrelet reported flying by a lakewatch in Lake 10/7 would be OH's 2nd. Prince Edward Point Bird Obs., ON hosted an adult Fork-tailed Flycatcher 10/5. A Boreal Owl banded 9/14 at Whitefish Point, Chippewa, MI was quite early. A Sprague's Pipit was seen 10/7 in Kane, IL. A Rock Wren was present in Grand Marais, Cook, MN in late Sep. A Violet-green Swallow was in Clinton, IL 9/15. A Varied Thrush turned up at Presquile Provincial Park, ON 10/2. A Prothonotary Warbler was photographed 9/26 in Billings, far western ND. Two Smith's Longspurs were in Alger, MI 9/12.

**Southwest:** A Roseate Spoonbill visited two locations in Maricopa, AZ 9/27–10/1. A juv. Short-tailed Hawk was discovered relatively far north in the Santa Rita Mountains of AZ 9/13. A Crested Caracara photographed in Esmeralda 9/20 was NV's 1st. Potentially AZ's 5th, an immature Northern Jacana appeared at Patagonia Lake, Santa Cruz 10/7. A juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger was on Lake Havasu, AZ 9/24–10/8; both Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers were also seen there. An adult male Ruby-throated Hummingbird returned for a second

fall to Santa Cruz, AZ 9/12; the same feeders were frequented by a Plain-capped Starthroat 9/12–23. One or two Buff-breasted Flycatchers in Santa Cruz, AZ 9/13–21 may have represented colonizers at a recent burn in the Santa Ritas. The ABA Area's 1st Sinaloa Wren continued in Santa Cruz, AZ throughout the period. A Prothonotary Warbler was photographed in Maricopa, AZ 9/21, and no fewer than 4 were found in NV. A Kentucky Warbler was in Maricopa, AZ 10/5. A "Cinnamon-rumped" Seedeater in Maricopa, AZ 10/3–7 incited the usual origin debate. A Dickcissel 9/26–28 in Esmeralda, NV may have been related to an influx mostly noticed farther west. Still very rare in AZ, a Common Grackle was photographed in Apache 9/13.

**West Coast and Northwest:** A young Wandering Albatross was photographed in waters off Lincoln, OR 9/13; the record is only the 2nd for the ABA Area and OR's 1st. WA's 1st "Dark-rumped" (likely Hawaiian) Petrel was



**Little Bunting.** San José de Castro, Baja California Sur, Mexico; 8 October 2008. © Kurt Radamaker.

seen off Westport, WA 9/28. A Wood Sandpiper, OR's 1st and only the 5th for the Lower 48, was first detected 9/26 in Lane Canyon, ID hosted a Red Knot 9/5. CA's 11th Little Stint was in Monterey 9/14. A Laughing Gull 9/24 in Deschutes was one of only a handful

of OR records. Hart's Pass, *Okanogan*, WA has been hosting a Northern Hawk Owl. Belatedly and excitingly, North America's 2nd **Brown Hawk-Owl** was found dead at a volcanic gas seep on Kiska Island in the Alaskan Aleutians 8/1. A **Black-capped Vireo** banded at Vasseaux Lake, BC 9/27 represented a 1st record for BC and Canada's 2nd. Three Yellow-green Vireos were found in southern CA. A **Bluethroat** on San Clemente Island, *Los Angeles* 9/14 was a 1st record for the Lower 48. A male Siberian Rubythroat was photographed on 10/8 in Gambell, AK; a Siberian Accentor was photographed there on 9/15. A Blackburnian Warbler was reported from *Ada*, ID 9/2. CA's 6th Baird's Sparrow was on SE Farallon Is. 9/14. Potentially ID's 1st, a **Smith's Longspur** was reported from *Blaine* 9/13. A **Dickcissel** in *Ada* 9/27 provided ID with only its 2nd record of the species; the species was also relatively widespread in southern CA.

**Mexico:** A dark morph **Red-footed Booby**, a 1st record for Baja California (BC), was photographed after it landed on a boat just south of Ensenada 9/28; it remained and arrived in *San Diego*, CA waters the next day. Yellow-green Vireos were noted in BC at El Rosario 10/3 and Maneadero Plain 9/21. A **Northern Wheatear** was photographed 10/3 at Villa Jesús María, BC. A **Townsend's Solitaire** at Rancho San José de Castro 10/4–5 was a 2nd record for Baja California Sur (BCS). A Black-throated Blue Warbler was at Bahía Tortugas, BCS 10/4–5. A **Prairie Warbler** was found in Parque Chipinque, Nuevo León 10/4. A Canada Warbler was discovered at El Rosario, BC 10/3; a Kentucky Warbler was found there 10/6. Mexico's 1st **Little Bunting** was photographed at San José del Castro, BCS 10/8.