

December 2013 sightings, available online to ABA members only, have been posted to the ABA website: aba.org/birding



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"Sightings" appears monthly, alternating between *Birding* and *Birding Online* <aba.org/birding>, with the latest news from the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Sightings are compiled from *Birding News* <birding.aba.org>, *eBird* <ebird.org>, and other online resources, with valuable contributions from a network of local experts. Readers should note that few of these reports have yet been vetted by a records committee. All birders are urged to submit documentation of rare sightings to the appropriate state or provincial committees and *eBird*. For full analysis of these and other bird observations, subscribe to *North American Birds* <aba.org/nab>, the ABA's richly illustrated online journal of ornithological record. In this compilation, *italicized place names* denote counties or parishes.

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Summary: Snowy Owls made headlines this month as they flew south after a boom-year breeding season. Hungry youngsters, having devoured an overabundance of lemmings in the Arctic, accumulated in places like Cape Race, NL, where as many as 73 were noted 11/30; dozens more blew into the Great Lakes region, New England, the Mid-Atlantic, and beyond, and by the month's end, several had reached NC, and 1 had drifted to Bermuda. An **Amazon Kingfisher** near Brownsville, TX was the 2nd ever for the ABA Area; TX also hosted the ABA Area's 1st, at Laredo in 2010. Potential state and provincial 1sts included **Tundra Bean-Goose** (NS), Elegant Tern (ON), Calliope Hummingbird (MB), Say's Phoebe (WV), and Gray Kingbird (DE).

Northeast: A **Tundra Bean-Goose** discovered in Yarmouth, NS 11/8–30 was a potential provincial 1st and represented 1 of only 4 or 5 ABA Area records of the species outside AK (others are from QC, YT, and CA). A Pink-footed Goose continued in Truro, NS through 11/18, and another was at Bonavista, NL 11/8–11. RI's 3rd Ross's Goose was in Exeter 11/23–30, and

continuing birds were at Sainte-Marie-de-Kent, NB through 11/21, and Windsor, NS through 11/21. A Barnacle Goose appeared at Watertown, CT 11/2, and another continued in the Truro area of NS through 11/5. A Ross's Gull was at Chambly near Montreal, QC 11/10–20.

CT's 1st **Black-chinned Hummingbird** continued in *Fairfield* as of 11/10, and NH's 1st **Calliope Hummingbird** continued in *Hillsborough* through 11/23. In MA, a Gyrfalcon was seen in *Norfolk* 11/3, and a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was identified on Nantucket I. 11/15, but may have been present there for 2 weeks prior to that date. A Fork-tailed Flycatcher in Hadlyme 11/30 was CT's 4th. A late Prothonotary Warbler landed on a vessel on the Grand Banks in NL waters 11/4, and elsewhere in the province a **Virginia's Warbler** at St. John's 11/14–30 was a 1st for the island of Newfoundland; a previous record exists for Labrador from 1994. Harris's Sparrows were in



Tundra Bean-Goose. Yarmouth, Nova Scotia; 21 November 2013. Photo by © Ronnie D'Entremont.

Hampton, NB 11/27–30 and Essex, MA 11/28–30. A Western Tanager was in St. John West, NB 11/3–11, and another was in Essex, MA 11/16–30. Also in MA, a Painted Bunting was on Cape Cod 11/21.

East-Central: Western Grebes were seen from shore in Asateague, MD 11/16, Cape Henlopen, DE 11/22, and Sandy Hook, NJ 11/22. In PA, an Anhinga appeared over Bake Oven Knob Autumn Hawk Watch in *Lehigh* 11/12, and a Swainson's Hawk overflew *Northampton* 11/21. An **Elegant Tern** was discovered on Grand I. in the Niagara R. 11/20, where it represented NY's 2nd record; the bird continued in the area through 11/24 and was seen in both NY and ON. An unusual hummingbird 1st seen in *Franklin* in late October was banded 11/13 and found to be PA's 2nd **Black-chinned Hummingbird**; it continued there through 11/25.

Also in PA, a Prairie Falcon returned to *Cumberland* for the 7th consecutive winter, and a Say's Phoebe was photographed in *Lehigh* 11/18. An Ash-throated Flycatcher visited *Nassau*, NY 11/16–25. DE's 1st **Gray Kingbird** made a brief but memorable appearance in *Sussex* 11/6. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher turned heads in Philadelphia, PA 11/16–19, and elsewhere in the state, a **MacGillivray's Warbler** in *Dauphin* 11/22–30 was PA's 2nd. NY hosted a Harris's Sparrow in *Madison* 11/9, as well as a continuing **Common Linnet** in *Queens*; if a wild bird, the latter could represent a state 1st, although historical records exist that may also pertain to wild birds. Several species of European finches have turned up in the East and Midwest in recent years, all presumably escapees.

Southeast: A pair of Fulvous Whistling-Ducks was out of range at Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center in *Georgetown*, SC 11/23. A Pacific Loon was reported from both the GA and SC sides of L. Hartwell 11/26–29, and in GA, the species was also reported from *Forsyth* 11/14 and *Gwinnett* 11/22–27. A Red-footed Booby was photographed 3 mi. off *Miami-Dade*, FL 11/1. A Black-legged Kittiwake was at Wilson Dam in AL 11/27–28, and 2 ad. Little Gulls were found in Chattanooga, TN 11/25. Continuing **Bar-tailed Godwits** were at Chincoteague NWR in VA 11/9, and in *Pinellas/Pasco*, FL through 11/30. A Snowy Owl appeared on the beach in *Dare*, NC 11/26–30, where it was the state's 8th—and 1st since 2001; elsewhere in the state, the species was reported from *Rockingham*



Black-chinned Hummingbird.

Shady Grove, Pennsylvania;
15 November 2013.

Photo by © Geoff Malosh.

11/28 and *Hyde* 11/30, while others were in *Chester*, VA 11/24, in *Jefferson*, KY 11/27, and at Dulles Int'l Airport outside Washington, D.C. 11/30.

A Calliope Hummingbird was a nice find in *Calhoun*, FL 11/29–30. A **Say's Phoebe** in *Mason*, WV 11/28–29 was a potential state 1st, and the species also appeared in *DeSoto*, FL 11/10–18 and *Lake*, TN 11/25. An Ash-throated Flycatcher was banded on Kiawah I., SC 11/4, and others were at Kiptopeke Hawk Watch in VA 11/15, and in *Carteret*, NC 11/17. In FL, a Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher made a brief appearance in *Collier* 11/1, and a Cassin's Kingbird was in *Flagler* 11/21–30. A Northern Shrike was in *Union*, KY 11/2, and a Townsend's Solitaire was at Honeymoon I. SP in *Pinellas*, FL 11/3–7. A Western Tanager returned to a Williamsburg, VA feeder 11/10 for the 6th consecutive fall/winter.

North-Central: A Harlequin Duck was seen just off *Lake*, OH 11/13; it or another was seen there with a King Eider 11/16.



Virginia's Warbler. *St. John's, Newfoundland; November 2013.*

Photo by © Bruce Mactavish.

ON's 1st **Brown Booby**, discovered in early Oct. on the Niagara R., was found on L. Erie at Long Point 10/31–11/1 and then 60 km. (37 mi.) ENE at Lowbanks 11/1–2. A Northern Gannet was seen from Cleveland, OH 11/10–20. A Roseate Spoonbill was an outlandish sight in *Sangamon*, IL 11/29. In shorebird news, a Snowy Plover was a nice find at Point Pelee NP, ON 11/1, IA racked up its 5th-ever **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** in *Tama* 11/10–12, and a Red Phalarope graced *Platte*, NE 11/11–17. Roving gulls reported from the region included a Little in *Marion*, IA 11/16–30, a Laughing in *St. Louis*, MN 11/10, and an ad. California in *Berrien*, MI 11/10–11. An **Elegant Tern** discovered on the NY side of the Niagara R. 11/20 became a provincial 1st when it overflowed the ON side at Fort Erie 11/22; it was seen again in ON 11/24. An **Ancient Murrelet** turned up on L. Michigan in *Oceana*, MI 11/16–19; it or another was seen from *Porter*, IN 11/22.

Snowy Owls reached MO and KS. MB hosted its 1st **Caliope Hummingbird** in Selkirk 11/9. A Lewis's Woodpecker was in *Roseau–Lake of the Woods*, MN 11/3–26, and 2 were reported from Omaha, NE 11/30. KS's 2nd Great Kiskadee continued at McPherson State Fishing L. through 11/24, where it was discovered in Sep. A **Violet-green Swallow** was photographed at Illinois Beach SP Hawk Watch in *Lake*, IL 11/10, and a Mountain Bluebird dropped in on *Monroe*, MI 11/1. Single Bohemian Waxwings were reported from *O'Brien*, IA 11/4, and in NE at Sutherland Res. and *Cheyenne* 11/10. A Lark Sparrow was at Fort Erie, ON 11/24–27.

South-Central: Noteworthy larids were a Black-legged Kittiwake in *Reeves*, TX 11/17–29 and a Kumlien's [Iceland] Gull on L. Ponchartrain, LA 11/23–30. A Costa's Hummingbird was

Ancient Murrelet. *Pentwater, Michigan; 18 November 2013.*
Photo by © Sean Williams.



Gray Kingbird. *Milford, Delaware; 6 November 2013.* Photo by © Chuck Fullmer.

in the Christmas Mtns. of w. TX 11/22–30. In OK, a Lewis's Woodpecker was reported from Taylor L. 11/9–29, and a Crested Caracara was in *Johnston* 11/19. An **Amazon Kingfisher** delighted attendees of the Rio Grande Valley Bird Festival 11/9–30 on a resaca (oxbow) of the Rio Grande in *Cameron*; it represented the 2nd record for both TX and the ABA Area. Also in TX, a Rose-throated Becard was at Santa Ana NWR 11/11.

Mexico: A **Surf Scoter** and a Red-breasted Merganser were terrific in Salcido, Durango 11/30. A Hooded Merganser was found near Saltillo, Coahuila 11/30. Baja California's 1st **Red-necked Grebe** continued at Estero Punta Banda through 11/8. No fewer than 26 **Red-necked Phalaropes** were tallied at the Las Coloradas salt ponds in Yucatán 11/29. An **Amazon Kingfisher** was a superb find at San Pablo Etla in the central valleys of Oaxaca 11/25, and a Rose-throated Becard was out of range at Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala 11/15. A Cape May Warbler was unexpected at Minatitlán, Veracruz 11/10. A Western Palm Warbler was at La Venta, Oaxaca 11/2 and another Palm Warbler was in Salcido, Durango 11/30.

Interior West: In AZ, single Black Scoters appeared on L. Havasu 11/10–31 and in Tucson 11/22–30, while both Blue-footed and Brown boobies continued on L. Havasu. Ad. Black-legged Kittiwakes were in CO in *Weld* 11/6 and *Mesa* 11/19–20. Another ad. kittiwake at Ennis L., *Madison* 11/10–19 was MT's 5th and the state's 6th; an imm., turned up at the same location 11/19. The species was also reported from *Socorro*, NM 11/28. A Laughing Gull was in *Graham*, AZ 11/10, and *Salt Lake*, UT hosted Heermann's and Iceland gulls 11/23 and



Tropical Kingbird. Ogden Wildlife Management Area, Weber County, Utah; 9 November 2013. Photo by © Paul Higgins.

11/29, respectively; the latter species was also noted in *Larimer*, CO 11/20. Elsewhere in CO, a Great Black-backed Gull was in *Pueblo* 11/16 and 11/26–27, and a Parasitic Jaeger was in *Bent/Kiowa* 11/4, while a Lesser Black-backed Gull was in *Teton*, MT 11/8.

An **Eared Quetzal** graced *Madera Canyon*, AZ 11/7. An Anna's Hummingbird continued in *Calgary*, AB through 11/4, and an imm. male Costa's Hummingbird in *El Paso*, CO 11/1–30 represented 1 of fewer than 10 records for the state. A Red-bellied Woodpecker in *Phillips*, MT 10/30 was that state's 5th. A Vermilion Flycatcher was reported from *Logan*, CO 11/2, and a **Nutting's Flycatcher** continued at AZ's Bill Williams R. NWR for the 3rd winter. UT's 2nd **Tropical Kingbird** was in *Weber* 11/7–10. NV's 3rd Winter Wren was in *Lincoln* 11/13, and another in *Washington*, UT 11/27–30 was that state's 3rd. The distribution of Winter Wren in the region is not fully understood, and the species may be more widespread than reported. In AZ, a **Sinaloa Wren** continued at *Huachuca Canyon*, and another report of the species came from *Tubac* 11/14–16, where it was last reported in late Sep.

Rambling warblers included a Black-throated Blue in *Esmeralda*, NV 11/5 and in AZ a Tennessee Warbler continuing in *Tubac* through 11/4, as well as Rufous-capped Warblers in *Florida*, *Hunter*, and *Miller canyons*. Also in AZ, an American Tree Sparrow in *Coconino* 11/9 was the state's 5th. A **Le Conte's Sparrow**

Amazon Kingfisher. Brownsville, Texas; 12 November 2013. Photo by © Larry Ditto.

at C. J. Strike Res. in s. ID was that state's 2nd—and 1st since 1896. A Painted Bunting was in *Washington*, UT 11/28–29. A Rusty Blackbird was photographed in *Cochise*, AZ 11/19, and a **Streak-backed Oriole** was in *La Paz* 11/4; the latter species also turned up in *Eddy*, NM 11/10–14, where it was that state's 5th.

Alaska: A **Dusky Thrush** returned to Anchorage, where it was recorded 11/24 for the 3rd consecutive fall and continued through 11/30. A Tennessee Warbler was in *Homer* 11/3–5. A Nashville Warbler in Anchorage 11/13 represented 1 of just a few to appear in the state. A Brambling was in *Seward* 11/28.

Pacific Coast: A pair of Barrow's Goldeneye was in *Los Angeles*, CA 11/25, and the fem. was present 11/26. A Masked Booby continued off *Los Angeles*, CA through 11/3. Blue-footed Boobies continued in *San Diego*, *Los Angeles*, *Riverside*, *Santa Barbara*, and *Marin*. A **Brown Booby** landed on a commercial fishing boat off *Ucluelet*, BC 11/12. Continuing in CA were a Black Vulture in *San Luis Obispo* all month, a Bar-tailed Godwit in *Santa Clara* 11/15–17, and a Ruff in *Sonoma* through 11/10. OR's 1st **Red-bellied Woodpecker** continued in *Union*.

Two Blue-headed Vireos were in *San Diego*, CA, 1 of which returned for the 4th year. BC's 3rd Great Crested Flycatcher continued at *Chilliwack* through 11/1. A Vermilion Flycatcher returned for the 3rd consecutive fall to *Ridgefield NWR* in WA, where it was observed 11/25–29. A Dusky-capped Flycatcher

Continued on page 64



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Victoria's Riflebird

Continued from page 31

was in Monterey, CA 11/16–18. An Ash-throated Flycatcher at Prince George, BC 11/23 represented an extreme northerly record. A Thick-billed Kingbird returned to San Diego, CA for the 4th consecutive winter 11/4. Also in CA, Zzyzx Desert Studies Center in San Bernardino hosted a Wood Thrush 11/14–17, a Rufous-backed Robin 11/13, and a Bohemian Waxwing 11/27–28; the latter species was also reported from Modoc, where a flock of 4 was present 11/29. A Mourning Warbler was in San Diego, CA 11/3, and a Yellow-throated Warbler was in Marion, OR 11/29–30. A Grace's Warbler returned to San Diego, CA for the 3rd consecutive winter, and another was found in Santa Barbara 11/6–11. Also in CA were a Painted Bunting in Monterey 11/11 and a total of 3 Rusty Blackbirds discovered at 2 Los Angeles sites; Marin and Santa Cruz hosted 2 more Rusties. A Common Grackle came to a feeder in Knutsford, Kamloops, BC 11/11–14.

Hawaiian Islands: Two Snow Geese were on 'Ohi'apilo Pond, Moloka'i 11/16, while a Canvasback was at Kuilima Wastewater Treatment Plant in O'ahu 11/29, and a Tufted Duck was there 11/30. A moribund Red-breasted Merganser was unexpected at Pololu Valley, Kohala, Hawai'i I. 11/13. On O'ahu, a Northern Harrier was at Kahuku 11/29, and a Gray-tailed Tattler and a Red Knot were at the Honouliuli Unit of Pearl Harbor NWR. A Curlew Sandpiper was on Moloka'i I. 11/16.

Addenda: A Snowy Owl photographed in Bermuda 11/28 at Gibbs Hill, and continuing there 11/29, was the most unusual report thus far of the current invasion. A late report came from Vancouver, BC of a Yellow-green Vireo photographed 9/18; this would represent a 1st record for the province and a 2nd for Canada (the country's 1st pertains to a specimen taken in 1899 in QC).

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