

Fourteenth 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 64 records of 42 species, including 57 accepted records of 37 species, and seven unaccepted records of seven species. We examined documentation from a total of 54 observers in evaluating the records included in this report. Included herein are reviewed species evaluations by the current Committee from 2003 through 2008.

Format: The format of this report follows the conventions used in the first through thirteenth 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, 2007). The records below are divided into two major groups: Accepted and Unaccepted. Each of these groups is then further divided into First State Records, 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 49th (Banks et al. 2008).

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 (*). 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.

Many records seen by numerous observers were documented by only a few of these observers, often only one. The Committee encourages 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 documentation 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. In at least two cases reported herein, the Committee did not vote to accept based on photographs alone, but did accept the record with additional details provided by written documentation.

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.

Meadowlark

County abbreviations are the first three letters of their name in most cases. Exceptions in this report are MCN for Macon Co, MSN for Mason Co., MSS for Massac 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.illinoisbirds.org/Listing/2004%20Lists/IllinoisRegionalBirdingMap.gif>.

Documentors: William Barnes, Marilyn Bell (MBE), Frank K. Bennett, H. D. Bohlen, Tom Bormann, Maury Brucker, Scott A. Cohrs, Linda Cox, Carl & Pen DauBach, Rich DeCoster, Paul K. Doughty, Tim Dwyer (TDw), Joseph W. Eades, Mary Jane Easterday, Carolyn S. Fields, Robert E. Fisher, Matthew E. Fraker, Bryan A. Guarente, C. Leroy Harrison, Jim Hedges, Frank M. Holmes, Steven J. Huggins, Robert D. Hughes, Dennis J. Jacobson, David B. Johnson, Dan M. Kassebaum, Jo Knox, Gregory S. Lambeth, Karen Lund, Travis A. Mahan, Joseph Marencik, D. James Mountjoy, Demayne Murphy, James Myers, Greg Neise, Dennis Oehmke, Eric Ratchliff, William C. Rowe, Bill Rudden (BRd), Thomas S. Schulenberg, Eric S. Secker, Mark Seiffert, Robert E. Shelby, Douglas F. Stotz, Paul W. Sweet, Mike Thelen, Joshua Uffmann, Ken Vail, Jenny Vogt, Eric W. Walters, Gerald White, Barbara Williams, Daniel T. Williams.

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 21 September 2008 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; also on-line at http://www.illinoisbirds.org/birds_of_illinois1.html) 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.

Acknowledgements: This report is made possible by the thoughtful, careful and timely review by all Committee members both past and current, and by the support of Illinois birders and institutions which contributed evidence of Illinois birds by specimens, documentations, photographs, and/or videotapes. Current Committee members, Bob Hughes, Dave Johnson, Travis Mahan, Paul Sweet and Mike Ward all provided careful evaluations of the records included in this report, as did Keith McMullen who left the Committee following the March 2008 Committee meeting.

ACCEPTED RECORDS

First State Records Accepted (one record of one species)

Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*) One adult at Rainbow Beach, Chicago, COO on 1-8 Aug (2007.045; PKD; DBJ). This is the first accepted record for Illinois of this species. It was previously considered hypothetical (IORC 1999) based on two sight reports mentioned in Bohlen (1989). There is a scattering of records in the upper Midwest, including sightings in Ohio, Minnesota (AOU 1998), and Indiana (source?).



Wilson's Plover.
Rainbow Beach,
Chicago. Cook
County. Photo
taken 1-8 August
2007 by Paul
Doughty.

Review List Records Accepted (49 records of 30 species)

Brant (*Branta bernicla*) One at East Galesburg, KNO on 9 Dec (2004.067; DJM).

Mottled Duck (*Anas fulvigula*) One at Horseshoe Lake, MAD on 28-30 May 2005 (JWE, WCR, DMK*). This record was accepted based on the written documentation. Photos were not considered diagnostic by a sufficient majority of the Committee, so they are treated as supportive of the record.

Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) One adult at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 22-23 Sep (2007.038; DTW; DMK*, TAM*)

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) One photographed at Chautauqua NWR, MSN on 30 Nov 2006 (JV, DO*); one breeding- plumaged adult at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area, JAS on 22 May (2007.052; RES*).



Four juvenile Wood Storks visited Hurricane Creek, Seminary Township, Fayette County from 28 August through 11 September 2007. Photos taken 8 September 2007 by Travis A. Mahan.



White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) One at Chautauqua NWR, MSN on 30 Nov 2006 (JV, DO*). The record from Chautauqua and that for the previous species are the latest fall records for both species in Illinois.

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) Four juveniles at Hurricane Creek, Seminary TWSP, FAY on 28 Aug-11 Sep (2007.042; Frances Baldwin, Sandy Britt; TAM*, DMK*).



Mississippi Kite. Illinois Beach State Park, Lake County. 4 November 2007. Photo by Steve Huggins.

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) One at Rockford, WIN on 8 Jul (2003.043; BW); one at Rockford, WIN on 10 May (2003.049; JM); one in ADA on 10 May (2003.045; KV); one at Winfield, DUP on 10 May (2003.046, MBe); one in SCL on 10 May (2003.047; ER); one w of Lexington, MCL on 10 May (2003.048; MEF); one at Belleville, SCL on 20 May (2007.027; DMK);

one at Waterfall Glen FP, DUP on 5 May (2007.028; JHe); one, 2nd year, at IBSP, LAK on 14 Sep (2007.029; PWS); an adult female at IBSP, LAK on 3-4 Nov (2007.037; SJH*). IORC required documentation of Mississippi Kite from locations outside the limited breeding range of this species in southern Illinois. Such records have been increasing in number in the last few years, and the Committee has removed the species from the review list.

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) One at IBSP, LAK on 24 Sep (2006.046; PWS); one at IBSP, LAK on 14 Sep (2007.037; PWS); One at Rockford, WIN on 15 Sep (2007.051; DTW).

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) One at McHenry Dam, MCH on 31 Aug (2007.015; CSF); one at IBSP,



Prairie Falcon. Champaign County. 30 December 2007. Photo by Greg Lambeth.

LAK on 3 Nov (2007.040; SJH*); one at Riverbend FP, CHA on 9-30 Dec (2007.063; BAG, GSL*); one at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 30 Jan-2 Feb (2008.002; MS*); one at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area, JAS on 25 Jan (2008.003; RES, CLH).

Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) One at Kennekuk County Park, VER on 10 May (2003.045; MJE); one at Carlyle Lake, FAY on 15 Apr (2007.018; DMK*).



Snowy Plover. Decatur dredge ponds, Macon County. 30 April-2 May 2007. Photo by Travis A. Mahan.

Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) One at Lake Decatur dredge ponds, MCN on 30 Apr-2 May (2007.041; TAM*).

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) One along the Mississippi River at Lock & Dam 16, ROC on 29 June (2007.071; GW, TDW).

Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) One at Mermet Lake, MSS on 27 Feb (2004.071; FKB); two adults at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 22 Nov (2007.035; BRd; DMK*, TAM*). One of the Carlyle birds remained until 27 Nov 2007.

Little Gull. Carlyle Lake, Clinton County. 22-27 November 2007. Photo by Dan Kassebaum.



Mew Gull (*Larus canus*) One bird at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 23-24 Feb (2008.007; DMK*, BRd*, TAM*, FMH*, TB*). This bird engendered a huge amount of discussion. It is apparently a 3rd cycle bird, clearly belonging to the canus complex. However, many observers thought the bird was an example of the taxon kamchatschensis ("Kamchatka Gull"), considered by some to be a distinct species. The Committee examined a number of photos and compared them to collections at the Field Museum. Unfortunately, birds in this plumage are not as cut-and-dried for identification as adults. The Committee concluded that we could not at present be certain that this individual belonged to kamchatschensis, but that



Mew Gull, possible 'Kamchatka' Gull, Carlyle Lake, Clinton County. Photos above and right taken 24 February 2008 by Bill Rudden.

the evidence was generally supportive of that identification. Size, structure and details of plumage pattern favored kamchatschensis, but many of these characteristics, especially plumage characteristics, are not 100% diagnostic at this age.

Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistosagus*) One adult at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 16-18 Dec (2007.057; DKM*, JU*). This is the third accepted record of this species from Illinois. All of the accepted records have been adults.

Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*) One adult at Carlyle Lake, CLI from 8 Sep (2007.034; MS; DMK*; TAM*, EWW*) to 12 Apr 2008. Although this bird was present for a number of months, there



Slaty-backed Gull. Carlyle Lake, Clinton County. 16-18 December 2007. Photo by Joshua Uffman.

Glaucous-winged Gull. Carlyle Lake, Clinton County. This bird was here from 7 September 2007 through 12 April 2008. Photo by Travis A. Mahan.



were lengthy periods during the overall period of occurrence when the bird was not seen for a period of weeks, including more than two months between mid September and late November 2007, and a month between late February and late March 2008. Its whereabouts during these lengthy absences are not known. See <http://www.htc.net/~kdan/glaucouswingedgull.htm> for details of dates of observations.



Arctic Tern. Carlyle Lake, Clinton County. 9 September 2007. Photo by Mike Thelen.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) One adult at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 9 Sep (2007.056; MTh*) A secondhand report that was not documented indicates that this bird was present on 8 September 2007 as well.

Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) One at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 8-12 Sep (2007.031; DMK, TAM)

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) One at Carlyle Lake, CLI on 6-8 Oct (2007.026; DMK). Most of the handful of records of this species in Illinois come from the month of September.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) One at Carlyle Lake, FAY on 12 Jan-2 Mar (2008.001; DMK).

Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*) One at IBSP, LAK on 7 Jun (2007.022; PWS). This is the second record of this species for the state.

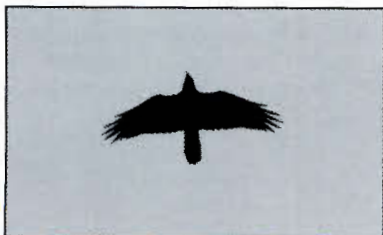


Clark's Nutcracker. Illinois Beach State Park, Lake County. 3 November 2007. Photo by Eric Walters.

Clark's Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*) One at IBSP, LAK on 3-7 Nov (2007.044; EWW*; DBJ). IORC has accepted one previous record for the state, Hancock County, winter 1996-7, saved as a specimen at the Illinois State Museum (Johnson et al 1999). Bohlen (1989) mentions three other records including

a specimen collected in 1894 that is apparently lost. A report from DeWitt Co. in Oct 2001 has never been considered by the Committee, as documentation has not been submitted.

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) One at IBSP, LAK on 13 Oct (2007.020; PWS, SJH*). The photos taken of this bird were not considered sufficient by the Committee to fully document this record, and it was accepted by the Committee based on the written documentation. Until the late 1800s, this species was resident and moderately widespread in Illinois. It vanished from the state and has



Common Raven at Illinois Beach State Park, Lake County. 13 October 2007. Photo by Steve Huggins.

been considered extirpated in the state (IORC 1999). Over the last forty years, however, Common Ravens have expanded their range to reoccupy area from which they had disappeared, including northern and central Wisconsin (Boarman and Heinrich 1999). The last accepted record for Common Raven in Illinois was 54 years to the day earlier, in 1953 at Chicago (Bohlen 1989). There have been several reports of Common Raven in Illinois since then, but these reports have either not been documented or have not been accepted by IORC.

Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*) One at Siloam Springs SP, BRO on 17 Jul (2007.049; DMK). This is the last remaining breeding site known for the species in Illinois. The species appears to have been absent for the previous three years from the site.

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) One at IBSP, LAK on 6 Nov (2004.069; DTW); one at Johnson-Sauk Trail SP, HEN on 19 Nov (2007.043; EWW*).



Townsend's Solitaire at Johnson-Sauk Trail State Park, Henry County. 19 November 2007. Photo by Eric Walters.

Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*) One at Pyramid Lake SP, PER on 10 Nov (2007.033; DMK). A fall 2006 report of this species from the same locality is still under review by the Committee. An article reviewing the status of this species in Illinois and Missouri was recently published (Kassebaum and Eades 2008).

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) One at Riverside Park, n. of Springfield, SAN on 29 Sep (2004.070; HDB).

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) One at Montrose, Chicago, COO on 22 May (2007.030; DM).

Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) One at Monterey Mine, CLI on 22 Nov (2007.025; DMK)

Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*) One at the Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, COO on 19-28 Jan (2008.006; SG, DP*; GN*). There are other birds from winter 2008 being evaluated by the Committee as possible Hoary Redpolls.



Hoary Redpoll. Chicago Botanic Garden, Lake County. 20 January 2008. Photo by Greg Neise.

Other accepted records (seven records of six species)

Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*) One at Fermilab, DUP on 22 Aug (2004.072; KL). This is the earliest fall report of this species in Illinois. It typically arrives in October, but Bohlen (1989) mentions a 31 August report and two September records.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*) One adult at Independence Grove FP, LAK on 17 Nov (2007.032; RDH*); one adult at Winthrop Harbor, LAK on 24 Nov (2007.033; RDH*).

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) One adult male at Aledo, MER on 6 Sep (2007.055; JKn)

Northern Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*) One in CLI near Carlyle Lake on 1-4 Nov (2007.039; DMK*, TAM*). This was the most southerly report of this species during the enormous flight that occurred during the fall of 2007. It is approximately the same latitude of the southernmost previous Illinois report, a bird near Horseshoe Lake, Madison Co.



California Gull. Winthrop Harbor, Lake County. 24 Nov 2007. Photo by Bob Hughes.



Northern Shrike in Clinton County, the most southerly report of this species during the flight of 2007. Photo taken 3-4 November 2007 by Dan Kassebaum.

in the winter of 1999-2000 (Stotz 2001).

Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*) One in Grant Park, Chicago, COO on 2 Sep (2005.022; DFS). Orange-crowned Warblers are reported by birders in early September and even late August, but there is little evidence to support these early fall reports. This record is one of the few documented reports from early September. The earliest fall specimen in the Field Museum collection is 14 September, and is one of only four (out of 78) from earlier than 28 September.

Any Orange-crowned Warbler in the fall in Illinois before 15 September should be documented.

Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*) subspecies hypochrysea (Yellow Palm Warbler) One at Northier Island, Chicago, COO on 7 Nov 2006 (DFS, TSS).

UNACCEPTED RECORDS

Possible first state record species (three records of three species)

Great Gray Owl (*Strix nebulosa*) One photographed near Sparta, RAN on 2 February (2007.058). The observer in this case photographed the owl in question without specifically identifying it as to species. Because the photos appeared to show pale eyes, people to whom the observer showed the photos concluded that the owl was a Great Gray Owl. The Committee concluded, after extensive discussion, that the bird in the photo was a Barred Owl. On close examination, the pale eyes looked to be an irregular area of off-white that did not fully fill the eye sockets, rather than the piercing bright yellow eyes of a Great Gray Owl. The Committee believes that the pale eyes seen in the photo are an artifact. The plumage of the bird also appears to resemble that of a Barred Owl rather than a Great Gray Owl. The general tone of the plumage, the extent of the facial disks and the underparts pattern fit Barred Owl rather than Great Gray Owl. The winter of 2006-2007 was not a major flight year for Great Gray Owl, unlike 2005-2006 when this species occurred south to Iowa and southern Wisconsin. Also southern Illinois seems like an unlikely locale for the first Illinois record of this boreal forest species.

Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*) One seen by a single observer in Lincoln Park, Chicago, COO on 28 Oct (2006.051). The majority of the Committee felt the submitted documentation was insufficient to accept this report as the first state record. The details were consistent with Cave Swallow, and the date is also consistent

with the timing of vagrant Cave Swallows elsewhere in the upper Midwest. However, the Committee felt that the description was inadequate to absolutely eliminate immature Cliff Swallows (in particular the pale auriculars of a Cave Swallow were not noted), and the observation of this flying bird was brief and made with the naked eye; no binoculars were used. There have been a handful of Cave Swallows reported from Illinois, mostly along the Lake Michigan lakefront, but none have been accepted yet by IORC, although at least three records remain under consideration. The species has been found in small numbers in other Midwestern states. Most vagrant records in inland eastern North America are from late fall, so this report fits the known pattern of vagrancy. The limited evidence indicates that vagrant birds belong to the subspecies pallida that breeds in Texas and New Mexico (Spahn and Tetlow 2006).

Varied Bunting (*Passerina versicolor*) One reported from Montrose, Chicago, COO on 14 Nov (2004.066). This was a single observer sighting of a basic-plumaged adult male. A majority of the Committee voted not to accept the record based on questions about the origin of such a bird, although a couple of Committee members also expressed concern about the identification, questioning whether other buntings and grosbeaks had been eliminated. Varied Bunting undergoes a fairly limited migration at the north edge of its range with birds withdrawing a short distance southward into northern Mexico. Varied Bunting typically disappear from their southwestern US breeding grounds by September (Phillips et al 1964), well before this record. However, the only two California records are from mid-November and January (Roberson 1980). There is little evidence of long-distance vagrancy in this species; the only accepted record in North America far from its breeding range is a 7 May 1995 record at Long Point, Ontario (Dobos 1996).

Review list species (three records of three species)

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) One seen and photographed in southwestern MON on 13-14 Oct (2007.023). The Committee examined both the photograph and the written details on this bird. A majority of the Committee thought that the documentation was not sufficient to determine the identity of this bird, as White-faced Ibis could not be eliminated. The bird is accepted as a *Plegadis* sp., not identified to species.

Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*) One gray morph reported at Peoria, PEO on 17 Dec (2005.021). The Committee unanimously thought that the documentation of this bird had too limited a description of the bird and did not rule out the possibility of it being another species of raptor.

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) An adult male found dead near Midway airport, COO in early May (2007.059). A photo of a dead adult male Painted Bunting appeared on-line on Craig's List (<http://chicago.craigslist.org/>) in mid May 2007. The narrative that accompanied the photo

indicated that the bird had been found near Midway and was buried in the backyard of the person who found it. Posts on Craig's List are anonymous and attempts to contact the person who posted the photo were unsuccessful. This record is consistent with current patterns of vagrancy in Painted Buntings in Illinois (there are several May records, for example, the Montrose record above). However, a variety of factors led the Committee not to accept this report for Illinois. That this record remained anonymous, did not have a specific locality or date, and involved an adult male individual found near a major airport of a species that is commonly held in captivity led the Committee to this decision.

Other records not accepted (one record of one species)

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) One at Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, COO on 30-31 Jan (2006.044). The written documentation does not provide a description of this bird or an explanation of how it differed from other possibilities. With the lack of details to establish the identity of this bird the Committee voted not to accept this record. Some of the plumages of young Bald Eagles can resemble the plumage pattern of an Osprey. Given the abundance of Bald Eagles in Illinois in winter and the very few winter Osprey records, immature Bald Eagles should be considered carefully by Illinois birders when they observe a bird they believe may be an Osprey between December and February.

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See page 48 for journal abbreviations.

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— Douglas F. Stotz

Conservation Ecologist/Ornithologist

Field Museum of Natural History

1400 S. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60605

dstotz@fieldmuseum.org