

Proceedings of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee

Thomas A. Tustison, Chairman

The most recent meeting of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (hereafter "MOURC") was conducted at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center in Bloomington, Minnesota on 2 December 2012. In attendance and voting at this meeting were MOURC members Terence P. Brashear (alternate), Robert M. Dunlap, Kim R. Eckert, Bruce A. Fall, Andrew R. Forbes (alternate), Anthony X. Hertzler, James W. Lind, Robert P. Russell (alternate), Andrew D. Smith, and Thomas A. Tustison (chair).

Among the topics discussed at the most recent MOURC meeting was a potential first state record Mountain Chickadee (2 October 2012, Lake Vadnais, Ramsey County). The discussion was whether or not to assign a record number to this report and vote on the submitted documentation. The observer did not provide his name and the description was inadequate. There was no mention of similar species such as a female Red-breasted Nuthatch. It was unanimously decided, under recently-amended bylaws, not to vote on this record for reasons above-mentioned. The amended bylaws which have not yet been published provide that the Committee need not review every Casual and/or Accidental record that may be submitted if the Committee determines the record is not worthy of consideration. The amended bylaws now read: "All documented records of Casual and Accidental species and potential first state records are voted on, unless a majority of the Committee votes not to do so."

- Tropical/Couch's Kingbird (28 October 2011, Duluth, St Louis County, record #2011-034) had been previously unanimously accepted (*The Loon* 84:4-5), but a separate vote is needed to determine if this represents a species classified as "A" (no subscript indicating the identification as Tropical/Couch's Kingbird can be determined from the physi-



Record 2013-033, Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*), 4 May 2013, Ortonville, Big Stone County. Photo by Douglas L. Pierzina.

cal evidence alone) or as "A_s" (a qualifying subscript indicating the physical evidence alone is insufficient to determine the identification as Tropical/Couch's Kingbird). After a brief discussion, it was unanimously accepted with the unqualified "A" classification.

The subject of establishing formal guidelines for unusual migration dates for observations of Regular species was discussed. It was decided that the Seasonal Report editors would continue to handle such records and that MOURC would not need to be involved.

Subsequent to the most recent meeting, the following records were voted on electronically and Accepted:

- King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*), 9-24 February 2013, one-half mile northeast of the Lakewood Pumping Station, St. Louis County (record #2013-001, vote 7-0). First-year male, photographed. New winter record for St. Louis County. The bird was observed by sev-

eral experienced observers who satisfactorily eliminated other similar species such as Common Eider. The photographs depict the bird quite far-away, but give support to the identification.

- Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*), 9 March 2013 – 8 April 2013, Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park, Anoka County (record #2013-002, vote 7–0). Adult male (photographed). The bird was also reported in the Hennepin County portion of the Mississippi River on 14 March 2013 and again on 8 April 2013. MOURC determined that the details were sufficient to identify the bird; however, a purported, accompanying female (seen on 9 and 14 March 2013) was Not Accepted by the Committee. There was a report of a Barrow's Goldeneye at this location lingering until 21 April 2013 in Hennepin. However, since no gender was indicated, we don't know which bird was being reported.

- Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*), 31 May – 1 June 2013, Myre-Big Island State Park, Freeborn County (record #2013-027, vote 7–0). Adult in alternate plumage, photographed. Fourth state record and first county record.

- Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), 24 April 2013, about 12 miles northeast of Lancaster via County Road 4, Kittson County (record #2013-003, vote 7–0). Adult. First county record. An excellent photograph indisputably confirms the identification. No evidence of hybridization.

- Glossy Ibis, 26–27 April 2013, Houston County (record #2013-004, vote 6–1). Adult, photographed. First county record. The photographs alone were inconclusive. Written documentation by one observer augmented the identification. It is regrettable that none of the other observers provided any documentation which might have made the ultimate identification more straightforward.

- Glossy Ibis, 30 April 2013, Silver Creek Reservoir, Olmsted County (record #2013-006, vote 7–0). Adult, photographed. First county record. The report makes a disclaimer that part of the written report in the Request for Documentation was cut and pasted from another report of a different Glossy Ibis observed on an earlier date in another county. This practice is strongly discouraged, but there was enough independent evidence to

permit acceptance of the record.

- Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*), 27 May 2013, Duluth, Park Point, beach near Sky Harbor Airport, St. Louis County (record #2013-025, vote 7–0). Third state record. The only previous records of this species in Minnesota are of single birds, both at Duluth: one on 4 July 1981 (*The Loon* 53:123–25) and the other seen 15–20 May 1982 (*The Loon* 54:243). There were various quality photographs and written descriptions from several experienced observers. Age and sex uncertain, but the bird is in all probability a first-spring male. The bird was viewed by more than 20 observers. Coincidentally, a Wilson's Plover was seen the previous day at Peninsula Point in Michigan's Upper Peninsula where it is also considered Accidental. A comparison of the photographs indicates that these birds were not the same individuals (Karl Bardon, pers. comm.).

- Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*), 3–4 May 2013, about three miles southwest of Graceville on the west side of 760th Avenue at 250th Street (Section 24, Toqua Township), Big Stone County (record #2013-034, vote 7–0). Male, photographed. This bird was independently documented at the same location the day after the initial observation.

- Black-necked Stilt, 10 May 2013, Rice Lake State Park, Steele County (record #2013-035, vote 7–0). In spite of the omission of age particulars, the description is convincing.

- Black-necked Stilt, 22 May 2013, Thielke Lake Wildlife Management Area, Big Stone County (record #2013-021, vote 7–0). MOURC generally felt that the description could have been more detailed.

- Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*), 4 May 2013, Ortonville Township, Big Stone County (record #2013-033, vote 7–0). Adult, diagnostic photographs.

- Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*), 14 June 2013, Roseau Lake Wildlife Management Area, Roseau County (record #2013-031, vote 7–0). Adult, photographed. First county record. First summer record since the first state record in 1898 in Marshall County when a specimen was taken at Warren (Roberts, Thomas S. 1919. *A Review of the Ornithology of Minnesota*. University of Minnesota Publications Number 11. 101 pp.).

- Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), 14 April



Record 2013-031, Long-tailed Jaeger, 14 June 2013, Roseau Lake WMA, Roseau County. Photo by Andrew Nyhus.

2013, Great Western Industrial Park, Dakota County (record #2013-019, vote 7-0). Immature gray morph, photographed. The photos were of generally marginal quality, but were sufficiently supplemented by written details.

- Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*), 30 April – 7 May 2013, near the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources office on state highway 32, three miles south of U.S. Highway 2 and in Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge, Polk County (record #2013-007, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed. The photographs of a distant bird show sufficient detail to confirm the identification.

- Say's Phoebe, 2 May 2013, two miles northeast of Lake Christina, Otter Tail County (record #2013-041, vote 7-0). Adult, diagnostic photographs. First county record.

- Say's Phoebe, 4 May 2013, Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge, Auto Tour Loop, Lac qui Parle County (record #2013-008, vote 7-0). Adult. Both written reports were brief, but the observers were experienced. The Say's Phoebe is now essentially a Regular species, given that it has been reported annually since 2004.

- Say's Phoebe, 12 May 2013, Felton Prairie on the south side of County Road 108

across from the parking area at the interpretive kiosks, Clay County (record #2013-013, vote 7-0). Adult, diagnostic photographs.

- Say's Phoebe, 22 May 2013, Felton Prairie, along a road informally known as "the Longspur Road", Clay County (record #2013-023, vote 7-0). This location is roughly a mile south-southeast of where Say's Phoebe (record #2013-013) was seen ten days earlier, raising the possibility that this may have been the same bird.

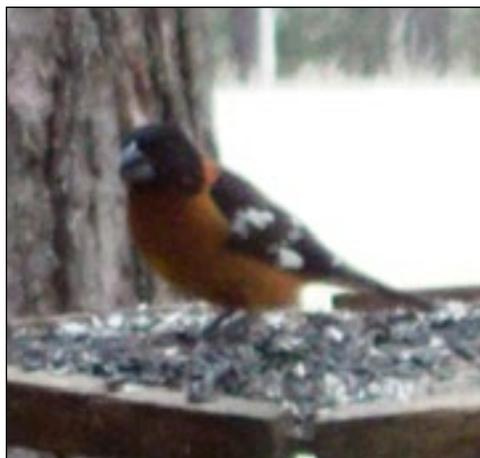
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*), 2-5 June 2013, seen at the mouth of the Brule River, near the Naniboujou Lodge, Cook County (record #2013-028, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed. First summer record for the county. The 3 June 2013 photograph confirms the identification, although there is no written description. This bird was also seen and photographed by a tour group three days after the initial sighting.

- Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmintheros vermivorum*), 4-5 May 2013, Fridley, Anoka County (record #2013-009, vote 7-0). Adult. First spring record for Anoka County. Confidence in the documentation could have been appreciably improved by supplying contemporaneous field notes.

- Yellow-throated Warbler (*Setophaga dominica*), 5-18 May 2013, Carver Creek Loop at the Rapids Lake Unit of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Carver County (record #2013-010, vote 7-0). Adult. First county record. The bird was seen, heard, and photographed by many observers.

- Yellow-throated Warbler, 10 May – 27 July 2013, near the Nature Store parking lot, Whitewater State Park, Winona County (record #2013-012, adult Accepted, vote 7-0). At least one fledged juvenile (and possibly as many as two other juveniles) were seen in the presence of a single adult. Adult and juvenile(s) were both photographed (one or more juveniles Accepted by MOURC, vote 6 -1). First county record, first county breeding record, and second successful state breeding record (for the first state successful breeding record see **The Loon** 73:236-240).

- Yellow-throated Warbler, 26 June 2013, Carley State Park, Olmsted County (record #2013-032, vote 7-0). First county record. The record is supported by a detailed description from a knowledgeable observer.



Record 2013-024, Black-headed Grosbeak, 25 May 2013, Embarrass, St. Louis County. Photo by Suzanne Winckler.



Record 2013-014, Bullock's Oriole, 14 May 2013, St. Louis Park, Hennepin County. Photo by Debbie Johnson.

- Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*), 18 May 2013, 140th Street between Roberts and Sundberg Avenues in northeastern Nobles County (record #2013-018, vote 7-0). Adult male. The bird was observed and photographed by several competent observers.

- Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*), 25-26 May 2013, private residence, St. Louis County (record #2013-024, vote 7-0). Adult male, photographed. First spring record for the county. Good photographs and no evidence of hybridization.

- Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*), 3 May 2013, private residence, Washington County (record #2013-036, vote 7-0). Adult male, photographed. First record for the county. Photographs and descriptions are diagnostic with no apparent evidence of hybridization.

- Lazuli Bunting, 15 May 2013, private residence, Minnesota River Valley four miles southeast of Courtland, Nicollet County (record #2013-016, vote 7-0). Adult male, photographed. First county record. The photographs are conclusive, showing no evidence of hybridization.

- Lazuli Bunting, 18 - 22 May 2013, private residence, Hutchinson, McLeod County (record #2013-020, vote 7-0). Adult male, diagnostic photographs. First record for the county.

- Lazuli Bunting, 19 May 2013, Pipestone

National Monument, Pipestone County (record #2013-038, vote 7-0). Adult male. First record for the county. Apparently enough of the bird was seen, if only briefly, to rule out a hybrid Lazuli/Indigo Bunting.

- Lazuli Bunting, 19 May 2013, Pipestone Wastewater Treatment Plant, Pipestone County (record #2013-039, vote 7-0). Immature male, videotaped. The video is barely adequate for identification purposes, but shows the characteristics of a Lazuli Bunting.

- Lazuli Bunting, 21-22 May 2013, near Worthington, Nobles County (record #2013-037, vote 7-0). Immature male, diagnostic photographs. First record for the county.

- Lazuli Bunting, 27-30 May 2013, Westfield Township, Dodge County (record #2013-026, vote 7-0). Immature male, photographed. First record for the county. The photographs are conclusive, with no apparent evidence of hybridization.

- Lazuli Bunting, 6-7 June 2013, Duluth, Allendale Avenue, St. Louis County (record #2013-030, vote 7-0). Apparent second-year male in first-alternate plumage, photographed. First summer record for St. Louis County. The bird was seen and photographed by several observers.

- Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*), 9-10 May 2013, Aitkin County (record #2013-011, vote 7-0). Adult male, diagnostic photograph. Second spring record for the county following

a previous spring record in 2002.

- Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*), 14 May 2013, private residence, St. Louis Park, Hennepin County (record #2013-014, vote 7-0). Adult male, well-photographed. Second state record and the first for the county. Unfortunately, this Accidental species did not linger long enough to be seen by other observers. The first state record was an immature male, 19 October – 13 December 1968, Duluth (mist-netted and photographed), St. Louis County (**The Loon** 41:41-42).

- Eurasian Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*), 26 May 2013, Corcoran, Hennepin County (record #2013-042, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed. Ninth state record and first county record.

The following records were voted on and were Not Accepted (Please note that a record which is Not Accepted only means that the documentation was not complete or convincing enough to include the sighting in **The Loon**, the journal of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union (MOU), or in the MOU's archives of confirmed bird records. Such a vote does not necessarily mean the observer misidentified the bird or did not see it. Summaries of the reasons why a record was Not Accepted are included here. These are in no way intended to be critical of the observer. The only purpose is to highlight the difficulties an observer may encounter while identifying or documenting these and similar species.):

- Glossy Ibis, 28-30 April 2013, Nicollet County (record #2013-005, vote 2-5). None of the observers submitted contemporaneous field notes. The photographs were inconclusive, showing either an ambiguous ibis species or a more-likely White-faced Ibis. Some descriptions noted the dark facial skin and dark eyes without red or pink, dark legs with pink only at the ankle joint, and lack of white feathers bordering facial patch and eye. However, one photograph seems to show a faint hint of pink in the eye. A second photograph appears to show a very faint pink tinge to the facial skin. There is nothing in the written material or the photographs that conclusively eliminates an immature White-faced Ibis in pre-alternate plumage. Finally, the possibility of hybridization was not adequately ruled out.

- Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*), 6

May 2013, near Pine City, Pine County (record #2013-040, vote 0-7). The consensus was that the record was insufficient in detail to support the identification. The observer omits comparisons to other large bird species (pelicans, egrets, etc). It may have been a Whooping Crane, but the description makes no mention of the presence or absence of leg bands, which would help in determining whether or not this was a captively raised bird.

The efforts of all those observers who document unusual species are greatly appreciated, whether or not the records are Accepted. Though photographs are always welcome, observers are strongly encouraged to submit written documentation based on contemporaneous field notes for all records. The Committee acknowledges with thanks those who provided written descriptions for the records listed in this article: Karl J. Bardon, David A. Bartkey, Dedrick Benz, Tom F. Boevers, Tracy Brewer, Paul E. Budde, David A. Cahlander, John Cyrus, Robert M. Dunlap, Kim R. Eckert, Bruce A. Fall, Cole Foster, Malcolm Gold, Carl W. Greiner, Chad Heins, Mike L. Hendrickson, Anthony X. Hertzell, John W. Hockema, Pete Hoeger, Emily Hutchins, Robert B. Janssen, Paul E. Jantscher, Debbie Johnson, Don O. Kienholz, Douglas W. Kieser, George Lahr, Andrew B. Longtin, Tom Middagh, David F. Neitzel, Andrew Nyhus, Michael Oetken, Douglas L Pierzina, Jim Pipher, Brian Plath, Tom Rice, Karl Roe, Gary Sankary, Aaron Steed, Mark Sparky Stensaas, Peder H. Svingen, Jack Swelstad, Jason Swelstad, Raymond Tervo, Thomas A. Tustison, Butch Ukura, Bill J. Unzen, Nancy Voges, Suzanne Winckler, and Roy Zimmerman. Many observers documented records of rare Regular species which were not voted on by the Committee; though not cited here, their efforts are greatly appreciated.

The Committee welcomes questions or comments from MOU members regarding any record in particular or our procedures in general. More information including our bylaws and current checklist can be found at <<http://moumn.org/mourc>>. Summary: 38 records voted on — 36 Accepted, 2 Not Accepted.

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