

## INTERGRADE JUNCOS (*JUNCO HYEMALIS* *MEARNSI* X *J. CANICEPS CANICEPS*) IN EASTERN COLORADO

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The foothills of the Colorado Front Range provide wintering habitat for several races of the *Junco* complex. One can easily observe Gray-headed Junco (*Junco caniceps caniceps*) as well as five recognizable forms of Dark-eyed Junco (*J. hyemalis*). Listed in general order of occurrence these forms include Pink-sided Junco (*J. h. mearnsi*), dark-hooded forms of Oregon Junco (*J. h. oregonus*), Slate-colored Junco (*J. h. hyemalis*) and White-winged Junco (*J. h. aikeni*).

Among one mixed *Junco* flock coming to feeders along Bluebell Canyon in Boulder County, Colorado, were two individuals which by plumage characteristics appeared to be vividly marked intergrades between *caniceps* and *mearnsi*. The flank color (typically gray in *caniceps* and warm buff in *mearnsi*) of both intergrades was a warm rusty-buff. Likewise, the back color (rust in *caniceps* and dull brown in *mearnsi*) was a rich rust (Figure 1). Both individuals were observed from early December 1979 to late March 1980. George F. Barrowclough, currently studying geographical variation in the genus *Junco*, examined a color photograph of one of these birds and confirmed that it appeared to be an individual from one of the intergrade populations of *J. c. caniceps* - *J. hyemalis mearnsi*.



Figure 1. Intergrade Gray-headed X Pink-sided Junco. Bluebell Canyon, Boulder County, Colorado, 20 March 1980.

Photo by Bruce E. Webb

## NOTES

Hybrid *mearnsi* X *caniceps* individuals have been recognized previously. Miller (Condor 41:211-214, 1939) describes such breeding specimens from isolated sections of the Wasatch Mountains in Utah and scattered ranges in southern Wyoming. Similar hybrids have been collected in the Flagstaff, Arizona, area in winter (specimens deposited at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, G.F. Barrowclough pers. comm.). However, east of the Continental Divide in Colorado, *Junco* hybrids of this combination are relatively rare.

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