

Proceedings of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee

Thomas A. Tustison, Chairman

The last two meetings of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (MOURC) were conducted at the Trailhead Lodge at the Carpenter Nature Center on 24 July and 4 December 2016, respectively. In attendance and voting at these meetings were MOURC members Dedrick A. Benz, Robert M. Dunlap (present only at the December meeting), Bruce A. Fall, Andrew R. Forbes, Douglas W. Kieser (alternate), William C. Marengo (alternate), Robert P. Russell, Andrew D. Smith, and Thomas A. Tustison (chair).

At, or subsequent to, these meetings the following records were voted on and were Accepted:

- **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** (*Querquedula autumnalis*), 19–23 May 2016, Eggert Lake, Le Sueur County (record #2016-014, vote 7–0, origin vote 9–0). Two adults, photographed. First county record. The Committee voted that both adults were wild.

- **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck**, 6–12 June 2016, Gopher Campfire Wildlife Sanctuary, Hutchinson, McLeod County (record #2016-020, vote 7–0). Adult, photographed. First county record.

- **Mottled Duck** (*Anas fulvigula*), 15–16 February 2016, Rum River Dam, Anoka, Anoka County (record #2016-005, vote 10–0, origin vote 10–0). Adult male, photographed. First state record. The Committee also voted to accept the bird as wild. There are two genetically distinct and phenotypically identifiable subspecies of Mottled Duck: the Florida subspecies, *A. f. fulvigula*, occurring primarily in Florida, and the Western Gulf Coast subspecies, *A. f. maculosa*, which ranges from Alabama to south Texas and northeast Mexico. The bird was scrupulously researched and independently described by five observers. In addition, the Committee consulted an outside expert to further evaluate the question of hybridization. After discussion and deliberation,



Mottled Duck, 15 February 2016, Rum River Dam, Anoka, Anoka County. Photo by Kathleen MacAulay.

the Committee unanimously agreed that the bird was a Mottled Duck of the subspecies *maculosa*. While there was some discussion of the remote possibility of Mallard hybridization, the Committee determined that the bird had virtually none of the various plumage characteristics normally associated with a mixed species pairing. Given the range of plumage differences among members of this subspecies, the Committee agreed that the bird was within the normal scope of individual variation for *maculosa*.

- **Rufous Hummingbird** (*Selasphorus rufus*), 28 July 2015, Mower County (record #2015-046, vote 7–0). Adult male, photographed. First county record.

- **Calliope Hummingbird** (*Selasphorus calliope*), 13–15 June 2016, dune bridge near beach house at Park Point, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2016-022, vote 7–0). Adult male, photographed. Second state record, first county record, and first summer record.

- **Black-necked Stilt** (*Himantopus mexicanus*), 31 May – 1 June 2016, flooded field



Calliope Hummingbird, 15 June 2016, Duluth, St. Louis County. Photo by Peder H. Svingen.



Gull-billed Tern, 1 June 2016, Salt Lake, Deuel County, SD. Photo by Kathy Java.

southwest of Tracy, Lyon County (record #2016-017, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed. First county record.

- **Purple Sandpiper** (*Calidris maritima*), 26 November 2014, Canal Park, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2014-055, initial vote 4-3; recirculated vote 2-5, **The Loon** 88:3-5; reconsidered vote 7-0). Photographed. This record was reconsidered based upon new photographic analysis. The analysis proved that the legs were not dark or black in the original photos but were, instead, within the spectral range of yellow to orange. This new information eliminated Dunlin so the Committee voted unanimously to accept the observation based on the written description and photographic evidence.

- **Black-legged Kittiwake** (*Rissa tridactyla*), 16 January – 12 February 2016, Canal Park, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2016-002, vote 7-0). Two first-cycle individuals, both photographed 16-18 January (**The Loon** 88:138-139). At least one of the two birds lingered until 12 February 2016.

- **Ivory Gull** (*Pagophila eburnea*), 1-24 January 2016, Canal Park, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2016-001, vote 7-0). First-cycle, photographed (**The Loon** 88:95-96).

- **Gull-billed Tern** (*Gelocbelidon nilotica*),

2-6 June 2016, Salt Lake and vicinity, Lac qui Parle County (record #2016-018, vote 10-0). Adult, photographed. First state record (**The Loon** 88:136-137). Originally recorded 1 June 2016 on the western shore of Salt Lake which lies in South Dakota, it was not observed in Minnesota until the following morning. The bird was last reported on 6 June 2016 at Sweetwater State Wildlife Management Area (about six miles southeast of Salt Lake) though no documentation or other details were provided for this date.

- **Arctic Tern** (*Sterna paradisaea*), 2 June 2016, 31st Street / Lafayette Square, Park Point, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2016-028, vote 7-0). Adult.

- **Arctic Tern**, 17 June 2016, County Road 61 just south of 290th Street, Big Stone County (record #2016-025, vote 7-0). Adult, well-photographed. First county record.

- **Glossy Ibis** (*Plegadis falcinellus*), 21 April 2016, Miedd Lake, Yellow Medicine County (record #2016-009, vote 5-2).

- **Black Vulture** (*Coragyps atratus*), 4 May 2016, Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Blue Earth County (record #2016-012, vote 7-0). First county record.

- **Barn Owl** (*Tyto alba*), 1 August 2014, five miles northwest of Houston in Perkins



Ivory Gull, 3 January 2016, Duluth, St. Louis County. Photo by Paul E. Budde.



Burrowing Owl, 29 April 2016, Breckenridge, Wilkin County. Photo by Jeanie M. Joppur.

Valley, Houston County (record #2014-057, original vote 3-4, reconsidered vote 6-1). Audio recorded. This is a heard-only record that was originally Not Accepted. The Committee, at its 6 December 2015 meeting, agreed to reconsider this observation due to confusion regarding the initial audio file labeling (see *The Loon* 87:7-8). At this same meeting, the Committee reviewed the resubmitted spectrograms and compared them to other known Barn Owl recordings. At its most recent 4 December 2016 meeting, the Committee reviewed and discussed the spectrograms again. The Committee, as part of its new deliberations, also reviewed comments regarding the spectrograms and vocalizations submitted by an independent authority. After lengthy discussion, a second vote was taken and the record Accepted.

• **Burrowing Owl** (*Athene cunicularia*), 23 April – 23 May 2016, northeast of Breckenridge, Wilkin County (record #2016-010, vote 7-0). Photographed.

• **Gyr Falcon** (*Falco rusticolus*), 24 January – 21 March 2016, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2016-003, vote 7-0). Juvenile gray-morph female, photographed and banded. One of two that overwintered in Superior, Wisconsin (see next record).

• **Gyr Falcon**, 14 February 2016, St. Louis River near Grassy Point, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2016-004, vote 7-0). Adult male, photographed.

• **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** (*Passer montanus*), 8-13 April 2016, private residence, East Grand Forks, Polk County (record #2016-006, vote 7-0).

• **Eurasian Tree Sparrow**, 18-19 April 2016, 1980 Seneca Road, Eagan, Dakota County (record #2016-008, vote 7-0). Two birds, photographed together.

• **Worm-eating Warbler** (*Helmitberos vermivorum*), 14-18 May 2016, east side of the Cannon River Wilderness Area, Rice County (record #2016-013, vote 6-1).

• **Yellow-throated Warbler** (*Setophaga dominica*), 1-10 May 2016, picnic area by nature store/swimming beach, Whitewater State Park, Winona County (record #2016-011, vote 7-0). The species has been recorded at this location for four consecutive years. It has also been recorded breeding at this location (*The Loon* 86:44). Photographed, adult male.

• **Yellow-throated Warbler**, 12 May – 27 July 2016, Gold Medal Park, Minneapolis, Hennepin County (record #2016-027, vote 7-0). Pair of adults, photographed. First county nesting record; at least two fledged young

(*The Loon* 88:84–85).

- **Yellow-throated Warbler**, 3 June 2015, Lake Maria State Park, Wright County (record #2015-044, vote 5–2). Adult male.

- **Prairie Warbler** (*Setophaga discolor*), 15 June 2016, Sand Coulee Scientific and Natural Area, Hastings, Dakota County (record #2016-024, vote 7–0). Audio recorded. Comparison of sonograms with a Prairie Warbler also recorded at this same location on 7 June 2015 indicates the bird is almost certainly different from the 2015 male, taking into consideration pronounced differences in the songs.

- **Lark Bunting** (*Calamospiza melanocorys*), 25–26 May 2016, near the town of Cook, St. Louis County (record #2016-015, vote 7–0). Adult male, photographed.

- **Lark Bunting**, 4–6 June 2016, County Road 12, Mehurin Township, Lac qui Parle County (44.8923, -96.3674) (record #2016-019, vote 7–0). Adult male.

- **Lark Bunting**, 11 June 2016, Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge, Polk County (record #2016-021, vote 7–0). Adult male, photographed.

- **Lark Bunting**, 21–22 June 2016, Lone Tree Lake, Lyon County (record #2016-026, vote 7–0). Female, photographed.

- **Baird's Sparrow** (*Ammodramus bairdii*), 13–20 June 2016, on Ost Road about one mile west of County Road 6, Douglas County (record #2016-023, vote 7–0). Adult male, video and audio recorded. First county record.

- **Painted Bunting** (*Passerina ciris*), 18–19 May 2015, private residence, Eveleth, St. Louis County (record #2015-045, vote 7–0). Adult male, photographed.

The following record was voted on and was 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).

- **Yellow-throated Warbler**, 17 April 2016, immediately behind the Visitor Center at the Rapids Lake Unit of Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Carver County (record #2016-007, vote 0–7). The documentation was very sparse, lacking important details. For example, it did not contain a description of the vocalization. There were no contemporaneous field notes submitted. For a ten minute observation, many details could easily have been provided but were not.

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: Brad Abendroth, Sandy Aubol, David A. Bartkey, Dedrick Benz, Karla Bloem, Milton J. Blomberg, Tom F. Boevers, Paul E. Budde, Charles Bush, Philip C. Chu, John Cyrus, Robert M. Dunlap, Kim R. Eckert, Bruce A. Fall, Susan Finnila, Alex J. Franzen, Randy S. Frederickson, Ben W. Fritchman, Juliann Grahn, Chad Heins, Anthony X. Hertz, Daniel Hoppe, Jeanie M. Joppru, Jan and Larry Kraemer, James W. Lind, Kathleen MacAulay, Kathy Java, Kevin Manley, Mark & Joyce Manning, Scott B. Meyer, Bruce Munson, John Richardson, Kathryn Rozovics, Connie Sabetti, Joel Schmidt, Andrew D. Smith, Linda Sparling, Liz Stanley, Peder H. Svingen, Thomas A. Tustison, Butch Ukura, Garrett Wee, 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.

Summary: 32 records voted-on: 31 Accepted, 1 Not Accepted.

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>>.

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