

Utah Birds Records Committee – 2024 Report

Committee members Max Malmquist, Keeli Marvel, Bryant Olsen, Kristin Purdy, Dennis Shirley, Mike Schjif, Mark Stackhouse, David Wheeler and Kevin Wheeler. Non-voting members Milt Moody (outgoing Secretary/Webmaster), Jack Skalicky (Secretary), Eric Huish (Archivist), Colby Neuman (eBird Liaison), and Jeff Cooper (contributor).

This 2024 report was compiled by Milt Moody and proofread and revised by Milt Moody and Jack Skalicky. The report summarizes 95 records of species submitted in 2024. The Committee accepted 70 out of 95 (81.4%) of these records. Comments for some of these records were taken directly from the comments made in the review process or from others specific observations. These are indicated by an italicized paragraph at the end of the record information.

Three new species were accepted and added to the Utah Bird List in 2024: Black-headed Gull, Crested Caracara, and Field Sparrow.

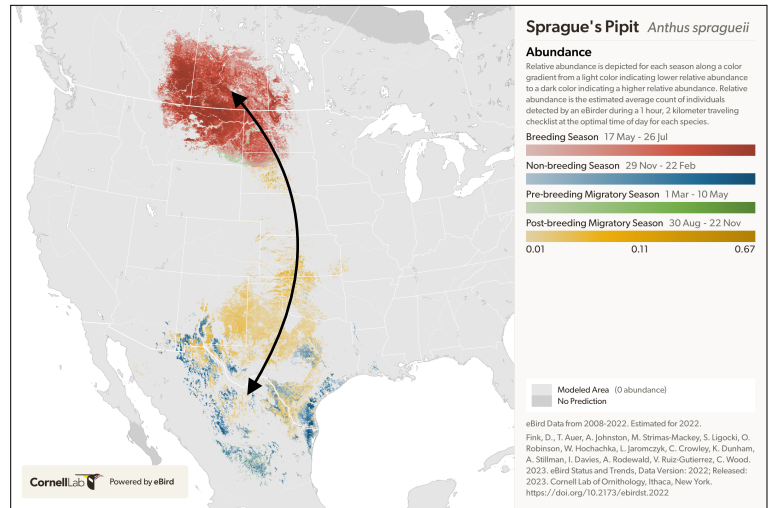
Black-headed Gull ([2024-54](#)) was found at Sand Hollow Reservoir, Washington County by Toni McQuivey Taylor on August 10th. The record provided excellent photographic documentation confirming the identification. Black-headed Gull is common and widespread across Eurasia. Vagrants in North America are rare but regular along the USA eastern seaboard from Florida to Maine, along the Canadian eastern seaboard, and throughout the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Seaway system. Vagrant records are relatively few in the western USA. Most individuals being reported along the Pacific coast, with few records from the intermountain west; eBird reports no records from Utah's neighboring states Idaho, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, and only a few records from Colorado (4), Wyoming (1), and now Utah (1) (<https://ebird.org/species/bkhgul>).

Crested Caracara was found at Ouray National Wildlife Refuge, Uintah County by Tory Mathis on August 28th ([2024-67](#)) and independently by Kathy Hackford ([2024-83](#)) on November 21st. Excellent photographic and written documentation confirmed the identification. The two records are assumed to describe the same individual. Formerly two species, Crested and Southern Caracara, are now combined to a single species. Most Crested Caracara records from the USA are from Florida and southern portions of Louisiana, Texas, and Arizona. Crested Caracara is also widespread throughout Mexico, Central America, and South America. Vagrant records within the continental USA are widespread, with a higher tendency near both coasts and more sparsely scattered in the interior USA and north to Canadian Provinces British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia (<https://ebird.org/species/y00678>).

The **Field Sparrow** record ([1999-01A](#)) was accepted 25 years ago, **without physical evidence**, sufficient for recognition as a "Provisional Species" and thus placed on the Auxiliary List. Since then the record author, Colby Neuman, has provided an original photograph of the Field Sparrow to the records committee. The committee accepted the record with photographic evidence elevating the species to the [Official Checklist](#). The two first accepted records discussed above, Black-head Gull and Crested Caracara, and elevation of the Field Sparrow status, adds three new species to the [Official Checklist](#).

The **Sprague's Pipit** record (2024-15) was accepted, without physical evidence presented, resulting in status of "Provisional Species" and is placed on the Auxiliary Bird List. The record is stamped April 19, 2024 at the Inland Sea Shorebird Reserve in Salt Lake County by Quinn Diaz. The record is well documented with detailed notes on the bird's field marks, structure, flight behavior, and vocalization heard.

Sprague's Pipit is highly dependent on prairie and grasslands habitat for breeding, migration stopovers, and wintering birds. The same migration route is used for northward spring migration as for fall southward migration. This phenomenon is convincingly demonstrated at this link (<https://science.ebird.org/en/status-and-trends/species/sprpip/abundance-map-weekly?week=1>). The shape of the overall migration route is that of an arc that bends



The northeast Mexico habitat primarily consists of **shortgrass prairies within the larger "Chihuahuan Desert grasslands,"** characterized by arid conditions and dominated by grasses like blue grama, buffalograss, and sideoats grama, with occasional sparse shrubbery like honey mesquite; this region is considered part of the southern extension of the North American Great Plains. Describe migration paths — seem to use same path for spring and fall migration. Appear to vacate breeding grounds with high affinity for the great plains (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma)

Seven species are currently "Provisional Species", Garganey [Sightings](#), Bar-tailed Godwit [Sightings](#), Elf Owl [Sightings](#), Blue-throated Mountain-gem [Sightings](#) (previously Blue-throated Hummingbird), Louisiana Waterthrush [Sightings](#), Sprague's Pipit [Sightings](#), Baird's Sparrow [Sightings](#).

Jaeger as a group or individually

Boreal Owl in Utah

Utah map with visual/audio verified records

Boreal Owl ([see notes](#))

- △26 Aug 2024 - Soapstone Creel, Wasatch Co., by Jeff Cooper (juvenile, [Photos & Audio](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △5 Aug 2024 - Beaver Creek Area, Wasatch Co., by Jeff Cooper, Terry Reid, James Loveless (eight, [Photos & Audio](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △1 Aug 2024 - FR 107, Summit Co., by Jeff Cooper, (five, [Audio](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △18 Jul 2024 - Duchesne Co., by Jeff Cooper, Terry Reid, James Loveless (four, [Photos, Audios](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △17 Jul 2024 - Soapstone Basin, Wasatch Co., by Jeff Cooper, Terry Reid, James Loveless (five, [Photos & Audios](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △11 Jul 2024 - (Soapstone Basin) Forest Road 414, Wasatch Co., by Jeff Cooper, Terry Reid, James Loveless (6 juveniles and 1 adult, [Photos, Audios](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |

- 2 Jul 2024 - Strawberry Ridge, Utah Co., by Karen and Von Welch, KC Childs, Jeff Cooper, (one) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △28 Sep 2023 - Near Pitt & Page Hill, Summit Co., by Jeff Cooper (two adults, [Photos](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △14 Sep 2023 - Murdock Basin Road, Wasatch Co., by Jeff Cooper (two adults, [Photos](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △15 Oct 2022 - Near Provo Falls, Uinta Mountains, Summit Co. by Jeff Cooper (4 adults, [Photos](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △10 Oct 2022 - West end of Uinta Mountains, Summit Co. by Jeff Cooper (2 adults, [Photo](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △3 Oct 2022 - No. slope of Uinta Mountains, Summit Co. by Jeff Cooper (five adults, [Photo](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △23 Sep 2022 - Murdock Basin, Wasatch Co. by Jeff Cooper (four adults, [Photo](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △23 Sep 2021 - Mirror Lake Hwy--Murdock Basin, Wasatch Co., by Jeff Cooper (adult, [Photos](#), [eBird](#)) & James Loveless ([eBird](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- 25 Aug 2020 - Soapstone area, Wasatch Co., by James Loveless | [eBird Checklist](#) |
- △23 Oct 2020 - Naturalist Basin, Duchesne Co., by Mike Hearrell (two, [Photos](#), [Audio](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △3 Oct 2020 - Uinta Mountains, Wasatch Co., by Jeff Cooper (three adults, [Photos](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △30 Aug 2019 - Marshall Lake, Duchesne Co., by Robert, Christina, & Kiley Reed (two, [Photos](#) & [Video](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △4 Oct 2019 - Soapstone Basin, Wasatch County, by Kenny Frisch (three, [audio](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- △15 Jul 2016 - Center Creek, Wasatch Co., by Tim Avery (heard, [audio](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- 8 Aug 2012 - East Fork of Black's Fork campground, Uintas, Duchesne Co., by Bryant Olsen | [Hotline Report](#) |
- 5 Dec 2011 - Skitzky Wildlife Management Area southwest of Duchesne, Duchesne Co., by Bryant Olsen | [Hotline Report](#) |
- 26 Jul 2008 - Leidy Peak area, Uintah Co., by Tim Avery, Colby Neuman, Samantha Sargent | [Hotline Report](#) |
- 7 Nov 2007 - picked up along a highway near the junction of U208 and US 35, Duchesne Co., delivered to Brian Maxfield | [Hotline Report](#) |
- △24-25 January 2006 - Bluebell Hwy - east of Bluebell. NW of Roosevelt, Duchesne Co. by Brian Maxfield (adult - [photos](#)) | [Hotline Report](#) | [Sight Record](#) |
- 22 Jan 2006 - in Card Canyon off of Logan Canyon, Cache Co. by Kirk Earl | [Hotline Report](#) |
- △25 Dec 2003 - Deer Valley Ski Resort, Summit County, by Joyce Tang (one, [Photos](#)) | [Sight Record](#) |
- Spring 2001 - Soapstone Basin Road, Uinta Mts, Wasatch Co., by Marcus Mika (one was mist-netted and fit with a radio-collared) [Boreal owls have been heard calling in the same area during spring for several years].
- ~ October 99 - Southeastern Utah, Todd black said he has seen them in the area.
- Spring 1999 - Yellow Pine area of Soapstone, Uinta Mts., Summit Co., by Carolee Parker (pair)
- △26 Mar to 4 Apr 1999 - head of Hell's Kitchen Canyon, Cache Co., by William Masslich, Ronald J. Ryel, Bryan Dixon, Jean Lown, Stuart Reynolds, Tim Slocum (photo by William Masslich) | [Hotline Report](#) | [UOS report](#) | [Original Record](#) |
- △Jun 1997 - Uintah National Forest by Heber, Wasatch Co., by Dave Stricklan (photo by Dave Stricklan - one adult) | [UOS report](#) | [Sight Record](#) |
- 1996 & 1997 - Evanston Ranger District, Uinta Mts, Summit Co., Carolee Parker (including nesting pair)
- late Mar 1995 - Off Sphinx Road, Logan Canyon, Cache Co., by Carolee Parker

- 3 Mar 1993 - Ashley Natl. Forest, Uintah Co., (one, 30-second territorial call reported) | [Sight Record](#) |

Brambling in Utah

Exemptions for the Review List:

- subject in general
- different species in specific

The Utah Bird Records Committee would like to thank those who submitted the documentation for their sightings of these rare birds.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS:

All species evaluated by the Committee are listed by common and scientific name using the nomenclature and taxonomic order of the American Ornithological Society Checklist of North American Birds, 7th Edition, 65th supplement., followed (in parentheses) by the number of Utah records accepted for this species in the last ten years and the total all-time number of official sightings for Utah.

The following information is included with each record in the species section: record number, sighting date and location, observers, with the initial finder listed first, then other contributors, if any, followed (in parentheses) by the number of birds observed along with age and sex if known and a link to any photos and finally, the final-round vote of the Committee with the first number being the "accept" votes and the second number being the "not-accept" votes. For those records that were not accepted, a review summary (in parentheses) will follow the final round vote. Any additional comments about individual records will be in italics after that record and comments about the species records as a whole will be in a final italicized paragraph at the end of the species section.

Mexican Duck (*Anas diazi*) ([13 / 13](#))

[2024-10](#) - 29 Jan 2024 - Powell Lake, Lehi, Utah Co., Jeff Cooper, (adult male, [Photos](#)) 1st round: 9 acc
[2024-14](#) - 24 Mar 2024 - Tonaquint NC, St. George, Washington Co., Shiloh Rasmussen, (adult male, [Photo](#))
[2024-36](#) - 30 May 2024 - Stateline Boat Ramp, Lake Powell, Kane Co., John Wilson (Adult Male, [Photos](#)) 1st round: 9 acc and on 30 Mar 2024 Ron Anderson male, [Photos](#)): 1st round: 9 acc
[2024-88](#) - 22 Nov 2024 - Goshen Reservoir, Utah Co., by McKay Olson, (adult male [Photos](#)) **1st round: in progress**

American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*) ([0 / 12](#))

[2024-03](#) - 7 Jan 2024 - Provo River going into the delta, Utah Co., by Colton Ferman, (male, [Photos](#)), 1st round: 0 acc, 9 not (There was not enough in this record to eliminate similar species).

Scaled Quail (*Gallinula galeata*) ([1 / 3](#))

[2024-24](#) - 2 May 2024 - East of Bluff, San Juan Co., by Kurt Hillman, (two) 1st round: 6 acc, 2 not, 1 to 2nd 2nd round: 9 acc

Gunnison Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus minimus*) ([1 / 1](#))

[2024-22](#) - 4 Apr 2023-4-San Juan County, by Terry Reid, James Loveless, Jeff Cooper, (5 male,female [Photos](#)) 1st round: 9 acc

Vaux's Swift (*Chaetura vauxi*) ([11 / 29](#))

[2024-18](#) - 27 Apr 2024 - Tonaquint Park, St. George, Washington Co., by Paul Hicks, (one or two, flying): 1st round: 3 acc, 5 not 2nd round: 0 acc, 9 not (Though this bird is most likely a Vaux's Swift, there is no evidence to eliminate a Chimney Swift as a possibility. This could be accepted as a Chaetura swift species).
[2024-21](#) - 7 May 2024 - Willard Bay State Park, Box Elder Co., by Bryant Olsen, (one) 1st round: 9 acc
[2024-23](#) - 8 May 2024 - Sand Hollow Reservoir, Washington Co., by Paul Hicks, (one flying) 1st round: 7 acc, 1 not, 2 to 2nd 2nd round 3 acc, 6 not (Though this was more likely to be a Vaux's Swift, the record didn't eliminate the possibility of the less likely Chimney Swift).