

Thirteenth report of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee

by Douglas F. Stotz

Evaluations by the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee ("IORC," or "the Committee") are reported here for a total of 60 records of 38 species, including 55 accepted records of 34 species, and five unaccepted records of five species. We examined documentation from a total of 50 observers in evaluating the records included in this report. Included herein are reviewed species evaluations by the current committee from 2003 through 2006.

Format: The format of this report follows the conventions used in the first through twelfth reports of the Committee (Goetz and Robinson 1988; Goetz 1989, 1990; Johnson, Deaton and Clyne 1998; Johnson and Stotz 1999; Stotz and Johnson 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006; Stotz 2001). The records below 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 taxonomy and sequence of species conforms to that of the seventh edition of the American Ornithologists' Union's checklist, (1998) and its supplements, through the 48th (Banks et al. 2007).

An accepted record is entered with the locality (including the standard abbreviation for the county), the date, and (in parentheses) the IORC record number (the first four characters of which give the year of the first observation), and the initials of the primary observer(s) who contributed specimens, descriptions, and/or photographs. Similar information is provided for unaccepted records, except the observers remain anonymous, and a brief explanation of why the record was not accepted is given. 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 both photographic and video evidence presented by same contributor. Many contributing photographers also submitted written descriptions, a practice the Committee encourages. The initial observers, if known to the committee, are listed first, set off from later contributors of documentation by a semicolon. For specimen records, a sharp (#) follows an abbreviation for the institution holding the specimen, along with that institution's catalog number of the specimen.

Several records that were seen by several to many observers were documented by only one or two of these observers. The committee would like to encourage all observers to document all the review list species they see. Documentation by multiple observers can provide additional evidence and support for the identity of rarities. Often records that have been not accepted suffer from incomplete information, a problem which additional documentation by other observers could help overcome. Additionally, end dates of rarities are often poorly documented; later observers can improve our record of when rarities leave by providing documentation. Increasingly photographs, especially digital images, are being used to document records, which has improved the acceptance rate of records. However, most photographic documentation is not accompanied by written documentation. The committee encourages observers to provide written docu-



*First-year
male Lazuli
Bunting
banded
at Sand
Bluff Bird
Observatory,
Winnebago
County.
29 April 2007.
Photo by John
Longhenry.*

Black-headed Gull
at Montrose,
Cook County,
24 February-
25 March 2007.

Photo by Emil Martinec.



mentation of records, even if documented by photographs. Written documentation can often provide important information in the evaluation of a record, even if high-quality photographs are obtained.

Information on the age and sex of the birds reported may be an opinion of the person(s) submitting the evidence and is not necessarily an accepted position of the Committee. All other remarks are the authors', although most of the information comes from the Committee files which are now stored in Chicago, Illinois, in the Bird Division of the Field Museum.

In several cases there are discrepancies between the details presented here and those in other published sources, especially regarding dates of occurrence. The data in this report provide the Committee's best assessment of all available information. I have not generally commented on records that are published elsewhere with more limited data than contained here, but have made explicit note of apparent errors in published data. The author accepts responsibility for any inaccuracies or misrepresentations of information herein. Errors that come to his attention will be published as corrigenda in a future IORC report.

Abbreviations: References to seasonal reports in the journals *Illinois Birds* and *Birding*; *Meadowlark*, *A Journal of Illinois Birds*; *American Birds* and *North American Birds* are abbreviated by IBB, MJIB, AB, and NAB, respectively, followed by volume and page numbers. Months are abbreviated by their first three letters. County abbreviations are the first three letters of their name in most cases. Exceptions in this report are KNK for Kankakee Co., MCN for Macon Co., and SCL for St. Clair Co. These abbreviations follow those adopted in Johnson, Deaton and Clyne (1998) and used in subsequent IORC reports.

"Northern", "central", and "southern Illinois" refer to specific subsections of the state as first defined by Gault (1922); see also Bohlen (1978). An on-line map showing the regions of Illinois can be found at <http://www.illinois-birds.org/Listing/2004%20Lists/IllinoisRegionalBirdingMap.gif>.

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Review List: The Review List includes species for which the committee will review all records or all records outside of some determined range within the state. These are species that, in general, average two or fewer records per year in the state, or which are extremely rare in all but a few counties in the state. The current review list was revised at the 5 November 2006 committee meeting. IORC requests and welcomes evidence concerning all records for the review species listed on the review list on the IOS/IORC website: <http://www.illinoisbirds.org/iorc.html>. In addition, any species not listed in the checklist of Illinois state birds (IORC 1999) should be documented, and will be reviewed by IORC. Documentation of regular species may be appropriate when they occur out of season – i.e., exceptionally early arrival dates or late departure dates for migratory species. All first state nesting records also should be documented. Exceptionally high counts of species may also merit documentation. These documentations should generally be sent to the seasonal editor of the *Field Notes* in the *Meadowlark* and/or the regional editors for *North American Birds*. Similarly, rarities on Christmas Bird Counts and Spring Bird Counts should be documented and that documentation provided to the appropriate compiler. In most cases, other than review list species, IORC will not review documentations, except at the request of compilers or editors.

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ACCEPTED RECORDS

Review List Records Accepted
(50 records of 29 species)

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) One adult male was near the Illinois River south of Bartonville, PEO on 12 Mar (2006.020; JLM). One adult male was seen at Carlyle Lake WMA, FAY on 20 Oct (2006.028; DMK)

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) A female-plumaged bird was on East Fork Lake, RIC on 16 Dec (2005.036; LH, RES). There are fewer than ten accepted records of this species in Illinois.

Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) One adult was at Horseshoe Lake, MAD from 27 Jun- 28 Jul (2007.013; FRH, JU*)



Reddish Egret at Chicago Botanic Garden, Cook County. 9 May 2007. Photo by Carolyn Fields.

Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*) An adult dark morph was at the Chicago Botanic Garden, COO (CBG) on 19-23 May (2007.011; CSF*). It was reported at GLNTC, LAK (ca. 16 miles NNE of CBG) on the afternoon of 23 May, when it had disappeared from the Botanic Garden. On 24-25 May, it was on the beach at Waukegan, another 4 miles north, where it was photographed (JSw*). The committee received no documentation of the bird from GLNTC.



Immature White Ibis in St. Clair County. 8-16 July 2006. Photo by Dan Kassebaum.



Adult White Ibis, Rend Lake, Jefferson County. 22 April 2006. Photo by Dan Kassebaum

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) An immature remained at Homer Lake, CHA from 29 Jul to 11 Aug (2005.022; BAG*); One immature was at Fayetteville TWSP, SCL on 8-16 Jul (2006.035; TJD, DMK*). An adult was seen at Rend Lake, JEF from 22 Apr to 4 May (2006.037; DMK*).

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) Two birds, an adult and an immature were at Carlyle Lake, CLI from 17 Sep to 1 Oct (2005.039; DMK*); one adult at Lake Springfield,

SAN on 4 May (2006.032; HDB*). An immature was at Carlyle Lake, FAY on 19-23 Oct (2006.027; DMK*). A minority of the committee did not feel that the photographs of the Fayette Co. bird ruled out Glossy Ibis, but they accepted the record based on written documentation. Thus this record is considered a sight record with written documentation and photographic support, rather than a record documented by photographs.

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) An immature was in East Fork TWSP, CLI on 15 Oct (2006.034; DMK, JPM*, DJa*). An adult was seen at the hawk watch at IBSP, north unit, LAK on 22 Oct (2006.026; DBJ); it was seen by a number of observers and documented and sketched by Dave Johnson. An adult was seen at Prairie Ridge SNA, JAS on 22 Sep (2005.037; RES)

Mississippi Kite, June, Jubilee College State Park, Peoria County. 21-26 June. Photos by Jane Ward.



Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) An immature photographed at Jubilee College SP, near Peoria, PEO was one of three birds present there from 21-26 June (2007.012; MB, JW*). Records of this insect-eating hawk north of its normal Illinois range are becoming more regular; however, 2007 also coincided with the emergence of the 17-year cicada brood (Brood XIII) in northern Illinois. Cicadas are a significant food item for Mississippi Kites in much of the northern part of their range.

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) One was seen near Savoy, CHA on 22-23 Jan (2006.002; RLJ, GSL)

Gyr Falcon in southwestern Livingston County. 3 February 2007. Photo by Tom Hutton



Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*) One was south of Flanagan, LIV on 3 Feb (2007.001; DFS, TH*). This bird was apparently seen earlier in the same area, but IORC has received no documentation.

Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) One was heard responding to playback at Eckert Woods, FAY on 17 Apr (2006.030; DMK).



Adult Purple Gallinule at Mermet Lake, Massac County. May 2006. Photo by Dan Kassebaum.

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinica*) An adult was seen at Mermet Lake, MSS from 6 May to 26 June (2006.036; DMK*).

Snowy Plover at Rend Lake, Jefferson County. 28-29 May. Photo by Dan Kassebaum.



Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) One was at Rend Lake, JEF on 28-29 May (2007.009; DMK*)

Ruff (Reeve) at Horseshoe Lake, Madison County. 19 July 2006. Photo by Dan Kassebaum.



Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) One adult female was at Horseshoe Lake, MAD on 18-21 Jul (2006.038; DMK*)

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) A juvenile lingered at Clinton Lake, DEW on 23-31 Oct (2005.044; EWW*, REF, DFS) and was seen by numerous observers. Its plumage fits the "dark intermediate" morph described by Olsen and Larsson (1997).

Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) A juvenile was seen at Heidecke Lake, GRU 19-23 Sep (2006.011; SAC*, CMA*)

Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) An adult in basic plumage remained at Montrose, COO from 24 Feb to 25 Mar (2007.002; JWH, EJM*).

Mew Gull (*Larus canus*) One was at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 1-5 Dec (1995.071; DMK; ASe*).

White-winged Dove (*Zenaidura asiatica*) One was at a feeder in Mendota, LAS on 23 May (2006.013; JEH). One was at Montrose, COO on 30 Apr (2007.005; AB*). Another was at Montrose, COO on 10 May (2007.006;

GAW*); a bird seen and documented on 8 May (2007.006; RDH) at Montrose was probably the same as the 10 May bird. One was photographed at the Northwestern landfill, Evanston, COO on 26 May (2007.007; JIE*). One remained at a feeder in Springfield, SAN from 1-3 May (2007.008; VMK*). The number of birds at Montrose during the spring of 2007 is not entirely clear. However, that a White-winged Dove could remain at heavily birded Montrose for over a week in early May (including the day of the Spring Bird Count) without being detected seems very unlikely. Based on that, the committee treated the 30 April and 8-10 May birds as different. This species continues to expand, and is now at least annual in Illinois. Records are concentrated in spring, mostly in May.

Barn Owl at Montrose, Cook County. 23 April 2007. Photo by Alex Bloss.



Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) One was at Montrose, COO on 23 Apr (2007.003; RDH, AB*). One was heard in pre-dawn hours near Chana, OGL on 10 Jul (2005.045; DFS). One remained in an abandoned corn crib at Hennepin Lake, PUT from 19 Nov to 17 Dec (2003.045; JDM, DFS). One was seen south of Victoria, KNO on 19 Oct (2003.043; DJM).

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) An adult male was at feeders near Lake Bracken, KNO on 23-25 Aug (2006.012; J&TSc*, DJM). An adult male was at a feeder in Mt. Carmel, WAB on 21 Jul (2006.024; KD, CS). A first-year male at feeders was banded and photographed, showing the diagnostic tail feathers, at Carbondale, JAC on 10 Aug (2005.043; CHu*).

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) One was at IBSP, LAK on 22-23 Sep (2006.033; MJF*). One was seen at Green Valley FP, DUP on 24 Sep (2006.040; REF). One was at Prairie Ridge SNA, JAS from 8 Dec (2006.043; RES*) to 1 Feb 2007.

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) One was at Lake Forest, LAK from 29 Oct to 1 Nov (2005.033; CEG). Although this bird was seen by a number of observers, only the original observer documented the record.

Adult male Townsend's Warbler at LaBagh Woods, Cook County. 5-9 May. Photo by Kanae Hirabayashi.



Townsend's Warbler (*Dendroica townsendi*) An adult male was at LaBagh Woods FP, COO from 5-9 May (2007.010; MFu, KH*).

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) One at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 22 Oct (2006.039; DMK) was thought to be probably an immature female.

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) An adult male was seen at Waterfall Glen FP, DUP on 8 May (2002.041; REF)

Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*) A first-year male was banded and photographed at Sand Bluff Bird Observatory, Shirland, WIN on 29 Apr (2007.004; DSe, JL*, LGJ). An adult female was observed and sketched at Carpenter Park, SAN on 14 May (2006.021; HDB). These are the fourth and fifth accepted records for Illinois. See photo on page 54.

Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) An adult male was seen Spring Lake, CAR on 13 May (2006.018; DTW).

Hoary Redpoll at Illinois Beach State Park, Lake County. 25 November 2006.

Photo by Robert Hughes.



Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*) One at IBSP, north unit, LAK on 25 Nov (2006.042; RH*) was seen by a number of observers.

Other accepted records (5 records of 5 species)

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) One was at Sangchris SP near the SAN/CHR county line on 9 Apr (2006.031; HDB*). This species is seldom recorded in spring in Illinois, although there are usually several reports in autumn each year.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*) One first-year bird was at Lake Decatur, MCN from 29 Oct to 11 Nov (2006.041; TAM)

Clay-colored Sparrow (*Spizella pallida*) One was photographed at Moorman Swine Research Center, Urbana, CHA on 10 Mar (2006.017; BAG*). This species typically arrives in Illinois in the latter half of April, so this may have been a wintering bird. There are only two winter records, both from the Chicago area, of this species that have been accepted by IORC, and it has not previously been recorded in Illinois in March.

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) one at Horseshoe Lake SP, MAD on 22 March (2006.015; SCI*). This is an early arrival date for this species. Bohlen (1987) mentions a 27 March record in Urbana, and one was reported from Massac Co. on 30 March 1998 (Clyne 1998), but otherwise this species typically arrives in Illinois no earlier than mid-April.

Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*) One was at Montrose on 19 Oct (2005.038; JPL). This species is rarely seen as a migrant in the fall, and this is about a month after most fall records. However, there are a handful of winter records.

UNACCEPTED RECORDS

Review list species (5 records of 5 species)

Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*) One was reported from Kankakee, KNK on 15 Apr (2006.014). Two observers documented this record, which represents the first report of a caracara from Illinois. The Committee felt that the possibility of this bird being an escape from captivity was too high to accept it as a first state record. Caracaras are not common in captivity and there does seem to be an increasing pattern of vagrancy; on the other hand this record didn't fit into any currently understood pattern. Additionally, both observers saw the bird for only a short period and their descriptions were not very detailed; at least two committee members expressed concern about the identity of the bird, mainly because of the limited detail in the descriptions provided. Neither observer mentioned, for example, the dark crown that caracaras show.

Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) One was reported on Northerly Island, Chicago, COO on 21 Oct (2006.025). This bird was flushed by the observer out of tall grass, and was seen only with the naked eye for two to three

seconds. Because of that fact, the observer was not able to obtain much detail on the plumage. The details provided are suggestive of Black Rail, but the majority of the committee did not feel they were sufficient to make the record acceptable.

Long-billed Murrelet (*Brachyramphus perdix*) One was reported at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 12 Nov (2005.041). Long-billed Murrelet is an Asiatic species that has a history of vagrancy into the inland United States (refs). There are records from several states in the Midwest, and its eventual occurrence in Illinois is expected. This bird seemed clearly to be a small alcid, and may have been (or perhaps probably was) a Long-billed Murrelet. However, a majority of the Committee felt that the distance to the bird, the brevity of the observation (less than a minute), and the windy conditions under which the bird was seen made it impossible to accept this report as a first state record.

Kirtland's Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*) An adult female was reported at Kankakee, KNK on 21 May (2006.010). The Committee was not convinced by the doc-

umentation of this bird. The bird seen may have very well been a Kirtland's but all of the Committee thought that the description did not rule out Magnolia Warbler. The description did not specifically mention whether the rump was yellow or dark, and did not mention anything about the tail pattern, which is very different between the species. The observer also did not notice tail-wagging, which is characteristic of Kirtland's.

Tricolored Blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*) An adult male was reported from a feeder in North Barrington, LAK on 26 Feb (2006.016). This species is restricted to western coastal states, plus Nevada and Baja California. There are no vagrant records from nearby states, much less from a site as distant as Illinois. The species is largely non-migra-

tory, although it withdraws in the winter into the heart of its breeding range, making it a poor candidate for long-distance vagrancy. A record of this species from Illinois would need to be supported by meticulous documentation and probably a photograph to be accepted. Unfortunately this report did not have such documentation. The bird was not specifically described by the documentor, but instead compared to a Peterson Field Guide description. There was no explanation of what characteristics made the observers think it was this species. Given the great similarity of Tricolored Blackbird to the very common Red-winged Blackbird, the entire committee thought that the documentation provided was inadequate to accept this species from Illinois.

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See page 57 for journal abbreviations.

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