

SIGHTINGS

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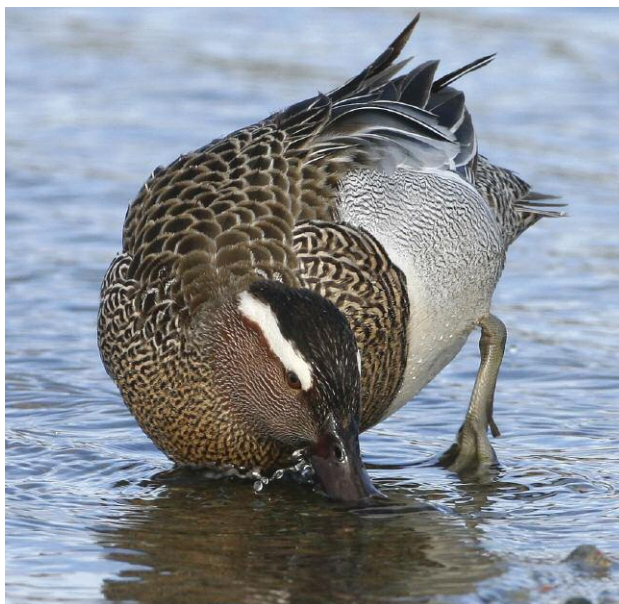
"Sightings" appears monthly, alternating between *Winging It* and *Birding*, with the latest news, reports, and rumors from the ABA Area and Mexico. Sightings are compiled from online discussion groups and RBAs, with valuable contributions from a growing network of informants continent-wide. Readers 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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Summary: Late May and early June are usually good for vagrants, as spring migrants, many of them heading back north for the very first time, inevitably wander off-course or overshoot their intended destinations. The January 2009 *Birding* photo quiz seems oddly prescient and timely in light of the appearance of the U.S.'s 1st **Gray-collared Becard**, a 1-day wonder photographed in southeast AZ. A **Greater Sand-Plover**—in stunning alternate plumage—delighted birders for an extended period in northern FL. **European** and **Swinhoe's Storm-Petrels** were photographed in the Gulf Stream. The original AZ **Sinaloa Wren** continues. Can it be much longer before its more-richly-colored and less-vocally-accomplished cousin, the Happy Wren, is found in the U.S.? State/provincial firsts included Mottled Duck (MO), Pacific Loon (SC), Bermuda Petrel (GA), Roseate Spoonbill (IN), Glossy Ibis (NV), Snail Kite (NC), Acadian Flycatcher (CO), Black-capped Vireo (QC), and **Fan-tailed Warbler** (NM).

Southeast: A pair of **Pacific Loons**, SC's 1st documented record, remained on Lake Russell (also in GA) through late May. An immature Red-billed Tropicbird flew across the GA-SC state line on a 5/30 pelagic trip; it would constitute

SC's 3rd and GA's 2nd record. That same trip produced GA's 1st **Bermuda Petrel**, pending acceptance. Bermuda Petrels were also observed off Cape Hatteras, NC; 3 were observed 5/29, when a **European Storm-Petrel** was also noted. A later pelagic produced a **Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel** 6/6. Late to press but still noteworthy is word of NC's 1st **Snail**



Garganey. St. John's, Newfoundland; 15 May 2009. © Bruce Mactavish.

Kite, salvaged in Columbus, NC 4/10. An alternate-plumaged **Greater Sand-Plover**, North America's and the western hemisphere's 2nd, was well photographed during its 5/14–27 stay at Huguenot Memorial Park near Jacksonville, FL. A **Zenaida Dove** was discovered on Key Largo, *Monroe*, FL 6/4. As is all too often the case, an immature Fork-tailed Flycatcher (AL's 4th) at Mobile's Blakely Is. was a 1-day wonder (3 hours, actually) 5/21. An exhausted **Sprague's Pipit** landed on a ship 40

miles off the NC coast 6/2. A male **Western Spindalis** was observed 5/19 at Boynton Beach, FL, and a male Shiny Cowbird was photographed 5/24 in St. Petersburg, FL.

Mid-Atlantic: A **Yellow-nosed Albatross** was reported over Assateague Is., Worcester, MD 6/6. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher delighted many on 5/26 when it visited Eastern Neck NWR, Kent, MD; another appeared in Union, NJ 6/1. Swainson's Warblers were discovered in Mercer and Monmouth, NJ in late May. Dozens of White-winged Crossbills were still being seen well into June in PA, and Pine Siskins were confirmed nesting across the region.

Northeast: A drake **Garganey** was photographed during its 5/15–17 stay in St. John's; it is the 3rd record for NL. An Eared Grebe was noted in Sanford, York, ME 5/26+. A frigatebird flew by l'Île Verte, QC 6/2. A **Little Egret** stopped at Codroy Estuary, NL 5/29–30. A **Reddish Egret** was reported from Brooklyn, NS 5/27. A pair of Mississippi Kites flew over a Cumberland, ME backyard 5/31. Three **European Golden-Plovers** continued at Bonavista, NL until 5/13. *Essex*, MA hosted a photogenic Chuck-will's-widow 5/16. A Northern Rough-winged Swallow found at Codroy Estuary 6/1 provided 1 of only a handful of records for NL. A male **Black-capped Vireo** was photographed at Pointe-aux-Outardes, QC 5/24. Two different Sedge Wrens



European Storm-Petrel. Off Hatteras, North Carolina; 29 May 2009. © Chris Sloan.

were found at Digby Neck, NS in late May. A male Lark Bunting turned up in Kennebunk, ME 6/10. A Boat-tailed Grackle was reported from Freeport, NS 6/3–4. Common Chaffinches were noted in 3 different QC towns in late May; though probably escapees, the simultaneous appearance of the species in MI is interesting.

North-Central: Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks are currently breeding as close as TN, so reports of 2 in Pope, IL, 1 in Madison, IL, and 2 in Boone, MO were not too surprising. MO's 1st well-documented Mottled Duck was seen at Otter Slough Cons. Area, Stoddard 6/2+; a pair of Fulvous Whistling-Ducks was also present. Brown Pelicans staged a noteworthy movement into IL, MO, and SD. Up to 9 Anhingas were reported from Pulaski, IL; another turned up in Oregon, MO 5/25. IN's 1st Roseate Spoonbill, an immature, first appeared at Goose Pond, Greene, IN 6/2; it was later joined by a pair of Fulvous Whistling-Ducks. A Swallow-tailed Kite flew over Schuyler, IL 5/17. A Purple Gallinule was photographed 6/8 in Walworth, WI. A Snowy Plover was found at Dorion, ON 5/22–23. A Flammulated Owl was seen 5/27 in Pennington, SD; the status

of this species in the Black Hills remains an enigma. Quite remarkable were ON observations of single Black Swifts flying over Long Point 5/12–13 and Point Pelee 5/17–18. Fish Crows seem to be gaining a foothold along Lake Michigan, with a flock of 6 splitting its time between Berrien, MI and LaPorte, IN. A Bell's Vireo was at Point Pelee, ON 5/15. A

Northern Wheatear appeared at Temiskaming, ON 6/2. Lowden-Miller State Forest in Ogle, IL hosted a male Black-throated Gray Warbler 5/23–24. A Yellow-throated Warbler was found in Hiddenwood SP, Walworth, SD 5/16. A Worm-eating Warbler was in extreme western SD (Harding) 5/23–24, and a Green-tailed Towhee was found nearby a day earlier. A Chestnut-colored Longspur was found 5/30 at Thunder Cape Bird Observatory near Thunder Bay, ON, where a Lazuli Bunting turned up the next day. The presence of 8 Common Chaffinches at



Greater Sand-Plover. Huguenot Memorial Park, Florida; 14 May 2009. © Roger Clark.

Whitefish Point, MI, another in DuPage, IL, a Linnet at Tawas Point, MI, and multiple "Gray-headed" [Eurasian] Goldfinches in the Chicago area were



Fan-tailed Warbler. Roosevelt County, New Mexico; 19 May 2009. © Jerry Oldenettel.

reminders that birders in the Great Lakes region have to contend with jail-breaking Old World finches turning up at any time.

South-Central: Masked Ducks were still being seen at Laguna Atascosa NWR, Cameron, TX through the end of May. The famous Greater-American Flamingo pair (the latter a bird wild) remained in Cameron, LA through 5/14, shortly after which the latter appeared in Brazoria, TX. Green Violetears appeared in 3 TX counties: Hidalgo, Gillespie, and Kerr. A Yellow-green Vireo was found at Johnsons Bayou, Cameron, LA 5/16–18, and a 2nd bird was found nearby 5/17–18. At least 3 turned up at coastal TX migrant traps, and another returned to a residential area in Brownsville, TX for its 6th consecutive summer. AR's 3rd Lark Bunting, an adult male, was a 1-day wonder in Boone 6/4 June. A Shiny Cowbird was found in Cameron, LA 6/6.

Mexico: Interesting reports from Ensenada, Baja California 5/14–15 include a Brant, a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, a Surf Scoter, and a Franklin's Gull.

Interior West: Overall, it was an exceptional month for eastern passerines. A **Baikal Teal** was found northeast of Calgary, AB 4/30. An alternate-plumaged Yellow-billed Loon was observed 5/17–18 at Rockport SP, Summit, UT. NV's 1st **Glossy Ibis** was at Pahrana-gat NWR in late May. A **King/Clapper Rail** appeared at Bosque del Apache NWR, Socorro, NM 5/9; it would be the state's 2nd record if a King and its 1st if a Clapper. An impressive number of **White-rumped Sandpipers** were photographed at Willcox, AZ, where totals ranged up to 13 birds on 6/4; the state had only 8 prior records—all of individual birds. A Little Gull was noted 5/13 at Sandpoint, Bonner, ID. CA's Salton Sea was again the site of a nesting attempt by a pair of Heermann's Gulls. A small invasion of Elegant Terns into AZ in early June coincided with major nest abandonment caused by warm water in the Gulf of California. An **Eared Quetzal** was reported from Chiricahua National Monument, AZ 5/31. CO birders carefully documented the state's 1st **Acadian Flycatcher** in Bent 5/12. The biggest news of the month was the appearance of a female-type **Gray-collared Becard** in Portal, AZ's famous South Fork–Cave Creek 6/5. A **Black-capped Vireo** first detected on territory in Carlsbad Caverns NP, Eddy, NM 5/20 remained well into June. The Patagonia, AZ **Sinaloa Wren** constructed a nest. A **Crescent-chested Warbler** was present in Pinery Canyon in AZ's Chiricahua Mts. 5/13–16. A Northern Parula was at Camas NWR,

Jefferson, ID 5/24; a Magnolia Warbler was found at the same location 6/5. Two Hermit Warblers were in ID on 5/8: 1 in *Elmore* and the other in *Owyhee*. NV experienced a noteworthy incursion of Kentucky Warblers. A **Fan-tailed Warbler** was nicely photographed at the



Gray-collared Becard. South Fork–Cave Creek, Arizona; 5 June 2009. © Jillian Johnston.

North Roosevelt Trap, *Roosevelt* over its 5/18–19 stay, providing an unequivocal 1st NM record. A female Scarlet Tanager, ID's 2nd, was discovered 6/1 at Camas NWR. The Madera Canyon, AZ Flame-colored Tanager continued.

Pacific Coast: Oxnard, Ventura, CA hosted a Tricolored Heron 5/8–18. An accidentally photographed Glossy Ibis at Malheur NWR 5/23 provided the 4th record for OR; all have been since 2006. Both a Snowy Plover and a Hudsonian Godwit were photographed on Whidbey Is., WA 5/27. Two White-rumped Sandpipers were noted in CA: 1 in *Kings* 5/15 and another in *Kern* 5/24. A Little Gull stopped by Lake Tahoe, *Placer*, CA 6/5. A Sandwich Tern was at the mouth of the San Diego River 5/11, while a Gull-billed Tern appeared in *San Mateo*

5/17–18, providing a 1st documented record for northern CA. A Horned Puffin was near San Miguel Is., CA 5/16; 1 turned up a week later near Santa Cruz Is. A Broad-billed Hummingbird was seen in Borrego Springs, *San Diego*, CA 6/3. CA's 1st springtime **Great Crested Flycatcher** was found at Pt. Loma, *San Diego* 5/20. At least 6 Yellow-throated and 5 White-eyed Vireos were noted across CA. The appearance of 4 Red-eyed Vireos in *San Diego*, CA alone was unprecedented. Visitors to HI's Alakai Swamp found a Puaiohi (Small Kaua'i Thrush) nest 5/31. *Harney*, OR oases produced a nice assortment of vagrants, including Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, and Palm Warblers. A singing Yellow-throated Warbler was near Nertarts, *Tillamook* 6/2; it would be OR's 6th. Cape May Warblers appeared at Pt. Reyes, CA 5/30 and Oasis, *Mono*, CA 6/4. A singing Hooded Warbler was in the Coast Range within *Coos*, OR 5/29. Nicely lining up with observations in NV, Kentucky Warblers were noted in *Kern* (2 individuals) and *San Bernardino*, CA. A Dickcissel, only OR's 2nd spring record, was photographed at Grants Pass, *Josephine* 5/27. A tardy Snow Bunting was observed in Pacific Grove, *Monterey*, CA 5/23–26; 1 was in coastal *Douglas*, OR 6/6. A Hawfinch was photographed 6/4 at Nome, AK. Eurasian visitors noted on AK's Aleutians and Bering Sea islands included Taiga Bean-Goose, Falcated Duck, Smew, Wood Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Black-tailed Godwit, Black-tailed Gull, Taiga Flycatcher, Eyebrowed Thrush, Dusky Thrush, Rustic Bunting, and Brambling. At least 2 'Akeke'e were found in the Alakai Swamp, Kaua'i 5/31.