

# Proceedings of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee

Thomas A. Tustison, Chairman

The most recent meeting of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (MOURC) was conducted at the Carpenter Nature Center Administration Building on 6 April 2019. In attendance and voting at this meeting were MOURC members Dedrick A. Benz, Andrew R. Forbes, Anthony X. Hertzell, Ann E. Kessen (alternate), Douglas W. Kieser, William C. Marengo, Robert P. Russell, Steve P. Stucker (alternate), and Thomas A. Tustison (chair).

At, or subsequent to, the most recent meeting, the following records were voted on (most electronically) and Accepted:

- **Tufted Duck** (*Aythya fuligula*) [Accidental], 11 December 2018 – 15 January 2019, Canal Park and surrounds including Harbor Basin, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2018-051, vote 6–1). Second state and first county record. Photographed. Indeterminate age and sex (*The Loon* 91:38–39).

- **Black-necked Stilt** (*Himantopus mexicanus*) [Casual], 5 May 2018, Murdoch Wastewater Treatment Plant, Swift County (record #2018-047, vote 7–0). First county record. Five birds accepted.

- **Black-necked Stilt** [Casual], 4–12 May 2018, North Ottawa Impoundment, Grant County (record #2018-049, vote 7–0). Adult, photographed.

- **Black-necked Stilt** [Casual], 18 May 2018, 320th Street, about one mile south of Madelia in a flooded field east of state highway 60 and south of Township Road 172, Watonwan County (record #2018-050, vote 7–0). First county record, photographed, adult.

- **Black-necked Stilt** [Casual], 18 May 2018, large flooded field next to the Minnesota River, on the west side of 401<sup>st</sup> Street, south of County Road 21, about 2.5 miles east of state highway 4, Nicollet County (record #2018-053, vote 5–2). First county record. Based on information in the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union's database, there were presumably two

individuals although the documentation submitted to the Committee fails to specify the number of individuals.

- **Ruff** (*Calidris pugnax*) [Casual], 2 – 15 August 2018, Freeborn Lake, Freeborn County (record #2018-032, vote 7–0). First county record. Photographed.

- **Red Phalarope** (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) [Casual], 10 October 2018, Pipestone Wastewater Treatment Plant, Pipestone County (record #2018-043, vote 7–0). First county record.

- **Pomarine Jaeger** (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) [Casual], 14 October 2018, Point Douglas Park, Washington County (record #2018-044, vote 7–0). First county record. Adult, photographed.

- **Slaty-backed Gull** (*Larus schistisagus*) [Casual], 28 October – 1 November 2018, at the boat dock behind the casino and hotel in Grand Portage, Cook County (record #2018-046, vote 7–0). Third or fourth cycle, photographed. Ninth state record.

- **Wood Stork** (*Mycteria americana*) [Accidental], 13 September 2018, in a coulee about one mile east of Hallock, Kittson County (record #2018-039, vote 7–0). First county and fourth state record. Immature, photographed.

- **White Ibis** (*Eudocimus albus*) [Accidental], 15 September 2018, private residence on Bay Lake, Baytown Township, Washington County (record #2018-040, vote 7–0). Second state and first county record. Adult, photographed.

- **Roseate Spoonbill** (*Platalea ajaja*) [Accidental], 26 August 2018, near the boat storage just west of the Hastings bridge, Washington County (record #2018-036, vote 10–0). Subsequently seen flying into Dakota County. First state record. First county records for Washington and Dakota (*The Loon* 90:139).

- **Roseate Spoonbill** [Accidental], 26 August 2018, boardwalk at the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge, Hennepin County (record #2018-035, vote 10–0). Hatch year in formative plumage,



**Tufted Duck, 3 January 2019, Duluth, St. Louis County. Record #2018-051. Photo by Larry Sirvio.**



**White Ibis, 15 September 2018, Baytown Township, Washington County. Record #2018-040. Photo by Shelley Livermore.**

photographed. Second state and first county record. While there is no conclusive evidence that this record involved the same bird as the immediately preceding record, the two records are presumably of the same individual due to its extreme rarity in the state and the relatively close proximity of the observations (*The Loon* 90:139–142).

• **Mississippi Kite** (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) [Casual], 26 May 2018, seen during the West Skyline Hawk Count, Thompson Hill, St. Louis County (record #2018-048, vote 6–1). Sub-adult.

• **Lewis's Woodpecker** (*Melanerpes lewis*) [Accidental], 3–10 October 2018, West Height of the Land Drive, about 3.2 miles northeast of Rochert, Becker County (record #2018-042, vote 7–0). Sixth state and first county record. Adult, photographed.

• **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** (*Passer montanus*) [Casual], 22–23 September 2018, end of gravel drive to the east of the cemetery building, Two Harbors, Lake County (record #2018-041, vote 7–0). Adult, photographed.

• **Lark Bunting** (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) [Casual], 2 August 2018, Hamlin Wildlife Management Area, Lac qui Parle County (record #2018-033, vote 7–0).

• **Lark Bunting** [Casual], 23–24 October 2018, (Sky Harbor Airport, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2018-045, vote 7–0). Female/immature, photographed.

• **Townsend's Warbler** (*Setophaga townsendi*) [Accidental], 5 September 2018,

Oakwood Drive, Albert Lea, Freeborn County (record #2018-037, vote 7–0). Sixth state and first county record. Immature male, photographed.

• **Lazuli Bunting** (*Passerina amoena*) [Casual], 14–20 May 2018, private residence, about 2.1 miles northeast of Embarrass, St. Louis County (record #2018-057, vote 7–0). Adult male, photographed.

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 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.)

• **Vaux's Swift** (*Chaetura vauxi*) [no Minnesota records], 12 September 2018, Memorial Park, Granite Falls, Yellow Medicine County (record #2018-054, vote 0–10). The members unanimously agreed that there was insufficient evidence to distinguish the bird from a Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*) and perhaps this was a molting adult of that species. Mention was made of very brief vocalizations, but the



**Lewis's Woodpecker, 4 October 2018, Height of Land Lake, Becker County. Record # 2018-042. Photo by Becca Engdahl.**



**Townsend's Warbler, 5 September 2018, Albert Lea, Freeborn County. Record #2018-037. Photo by Paul Prappas.**

observer did not note which of the swifts in the flock was making them nor were any audio recordings acquired. The observer did not indicate that he was familiar enough with Vaux's Swift vocalizations to make the identification.

- Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*) [no Minnesota records], 25 December 2018, private residence on West 95th Street, Bloomington Hennepin County (record #2018-052, vote 0–10). The value of the written documentation of this bird is compromised by the fact that the observer immediately consulted a field guide while the bird was in partial view raising the issue of the power of suggestion. From the description it is hard to differentiate what was observed versus what was gleaned from the field guide. The photo is too blurry to be of much help. A second photo from the next day of what was purported to be the same bird shows what appears to be an American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*).

- Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmitberos vermivorum*) [Casual], 13 May 2018, Blue Mounds State Park, Rock County (record #2018-055, vote 3–4). The identification was not pursued until the following day while accidentally stumbling on Worm-eating Warbler while looking at a field guide. Some members felt the description was too brief as was the length of the observation by an observer with no experience with the species.

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: Tom Boevers, Philip C. Chu, Robert M. Dunlap, Kim R. Eckert, Becca Engdahl, Deborah Fellows, Liz Harper, Ezra Hosch, Isaac Hosch, Robert B. Janssen, Douglas W. Kieser, Valerie Klumper, James W. Lind, Shelley Livermore, Heather Mahoney, Frank J. Nicoletti, Wayne Perala, Paul Prappas, John Richardson, Roger J. Schroeder, Larry Sirvio, Cindy Thury Smith, Todd Sorenson, Jeff J. Stephenson, Paul Suchanek, Alex Sundvall, Peder H. Svingen, Howard Towle, Thomas A. Tustison, Bob Williams and Julie Zempel. Many observers documented records of rare Regular species which were not subject to a Committee vote; 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: The Committee evaluated and voted on 23 records. Of these, 20 were Accepted and 3 were Not Accepted.

**Edina, Minnesota.**