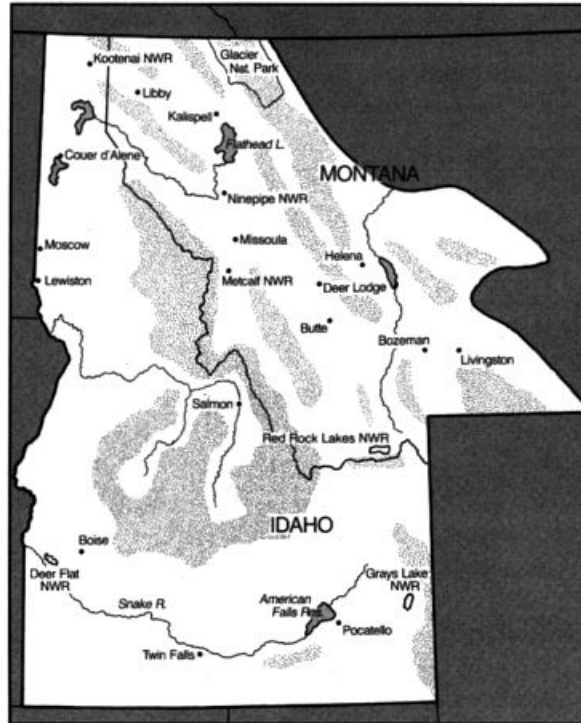


Idaho—Western Montana

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Spring 2001 weather was variable across the Region but averaged warmer and much drier than usual. In fact, this May was Montana's fifth driest in 106 years. Bird migration was rather uneventful at most locations, but Idaho's Camas National Wildlife Refuge and nearby Market Lake Wildlife Management Area hosted spectacular numbers of migrants that included three first state records and many other exciting rarities in the last two weeks of May.

This column is dedicated to the memory of Boise birder Florence Knoll, who died on 11 March. Florence was an experienced field ornithologist, frequent contributor to this journal, and a good friend to many in the birding community in both Idaho and Montana. She is dearly missed.

Abbreviations: A.F.R. (American Falls Res., by American Falls, Idaho); Camas (Camas N.W.R., Jefferson, ID); Lee Metcalf (Lee Metcalf N.W.R., Ravalli, MT); Market L (Market Lake W.M.A., Jefferson, ID).

LOONS THROUGH CRANES

Both rare and unseasonal was a breeding-plumaged Pacific Loon in Bonner, ID 29–31 May+ (LH). As in the last few years, American White Pelicans wandered far n., with one at Lee Metcalf 7 Apr (WT), up to 40 in Nez Perce, ID 15 Apr–28 May (m. ob.), and 40 in Kootenai, ID 30 May (SS). Great Egrets also strayed n., with singles reported at Mann L., Nez Perce, ID 28 Apr–16 May (KC, m. ob.), Bozeman, MT 12 May (JP, R&RW), and in Gallatin, MT 14 May (RI). Unlike recent years, a White-faced Ibis near Challis, ID 29 May (*vide* D&EF) was the only extralimital report. Mute Swans are showing up increas-



Idaho's third Hooded Warbler stopped at Argonne-West Lab, west of Idaho Falls, in remote Bingham County and was present from 8–11 May. It was discovered by Argonne-West employee and birder Dale Miller, who showed this beautiful male to many of his coworkers and visiting birders. The species made headlines in many parts of the West this spring. *Photograph by Ed Hahn.*

ingly frequently in Idaho, with reports of up to 2 at Fort Boise W.M.A., *Canyon* 1–18 Mar (m. ob.), and singles in *Blaine* 5 Apr (PWP) and near A.F.R. 14 Apr (DB). Undoubtedly one of the season's best finds was a **Whooper Swan** near Somers 5–11 Mar (ph. DC, m. ob.) which provided a first for Montana and the Region. Single Idaho Trumpeter Swans were out of range in *Nez Perce* 11 Apr (KC) and *Kootenai* 18 Mar and 16 May (SL). Like last year, Eurasian Wigeon numbers were high, with totals of at least 12 in Idaho and 18 in w. Montana. Ducks staged in extraordinary numbers at some locations, with 1263 American Wigeon at Lee Metcalf 15 Mar (WT) and an estimated 650 Common Goldeneyes and 975 Common Mergansers in *Canyon*, ID 10 Mar (JG). A Harlequin Duck strayed to Canyon Ferry Res., *Lewis and Clark*, MT 23 May (DE). An apparent Hooded Merganser x Common Goldeneye hybrid that visited *Flathead* in mid-Apr (DC) was odd but not unprecedented in w. Montana. Also far n. of typical range was a Swainson's Hawk in *Kootenai*, ID 28 Mar

(SL). The Rough-legged Hawk in *Owyhee*, ID 16 May (JD) was almost a month late. An estimated 1200 Sandhill Cranes staged in *Gem*, ID 31 Mar (CS), at least double the usual numbers there.

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH MOCKINGBIRD

Pluvialis plovers are unusual in spring, but Idaho hosted single Black-bellied Plovers in *Fremont* 6–8 May, *Blaine* 11 May (LG, RM), and *Jefferson* 21 May (GR), and an American Golden-Plover in *Fremont* 6 May (CW). A total of 21 Black-necked Stilts was reported away from their s. Idaho range, including a record 15 at Lee Metcalf 26 Apr (WT). Notable Montana shorebirds included a Marbled Godwit at Lee Metcalf 21 Apr (WT), a Red Knot in *Lewis and Clark* 12 May (GH, DS, JS), and a Dunlin near Missoula 10–24 Mar (LW). Whimbrels had an unusually good showing, with one in *Boundary* 10 May (PC) and 4 at Mann L. 16 May (RW), representing Idaho's 13-14th records. The best shorebird of the season was a **White-rumped Sandpiper** in *Jefferson* 27–28 May (†CT,

†CW, m. ob.) that provided Idaho's 4th record.

Incredible numbers of small gulls staged at Minidoka N.W.R., *Minidoka*, ID, including over 5000 Franklin's Gulls 16 Apr–11 May and about 5000 Bonaparte's Gulls 23–30 Apr (SB). Rare Pacific Coast gull numbers were fairly typical, with one Mew Gull, 5 Thayer's Gulls, a Glaucous-winged Gull, and 5 Glaucous Gulls reported. Up to 20 Pinyon Jays visited w. Montana's Bitterroot Valley until 7 Apr (DL). Single Idaho Band-tailed Pigeons were reported in *Gem* 22 Apr (FZ) and *Kootenai* 21 May (SW). At least 3 **Eurasian Collared-Doves** continued near American Falls, ID throughout the period (CT), where breeding was suspected but not proven. Camas hosted Idaho's 12th Black-billed Cuckoo 26–28 May (BD, DM, m. ob.) and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo on 28 May (DM) Both rare and late was a Snowy Owl near Polson, MT 21 Mar (JR). Especially unusual in spring were 2 wayward Ash-throated Flycatchers in Boise, ID 7–8 May (KR, MC) Also out of range was a Loggerhead Shrike at Lee Metcalf 5 Apr (CE) and Idaho Bewick's Wrens in *Payette* 1–5 Mar (m. ob.) and *Ada* 3 May (DT). A Northern Mockingbird that overwintered in *Canyon*, ID was last seen 11 Mar (CD).

WARBLERS THROUGH GOLDFINCHES

Among the many migrants reported at Camas were an incredible 21 species of warblers in mid- to late May, including rarities such as Idaho's 2nd **Golden-winged Warbler** 25 May (PWP, DS), 3rd **Northern Parula** 24–26 May (MCR, †CT, m. ob.), a Chestnut-sided Warbler 25–26 May (BD, m. ob.), 9th **Magnolia Warbler** 23 May (BD, m. ob.), first **Hermit Warbler** 22 May (†CT, †ph. CW, m. ob.), first **Black-throated Green Warbler** 12 May (MCR), 2 Blackpoll Warblers 19–25 May (MCR, BD, CT), 4 Black-and-white Warblers 12–31 May (m. ob.), and an Ovenbird 24 May (BD, m. ob.). Warbler highlights elsewhere in Idaho included the state's 10th **Black-throated Blue Warbler** in *Canyon* 28 May (†DT) and 3rd **Hooded Warbler** in *Bingham* 8–11 May (ph. EH, DM). Another spectacular find was a **Summer Tanager** at Market L. 27 May (D&EF, †CT, m. ob.) that provided Idaho's 4th record. It was a banner year for Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, with single males in Victor, MT 12 May (PC), *Blaine*, ID 18–19 May (JSe, BS), *Jefferson*, ID 18 May (DCI), near Helena, MT 26 May (JSc), and in *Oneida*, ID 26–31 May (JSa). The only Blue Grosbeak reported was in *Jefferson*, ID 14 May (CW). Indigo Buntings may have had

Mountain West

their best showing ever, with singles near Missoula, MT 13–22 Apr (RN), in Aberdeen, ID 12–13 May (DB), in Helena, MT 18–19 May (RW), in Butte, ID 25–26 May (CO), at Market Lake 27 May (D&EF), and at Camas on 28 May (DM). A singing male **Clay-colored Sparrow** in *Bonner* 27–31 May+ (DD) was Idaho's 9th. The only Golden-crowned Sparrow reported this season was in *Canyon*, ID 26–28 Apr (JA). Especially rare in spring were Lapland Longspurs in *Powell*, MT 3 Mar (BW) and *Elmore*, ID 25 May (JB). Reports of Idaho's Great-tailed Grackles were up from last year, with 5 in *Minidoka* 1–4 Mar (JC, ES) and singles in *Twin Falls* 31 Mar (B&SM), Boise 7 May (BC), *Minidoka* 8–13 May (SB), and *Power* 23 May (CT). Like last year, Common Grackles were seen in seven e. Idaho counties and at least two locations in w. Montana. A rare Purple Finch was an unprecedented find in *Owyhee*, ID 28 Apr (CS). Away from their local Idaho range in Boise and Pocatello, Lesser Goldfinches were reported below A.F.R. dam 1–31 Mar (m. ob.) and in *Salmon* 24 May (CH).

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Spring arrived up to two weeks earlier than normal east of the Rockies. Trees were fully leafed out by 1 May. The mountain areas of the Region experienced late heavy snows in April, providing above-normal snow packs in most ranges. With concentrated birding efforts in Colorado and Wyoming in proper habitat during migration, certain eastern species have apparently become regular. It appears that Glossy Ibis, Lesser Nighthawk, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, eastern vireos, Gray-cheeked Thrush, 35+ species of warbler, and other species, once considered quite rare, are findable each year. Future studies of migration and weather in this Region should confirm that eastern species are normal in the context of certain patterns of weather and that in some years many

eastern species are not rare. All sightings are from Colorado, unless otherwise indicated.

Abbreviations: B.S.W.M.A. (Bump Sullivan W.M.A., *Goshen*, WY); C.B.R. (Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso/Pueblo*, CO); Chatfield (Chatfield Res., *Jefferson/Douglas*, CO); C.V.C.G (Crow Valley Campground, Pawnee National Grasslands, *Weld*, CO); J.M.R. (John Martin Res., *Bent*, CO); E.K.W.S.P. (Edness Kimbal Wilkens State Park, *Natrona*, WY); F.L.W.E (Fort Lyon Wildlife Easement, *Bent*, CO); L.H.R (L. Hattie Res., *Albany*, WY); T.M.W.M.A. (Table Mountain W.M.A., *Goshen*, WY); W.H.R (Wyoming Hereford Ranch, e. of Cheyenne, *Laramie*, WY).

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

A basic-plumaged **Red-throated Loon** was at L.H.R. 24 May (SJD, JBF) and 22 Common Loons there 6 May (SJD). An ad. Neotropical Cormorant was at J.M.R. 8–9 Apr (BKP, MJ, SO). Single Least Bitterns were at Alamosa 11 May (JJR) and at C.B.R. 20 May (CLW et al.). A Great Egret was at Glendo Res., *Platte*, WY 18 May (CEM, JG). An ad. Little Blue Heron was at L. Henry, *Crowley* 29 Apr (VZ) and an ad