Fourth Report of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee

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Drawing of Mississippi Kite by Brian K. Willis.

Evaluations by the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee ("IORC," or "the Committee") are reported here for a total of 266 records, including 218 accepted records of 109 species and three hybrids or forms, and 45 unaccepted records of 32 species.[1] With this report, the Committee has published reviews of 1014 records, of which 799 are accepted, for an acceptance rate of 78.8%.

Here are the results for 65 out of 67 of the 1995 record evaluations, and 97 out of 100 of the 1996 evaluations.[2] Of the 162 records evaluated for these two years, 122 (75.3%) are accepted. In addition, this report covers 25 historical records prior to 1985, plus nearly all first state records since the third IORC report (i.e., since February 1989; see Goetz 1990), through 1997. Also contained are many, but by no means all, record evaluations for the period 1989-1994. An attempt has been made to include all review species from this period for which there is hard evidence in the form of a specimen or as a photograph published in *American Birds*, *Audubon Field Notes*, *Illinois Birds and Birding*, or *Meadowlark*. Any errors of omission are the fault of the authors. It is unfortunate that evaluations for many sight records for the period 1989-1994 were not accessible to the Committee until this report was in its final draft. Publication of IORC's decisions on such records will thus have to await a future Committee report.

Considerable effort has been made by the Committee since 1993 to evaluate and make published decisions regarding many older records of species that are to be formally accepted in the Checklist of Illinois State Birds (Illinois Ornithological Records Committee, MS, in preparation).

A total of 168 known observers contributed specimens, descriptions or photographs documenting the records included in this report; a few specimens were taken by collectors not acknowledged here by name.

Format: The format of this report follows the conventions used in the first three reports of the Committee (Goetz and Robinson 1988; Goetz 1989; Goetz 1990). Records are divided into two major groups: Accepted and Unaccepted. Each of these groups is then further divided into Review List Records and Other Records. The sequence of species conforms to that of the American Ornithologists' Union 1983 checklist and its supplements as published in *The Auk*, through the fortieth (July 1995) supplement, while the taxonomy and nomenclature are current through the forty-first (July 1997) supplement. The forty-first supplement is vague on some important matters of sequencing, and we have therefore postponed the substantial reorganizations outlined in that supplement, pending publication of the seventh AOU checklist.

Each accepted record is entered with the locality (including the standard abbreviation for the county (see below), the date, and (in parentheses) the IORC record number (the first four characters of which give the year of the first observation), followed by the initials of the primary observer(s) who contributed specimens, descriptions, and/or photographs. Photographic evidence is noted following a contributor's name by an asterisk (*); when the photographic evidence is known to be a videotape, a "v" is appended (*v); "*p,v" indicates the submission of both photographic and video evidence. Many contributing photographers also submitted written descriptions, a practice the Committee encourages. If the observer(s) who first discovered the bird submitted documentation, their initials are set off from the initials of other contributors by a semicolon. Initial observers who did not submit documentation are not generally listed. For specimen records, a sharp (#)