

Fifteenth 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 36 records, including 33 accepted records of 26 species, and two unaccepted records of two species. A total of 48 observers contributed reports, including descriptions or photographs documenting the records included in this report. Included are reviewed species evaluations by the Committee from 2007 through 2009.

Format: The format of this report follows the conventions used in the first through fourteenth reports of the Committee (e. g. Goetz and Robinson 1988; Goetz 1989; Johnson, Deaton and Clyne 1998; Johnson and Stotz 1999; Stotz and Johnson 2000; Stotz 2001; Stotz and Johnson 2003, Stotz 2008). 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 sequence of species conforms to that of the seventh edition of the American Ornithologists' Union's checklist, (1998) and its supplements, through the 50th (Chesser et al. 2009).

An accepted record is entered with the locality, including 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. Sound recordings are indicated by a + following the contributor's name. If the observer who first discovered the bird is known to the committee, their initials are set off from the initials of other contributors by a semicolon. Initial observers who did not submit documentations are not always listed. For specimen records, a sharp (#) follows an abbreviation for the institution holding the specimen, along with that institution's catalog number of the specimen if available.

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 not been accepted suffer from incomplete information, a problem which additional documentation by other observers could help overcome.

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 author's, 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 present-

ed here vs. other published sources, especially regarding dates of occurrence. The data in this report provide the Committee's best assessment of all available information. We have not generally commented on records that are published elsewhere with more limited data than contained here. The Committee accepts responsibility for any inaccuracies or misrepresentations of information herein. Errors that come to our 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.

"Northern", "central", and "southern Illinois" refer to specific subsections of the state as first defined by Gault (1922); see also Bohlen (1978). The terms "region" and "regional" apply to the Middlewestern Prairie Region as used in NAB and include Illinois as well as Iowa, Missouri, Indiana, and most of Ohio and Kentucky.

Observers and Documentors: Dan and Mary Alexander, Tim Avery, Michael J. Baum, Alex B. Bloss, Michael Bowman, Todd Bugg, Marilyn F. Campbell, Elizabeth J. Chato, Paul R. Clyne, Matthew M. Cvetas, Robert Erickson, Carolyn S. Fields, Matthew E. Fraker, C. Leroy Harrison, Ann Harness (AHr), Ann Haverstock, Mary Hennen, Jed B. Hertz, Kanac Hirabayashi, Frank Holmes, Robert D. Hughes, Dan M. Kassebaum, Lawrence Krutulis, Dave Kvernes, Tom Lally, Nolan

A. Lameka, Karen Lund, Michael A. Madsen, Travis A. Mahan, Walter J. Marcisz, Sharon Mitchell, Vince Moxon, Greg Neise, Kristine & Peter Paladino, Helen Parker, Diane Phillips, Kay Preshlock, Rhonda M. Rothrock, Bill Rudden, Eric S. Secker, Mark S. Seiffert, Kathryn Shane, Robert E. Shelby, Andrew P. Sigler, Stephen G. Spitzer, Josh Stafford, Alan F. Stokic, Douglas F. Stotz, Anne Straight, Craig B. Thayer, Michael S. Thelen, Michael Trahan, Bob Vogelgang, David E. Willard, Geoffrey A. Williamson, Jim Ziebol.

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 approved at the 21 September 2008 committee meeting. IORC requests and welcomes evi-

dence concerning all records for the review species listed on the review list on the IOS/IORC website: www.illinoisbirds.org/iorc.html.

In addition, any species not listed in the checklist of Illinois state birds (IORC 1999) should be documented. 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 should also be documented. Exceptionally high counts of species may also merit documentation. These documentations of non-review list species should generally be sent to the seasonal editor of the Field Notes in the Meadowlark. Both the Christmas Bird Count and Spring Bird Count require documentation of a greater range of species. Such documentations should be sent to the appropriate compiler. Some records from each of these long-term projects are reviewed by IORC, and the

documentations supporting observations of rare birds on them are largely stored at the Field Museum with the other IORC archives.

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. Thanks to the committee members who reviewed these records for intelligent, thoughtful reviews. These committee members were Bob Hughes, Dave Johnson, Dan Kassebaum, Travis Mahan, Paul Sweet, and Mike Ward. The author served as committee secretary. Dave Johnson stepped down from the committee after the meeting of 7 June 2009 following many years of service as a member and secretary of the committee. His tireless commitment to IORC is gratefully acknowledged.

ACCEPTED RECORDS

New State Records

(four records of two species)



Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*) One photographed in sod farm at Momence, Kankakee Co. on 13 to 18 Sep (2008.026; JBH*; GN). This bird was found on the 13th. Numerous observers looked for the bird on the 14th, but it was seen by only a handful of observers. It was not seen subsequently until it was photographed again on the 18th. Mountain Plover is quite a rare vagrant into the eastern United States. There are fewer than ten previous records from east of the Mississippi River (AOU 1998, Knopf and Wunder 2006).

The Cave Swallow was officially added to the Illinois bird species list in 2008. The photo of a Cave Swallow was taken in Olney, Richland County on 16 November 2008 by Bob Shelby.

This photo was published in Meadowlark: Vol 18, No. 2 and credited to the incorrect photographer. The photo was taken by Jed Hertz, who discovered the Mountain Plover in a sod farm at Momence, Kankakee County, and documented the first state record of this species.



Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*) An immature bird was photographed in a large mixed flock of swallows at Clement Township, Clinton Co. on 13 Sep (2008.027; DMK*, MSS*). Both observers believed that at least two birds were present, perhaps more. However, the photographs do not clearly document more than a single bird. One adult female found dead at McCormick Place, Chicago, Cook Co. on 10 Nov (2008.042; DEW, MH, spec. FMNH #461103). One adult was photographed at East Fork Lake, Richland Co. on 15-16 Nov

(2008.043; RES*, CLH). Based on plumage, the McCormick Place specimen is referable to the subspecies pallida that breeds in the southwestern United States. The bird photographed in Richland Co. also appears to belong to the subspecies pallida. The photos of immatures from Clinton Co. do not seem to be identifiable to subspecies. This species has become a fairly regular vagrant in fall to the eastern United States especially the Great Lakes region and the northeastern United States. Previous records of fall birds in the Great Lakes region and

the northeastern United States identifiable to subspecies, both specimens and some photos, have all been pallida (McNair and Post 2001, Spahn and Tetlow 2006). Birds from the Florida breeding population and the northeastern United States in spring have been identified as nominate fulva, the West Indies breeding subspecies (Smith et al. 1988, McNair and Post 2001).



A subadult Brown Pelican was photographed at Crystal Lake, McHenry County 3-4 June 2009. Photo by Geoffrey Williamson.

An immature Brown Pelican was seen near Alton, Madison County 11 May to 26 August 2009. Photo by Mike Thelen.



Review List Species

(29 records of 24 species)

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck

(Dendrocygna autumnalis) Eleven videotaped at Iola, Clay Co. on 7 May (2008.012; CLH*, RES). Four photographed at Ware, Union Co. to Grand Tower, Jackson Co. on 6-11 July (2008.035; DMK*). Five adults were shot out of a reported flock of 15 birds at Chautauqua NWR, Mason Co. on 9 Nov (2008.049; JS*, three spec. to FMNH). The committee examined photos of the five collected birds. Three of the birds were sent to the Field Museum for preparation as specimens. There were previously two accepted records for Illinois of this species.

Brant (*Branta bernicla*) One immature moved around Chicago's Lake Michigan lakefront, Cook Co. from 26 Oct to 14 Dec (2008.044; WJM; CSF*, GN*, GAW, CBT, DFS, PRC). A Brant was reported off and on through fall 2008 throughout the southern Lake Michigan lakefront. The first report came from Calumet Park on 26 October. Later, observers found one in Lincoln Park on 29 October, where it remained until at least 2 November. It was subsequently found on the Museum Campus in Grant Park on 11 November, remaining there until 19 November. Finally it was found in Jackson Park on 8 December, and was last seen on 14 December. The close proximity of the reports, the non-overlapping dates of

occurrence between the various sites, and some details of how the plumage changed across time as the bird matured across the fall led the committee to conclude that only a single bird was involved in this record.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) An adult male was photographed at Downs, McLean Co. on 2-4 Apr (2008.010; MEF; DMK*).



An adult male Eurasian Wigeon, center, was at Downs, McLean County on 2-4 April 2008. Photo by Dan Kassebaum.

Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*) A female was seen and photographed along the Lake Michigan shoreline at Loyola Park in northern Chicago and the southern edge of Evanston, Cook Co. on 14 to 28 Feb (2009.011; SGS*; NAL*). This bird engendered extensive discussion with some arguing that the bird represented a hybrid Barrow's X Common Goldeneye. The two characteristics that doubters focused on were head shape and the extent of white in the wing. Numerous photos of this bird showed a variety of apparent head shapes, mostly as a result of the active diving in which the bird often engaged. Immediately following a dive the head shape would appear atypical. However, many photos show a typical head shape for a Barrow's Goldeneye. The white in the wing may be more extensive than average for a Barrow's Goldeneye, but clear photos of the spread wing indicate the white to be within the variation shown by female Barrow's Goldeneyes. The committee unanimously accepted this bird as a female Barrow's Goldeneye.

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) An immature photographed near Alton, Madison Co. on 11 May to 26 Aug (2009.017; BR*; GN*, MST*). A subadult was photographed at Crystal Lake, McHenry Co. on 3-4



Dan Kassebaum took this photo of a Roseate Spoonbill on 5 September 2008 at Ware, Union County.

Up to four individuals were observed and one photographed between Ware, Union County and far southern Jackson County near Grand Tower in September 2008.

June (2009.016; KP; KL*, GAW*, CSF*). The latter bird may have been present for 2 to 3 days before birders became aware of it according to reports from residents of the area (fide KL). The Alton Brown Pelican moved between Illinois and Missouri waters. The last specific report from Illinois that I could locate was on 2 July.

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) One adult male photographed near Forest Glen Preserve at Meeks, Vermilion Co. on 4 Sep (2008.021; MFC*). This record followed the passage of the remnants of Hurricane Gustav, which made landfall along the Gulf Coast of Louisiana, with its remnants traveling across Illinois. The photograph does not show any identifying features to distinguish Magnificent from Great Frigatebird (*Fregata minor*). However, given that Magnificent Frigatebird is a regular post-hurricane wanderer throughout the eastern United States, it is the only regular frigatebird in the Gulf of Mexico, and there are only two records of Great Frigatebird in continental North America, the committee unanimously agreed that this record was best treated as Magnificent Frigatebird.

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) One female photographed along Cache River, Pulaski Co. on 30 May (2009.029; CKM, JDM; DMK*). Anhingas (up to six) began to be reported from along the Cache River beginning on 1 May, although there were earlier secondhand reports. Birds continued into summer; further details on these birds will be

forthcoming. A soaring female photographed at the end of May was the only documentation received of these spring birds.

Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*) Up to four individuals observed (and one photographed) between Ware, Union Co. and Grand Tower, Jackson Co. on 5-28 Sep (2008.024; DKv; DMK*).

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) One immature at E. Cape Girardeau on 6 Sep (2008.038; MSS*). One immature at Horseshoe Lake, Madison Co. on 3-10 Aug (2008.025; FH, JZ; BR*). After a hiatus of about fifteen years with no records of this species, there have been at least seven accepted records since 2003.

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) One photographed at Washington Co. CA on 20 May (2009.012; MSS*) This record is from approximately 35 miles north of the area of regular occurrence of this species in southern Illinois.

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) Two photographed south of Carbondale, Jackson Co. on 23-25 August (2008.023; RMR; TAM*). Swallow-tailed Kites occurred throughout much of Illinois until the very early part of the 20th century (Bohlen 1989). For much of the next century, there were essentially no records in Illinois. There have now been three accepted records in Illinois since 2005, and other records in the Upper Midwest. The species appears to be increasing on its southeastern US breeding grounds, and vagrant records should continue to increase.

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) An immature was photographed at Carlyle Lake, Clinton Co. on 25 Oct (2008.052; CLH; DMK*). This is the latest in the year report in the last two decades, although there are some November reports from the 1980s, and a late October specimen from 1917 (Ford et al. 1934). Although the breeding population centered on northwestern Kane County, seems to barely be hanging on, records of migrants in the fall appear to be on the increase.

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) A bird in partial alternate plumage was seen and photographed at Greene Valley FP, DuPage Co. on 23 August (2008.022; MAM; NAL*). After some dozen reports in the 1960s though 1980s, this is only the second accepted record since 1987.

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) One photographed at Horseshoe Lake, Madison Co. on 8-15 December (2007.064; FH*). This bird was seen on the Collinsville CBC on 15 December.

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) One at Montrose, Chicago, Cook Co. on 2 May (2009.022; LK; MMC, MTr*). Since the first state record in 1998, there have been at least 16 accepted records in Illinois of this expanding species. Most of these records fit the pattern shown here of a single bird seen in May for only a short period.

Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) One photographed at Montrose, Chicago, Cook Co., on 29 Oct (2008.045; RDH, BV*). This bird

was killed by a Cooper's Hawk later in the day.

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) One photographed at Montrose, Chicago, Cook Co. on 31 Oct-1 Nov (2008.046; RDH; KH*, NAL*).

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) One photographed in an Evanston yard on 25 Mar (2009.027; MMC*).



Matthew Cvetas took this photo of a Varied Thrush in an Evanston, Cook County yard on 25 March 2009.



Alex Bloss took this photo of a Hoary Redpoll at Chicago Botanic Garden, Cook County on 24 January 2009.

Todd Bugg took this photo of a Hoary Redpoll at Merwin Nature Preserve, McLean County on 25 January 2009.

Two Swainson's Warblers were found in Alexander County on 2 July-28 August 2008. Dan Kassebaum photographed this bird in early August 2008.

Kirtland's Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*) A male was photographed in Lincoln Park, Chicago, Cook Co. on 21 May (2008.011; TA*).

Swainson's Warbler (*Limnolophus swainsoni*) Two were in Alexander Co. on 2 July-28 August (2008.036; RE, APS; DMK*). Birds were seen and/or heard by a number of observers before one bird was photographed in early August.

Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) One adult male was seen and heard singing along the Jane Addams Trail at Scioto Mills, Stephenson Co. on 16-24 Apr (2009.021; AS; ESS*, DP*, SM*).

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) An adult male was photographed at Mahomet, Champaign Co. on 27-28 May (2008.017; D&MA*; EJC, HP).

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) An adult male was photographed at a feeder in Harrisburg, Saline Co. on 13 May (2008.016; KS*).

Hoary Redpoll (*Acanthis hormemanni*) One, apparently a female, was seen and photographed irregularly at Chicago Botanic Garden, Cook Co. between 24 Jan and 3 Mar (2009.023; AFS, RE, AHR; ABB*, NAL*). One adult male was seen regularly and photographed at Merwin Nature Preserve, McLean Co. on 25-30 Jan (2009.003;



TB*; MEF). There were later undocumented reports of presumably the same bird at this site until 5 Mar 2009. One adult male was photographed at a feeder in Wheaton, DuPage Co. on 21 February (2009.026; VM*). Other records from winter 2007-8 and 2008-9 remain in review. The number of Hoary Redpolls reported in Illinois during these winters is unprecedented. The Hoary Redpolls did accompany two of the largest Common Redpoll invasions of the past two decades. However, more knowledge of identification criteria, and increasing photographic documentation because of digital cameras have played an important role in improving our knowledge of this species in Illinois.



Vince Moxon took this photo of a Hoary Redpoll at his backyard feeder in Wheaton, DuPage County on 21 February 2009.

Other accepted records

(Three records of two species)

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*)

An adult photographed at Prairie Green FP, Kane Co. on 27 May (2009.013; MB*; AH*).

California Gull (*Larus californicus*) An adult was at North Point Marina, Winthrop Harbor, Lake Co. from at least 16 Mar to 12 Apr (2009.020; CSF*). Another adult was at North Point Marina, Winthrop Harbor, Lake Co. on 30 May (2009.019; TL*). The committee concluded that because of the lengthy period between the first and second bird without any sightings, despite regular coverage by a number of observers, these records were best treated as separate birds.

UNACCEPTED RECORDS

First State Records

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*) A male photographed along the Hennepin Canal at Kneiff Rd in Whiteside Co. on 12 May (2009.018) was identified as a possible Bullock's Oriole. The committee reviewed the photos of this bird, a subadult oriole. They concluded that the bird was a young male Baltimore Oriole with a somewhat atypical pattern of black on the head. Although this pattern was unusual-looking, it did not match Bullock's Oriole. The bird also did not match the wing or tail pattern of a Bullock's Oriole.

Review List Records

Unaccepted

(one record of one species)

Garganey (*Anas querquedula*) A female teal at Sauer Family Prairie Kame FP, Kane Co. on 22 May (2009.028) was documented as this species with detailed written documentations by two observers. Despite this, a majority of the committee did not feel the documentation firmly established the identity of this bird as a Garganey. In particular, some committee members felt the written descriptions were not completely consistent with female Garganey, and that the possibility of a hybrid between other species of "blue-winged" *Anas* could not be convincingly eliminated.

Literature Cited

See page 80 for journal abbreviations.

American Ornithologists' Union. 1998. Check-list of North American birds, seventh edition. Washington, D.C.: American Ornithologists' Union.

Atwood, B. 2004. Snowy Plover: Fifth Illinois record. MJIB 13:19-20.

Chesser, R. T., Banks, R. C., F. K. Barker, C. Cicero, J. L. Dunn, A. W. Kratter, I. J. Lovette, P. C. Rasmussen, J. V. Remsen, Jr., J. D. Rising, D. F. Stotz and K. Winker. 2009. Fiftieth supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds. Auk 126:705-714.

Bohlen, H. D. 1978. An annotated check-list of the birds of Illinois. Illinois State Museum Popular Science Series, Vol. IX.

Bohlen, H. D. 1989. The birds of Illinois. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Ford, E. R., C. C. Sanborn, C. B. Coursen. 1934. Birds of the Chicago region. Chicago Academy of Sciences Program of Activities 5:17-80.

Gault, B. T. 1922. Checklist of the birds of Illinois. Chicago: Illinois Audubon Society.

Goetz, R. E. 1990. Third report of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee. IBB 6:9-14.

Goetz, R. E. and J. C. Robinson. 1988. First report of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee. IBB 4:57-63.

Illinois Ornithological Records Committee. 1999. Checklist of Illinois State Birds. Evanston: Illinois Ornithological Society.

Johnson, D. B., P. R. Clyne, and M. F. Deaton. 1998. Fourth report of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee. MJIB 7:50-65.

Johnson, D. B., and D. F. Stotz. 1999. Fifth report of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee. MJIB 8:53-62.

Knopf, Fritz L. and M. B. Wunder. 2006. Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca:

Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Retrieved from the Birds of North America Online: http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna%22%20target%3D%22_top%22%20rel%3D%22nofollow/species/211.

Mahan, T. A. 2004. Roseate Spoonbill: First Illinois record. MJIB 13:8-9.

McNair, D. B. and W. Post. 2001. Review of the occurrence of vagrant Cave Swallows in the United States and Canada. Journal of Field Ornithology 72:485-503.

Palmer-Ball, Jr., B. 1996. The Kentucky Breeding Bird Atlas. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky.

Ridgway, R. 1895. The Ornithology of Illinois: a descriptive catalogue of the birds of Illinois, Vol 2. Springfield, IL: Natural History Survey, State Laboratory of Natural History.

Smith, J. O. 2003. Burrowing Owl in Champaign Co. MJIB 12:132-133.

Smith, P. W., W. B. Robertson, Jr., and H. M. Stevenson. 1988. West Indian cave swallows nesting in Florida, with comments on the taxonomy of *Hirundo fulva*. Florida Field Naturalist 16:86-90.

Spahn, R. and D. Tetlow. 2006. Observations on the Cave Swallow incursion of November 2005. Kingbird 56:216-225.

Stotz, D. F. 2001. Seventh report of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee. MJIB 10:52-58.

Stotz, D. F. 2008. Fourteenth report of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee. MJIB 10:48-54.

Stotz, D. F., and D. B. Johnson. 2000. Sixth report of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee. MJIB 9:50-55.

Stotz, D. F., and D. B. Johnson. 2003. Ninth report of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee. MJIB 12:55-61.

— Douglas F. Stotz, Conservation Ecologist/Ornithologist
Field Museum of Natural History
1400 S. Lake Shore Drive
Chicago IL 60605
dstotz@fieldmuseum.org