

Sixteenth 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 43 records, including 41 accepted records of 31 species, and two unaccepted records of two species. A total of 51 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 2010. The format of this report generally follows the conventions used in the first through fifteenth reports of the Committee (e. g. Goetz and Robinson 1988; Goetz 1990; Johnson et al. 1998; Johnson and Stotz 1999; Stotz and Johnson 2000; Stotz 2001; Stotz and Johnson 2003, Stotz 2009b). 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 nomenclature, English names and sequence of species conforms to that of the seventh edition of the American Ornithologists’ Union’s checklist (1998) and its supplements, through the 51th (Chesser et al. 2010).

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. The initials of a contributor without any further modification, indicates that no more than written documentation was provided by that observer. When additional evidence exists, a colon follows the observers name with the following codes: p for photographic evidence, v for video, s for sound recording. Many contributing photographers also submitted written descriptions—a practice the Committee encourages. 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 presented 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.

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C. Leroy Harrison, Frank L. Holmes, Kanae Hirabayashi, Robert D. Hughes, Lynnette Ishmael-Miller, Dan M. Kassebaum, Vernon M. Kleen, Gregory S. Lambeth, Karen Lund, Keith A. McMullen, Karen K. Mansfield, Michael A. Madsen, Matt McKim-Louder, Pete A. Moxon, Robert A. Morgan, Terry & Sherrie Martin, Walter J. Marcisz, Greg Neise, Malora Redman, Rhonda M. Rothrock, Rick Remington, William M. Rowe, Alan F. Stokie, Andrew P. Sigler, Douglas F. Stotz, Elliot Schunke, Jeff A. Smith, Jeffrey R. R. Skrentny, Lavonne Sharp, Mark S. Seiffert, Robert E. Shelby, Rick & Linda Scheibel, Wesley S. Serafin, Geoffrey A. Williamson, Mabe & Kevin Wassel.

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 evidence 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, see also list on IOS website at http://www.illinoisbirds.org/birds_of_illinois1.html) 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 videos. Thanks to the committee members who reviewed these records for intelligent, thoughtful reviews. These committee members were Bob Hughes, Dan Kassebaum, Travis Mahan, Paul Sweet, Mike Ward, and Geoff Williamson; Bob Fisher, acting as an alternate member of IORC also reviewed some records included in this report. The author served as committee secretary.

ACCEPTED RECORDS

New State Records (one record of one species)

Green Violetear (*Colibri thalassinus*) One photographed at a feeder near Mascoutah, St. Clair Co. on 10 Aug (2009.033; R&LS:p). This tropical species found from Mexico to Central Bolivia has been recorded more than 30 times in Texas (Newfield 2001) and sparsely across eastern North America north to Ontario and Michigan (AOU 1998). The photos clearly demonstrate that this bird belongs to the *thalassinus* group of subspecies found in Mexico and northern Central America rather than the more distant *cyanotis* group found from Costa Rica south.

Review List Species (39 records of 29 species)

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) Two were seen and photographed at Bellrose Refuge, Cypress Creek NWR, Pulaski Co.



Green Violetear.
10 August 2009. Fayetteville,
St. Clair County.
Photos by Rich Scheibel.

on 6 May (2009.061; MML:p); One was photographed at Bischoff rd., Granite City, Madison Co. on 31 May to 15 Jun (2009.056; FLH; DMK:p). One photographed in Calhoun Co. on 18 May (2010.007; DMK:p).

Brant (*Branta bernicla*) One was along the Illinois River in downtown Peoria, Peoria Co. and immediately across the river in Tazewell Co. on 3-9 Dec (2009.034; RF:p).

Mottled Duck (*Anas fulvigula*)

One photographed at Santa Fe Bottoms, Clinton Co., 30 Jul - 6 Sep (2009.036; DMK:p). Dates listed for this individual in Stotz (2009a) are incomplete.

King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*) One first winter male photographed on the Little Calumet River, Chicago, Cook Co. on 17 Feb (2010.001; SBB:p).

Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) One was photographed and stayed at Carlyle Lake, Clinton Co. from 30 Jul to 5 Sep (2009.079; DMK). One was present near Lake Calumet during the period 28 May to 31 July (2010.018; WJM:p, APS; RDH:p, SBB:p, ESc:p). This bird was originally found as a fly-over among large numbers of Double-crested Cormorants southwest of Lake Calumet. Beginning on 6 June, the bird was found regularly during the day at Burnham Prairie southeast of Lake Calumet. It clearly did not roost at that site and typically seemed to arrive mid-morning, usually with small numbers of Double-crested Cormorants.

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) Up to six adults, Lower Cache River, Pulaski Co., and 5 active nests, Little Black Slough, Johnson Co., 3 of which were confirmed to contain nestlings, 23 May to 14 Jul (2009.070; MML:p). The committee already accepted a photographic record of one of these birds from May in Pulaski Co. (IORC2009.029; Stotz 2009b). This is the first confirmed nesting record for Illinois of this species. The AOU checklist (1998) states that it formerly bred in southern Illinois, but there appear to be no specific records of such breeding (Bohlen 1989). It bred until the late 1800s in far southeastern Missouri (Robbins 1992), and in southwestern Kentucky until the 1950s (Palmer-Ball 2003). Currently the nearest breeding colony is in extreme western Tennessee (Nicholson 1997).



Mottled Duck. Private property in Santa Fe Township, Clinton County. 5 August 2009. Photo by Dan Kassebaum.



Roseate Spoonbill with Great Egrets. Vandalia, Fayette County. 23 September 2009. Photo by Greg Neise.



Swallow-tailed Kite. Southwest McHenry County. 16 August 2010. Photo by Robert Morgan.



Little Gull in basic plumage. Carlyle Lake, Clinton County. 31 October 2009. Photo by Dan Kassebaum.

Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*) One was photographed at Carlyle Lake, Clinton Co. on 30 July (2009.037; DMK).

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) One immature was at Wabash Bottoms, Wabash Co. on 12-18 Jul (2009.038; CLH, RES; DMK:p). Four to 5 immatures along the Mississippi River levee in Monroe Co., 19-27 Jul (2009.060; CPA; WMR:p, JRRS:p, KAM:p). One immature photographed at Mitchie, Monroe Co. on 29 Jun-1 Jul (2010.006; DMK:p); another immature was photographed at Fountain, Monroe Co. on 21-24 Jul (2010.005; DMK:p). While currently this species seems to have increased in numbers Illinois with multiple records from 2008 to 2010, there have been previous periods of increased abundance in Illinois, such as 1976-8 when there were five records for the state.

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) One photographed in SW McHenry Co on 16 Aug (2010.017; RAM:p). After decades of near complete absence from the upper Midwest, this species is beginning to appear with increasing frequency. This is at least the fifth record in the past decade in Illinois.

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) One seen at Lake Shelbyville, Moultrie Co. on 22 Sep (2009.053; KAM).

Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) One adult seen at Alton, Madison Co. on 11 May (2009.051; KAM); one basic adult photographed at Carlyle L, Clinton Co. on 31 Oct (2009.078; DMK); one seen at the same site on 21 Nov was thought to represent the same individual.

Adult male Broad-billed Hummingbird.

*Second state record.
Clinton, DeWitt County.
25 August 2010.*

Photos by Lynnette Miller-Ishmael.



Figure 1 – The banded Broad-billed Hummingbird revealed deep steely blue, notched tail feathers.

Figure 2 – The Broad-billed Hummingbird has a long, slightly decurved, two-tone bill.

Figure 3 – The Broad-billed Hummingbird visits feeders with Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, whose wing span and body length are smaller.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) One first-year bird photographed at Clinton Lake, DeWitt Co., on 29 Nov – 6 Dec (2009.064; MEF:p).

Royal Tern (*Thalasseus maximus*) One adult in basic plumage was photographed at LaSalle Lake, LaSalle Co. on 9-10 Jul (2009.032; APS, MAM, AFS; GN:p). This is the third report for the state reviewed and accepted by IORC; the last accepted report was from 1988. Two additional records exist from before the formation of IORC (Bohlen 1989).

Sandwich Tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) One adult was along the Lake Michigan lakefront of Cook Co. on 11-30 Sep (2010.014; RR:p; RDH:p; SBB:p; GN:p; JRRS:p). The bird was found at Evanston on 11 September, then re-found at Montrose on 14 September, and then at 63rd Street Beach and Rainbow Beach on 15 September. It was not seen for the next two weeks but was photographed as a fly-by at Montrose on 30 September. Comparisons of photos from all of these sightings make it clear that only a single individual was involved. It showed a nearly entirely black crown, with white speckling on the forecrown, an unusual plumage for this late in the season. There is one previous record of Sandwich Tern from Illinois, an accepted single observer sight record from Waukegan in April 1989. The possibility that this individual is referable to the nominate Eurasian subspecies instead of the widespread North American form *acutiflavus* has been raised, and research is on-going into this question.

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) One photographed in DeKalb Co., on 14 June (2009.030; T&SM; KL:p). The bird was apparently present for

the first three weeks of June. One photographed at Colchester, McDonough Co. on 17 Jun (2009.031; ECF). This species has become annual in small numbers since the first record in 1998. Most records come from late April through June.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) One photographed on a window ledge of a high rise in Lincoln Park, Chicago, Cook on 18 Nov (2005.049; LS).

Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) One photographed at American Bottoms, Monroe Co. on 22 May (2010.010; KAM:p; MSS).

Broad-billed Hummingbird (*Cyananthus latirostris*) An adult male photographed, captured and banded at a feeder in rural DeWitt Co. on 24-25 Aug (2010.021; LIM:p; VMK). This is only the second record for Illinois. The first record was a female photographed and banded at a feeder in Peoria Co. in November 1996 (Johnson et al. 1998). There are many records outside its breeding range in Arizona and New Mexico for this species in the southwestern and southeastern United States, but relatively few records elsewhere in North America. In the upper Midwest, besides the two Illinois records, Broad-billed Hummingbird has been found in Wisconsin, Michigan and Ontario (R. C. Domagalski, unpub.).

Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) One photographed, captured, banded and measured in the hand at Carlyle L, Bond and Fayette Cos. on 13-19 Jun (2009.073; DDT:p; KAM:p; DMK:p; VMK). The photographs are very suggestive of a Tropical rather than Couch's Kingbird based on long bill, longer primary projection and deeply forked tail. In addition,

the measurements taken when the bird was banded clearly rule out Couch's Kingbird based on the relatively short wing chord, long culman length, and wing formula (see Pyle 1997 for details of identification).

Fork-tailed Flycatcher

(*Tyrannus savana*) One adult male at Gateway Park, East Moline, Rock Island Co. on 20-25 Nov (2009.057; M&KW:p, MR:p). This is the third record for Illinois and the first in the fall or away from the Chicago area.

Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*) One was photographed in Champaign, Champaign Co. on 14-15 Mar (2009.080; MML; GSL:p). One seen along the LaMoine River, McDonough Co. on 3 Sep (2009.039; MJB). One photographed at Siloam Springs SP, Brown Co. on 31 May (2010.009; DMK:p). Siloam Springs is, and has been for at least a decade, the only known breeding site for Bewick's Wren in Illinois. Records from other sites have been few in recent years, and like the two 2009 records here involve birds seen during migration.

Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*) One photographed on Northerly Island, Chicago, Cook Co. on 10 Nov (2009.059; KKM; JRRS:p, GN:p, DFS). This is only the fourth record from Illinois and the first record since 1974. All these reports come from the Lake Michigan lakefront (Bohlen 1989).

Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*) One seen at Greene Valley FP, DuPage Co. on 27-31 Oct (2009.058; REF, KDF; JAS:p).

Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*) One female at Elsen's Hill FP, DuPage Co. 18 Sep to 11 Oct (2010.022;



Fork-tailed Flycatcher. East Moline, Rock Island County. 25 November 2009. Photo by Kevin Wassell.



Bewick's Wren. Champaign swine ponds, Champaign County. 15 March 2009. Photo by Greg Lambeth.



Sage Thrasher. Northerly Island, Cook County. 11 November 2009. Photo by Greg Neise.



Adult male Lark Bunting. Montrose Point, Cook County. 10 August 2009. Photo by Kanae Hirabayashi.

PAM; GN:p, AAA:p). This bird was still present as of this writing (13 Oct 2010). This is about the ninth record for the state; not all have been considered by IORC. Most records have been spring birds remaining for only a short period.

Swainson's Warbler

(*Limnithlypis swainsoni*) A pair was present in the Shawnee National Forest of Jackson Co. from at least 20 Jun to 27 Jul (2009.055; RMR; DMK:p, MML:p of possible nest). A completed, but empty nest matching the characteristics of the species was found at this location.

MacGillivray's Warbler

(*Oporornis tolmiei*) A singing male was photographed and sound recordings obtained at Waterfall Glen FP, DuPage Co. on 9-11 Jul (2008.053; MAM:s; WSS:p, DMK:s). This is the third accepted record of this species from Illinois. The other records have been during spring migration in May.

Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) One adult male photographed at Montrose, Chicago, Cook Co. on 10 Aug (2009.072; RDH; GAW:p, KH:p).

Great-tailed Grackle

(*Quiscalus mexicanus*) One female seen and photographed at Coulterville, Randolph Co. and nearby in Perry Co. on 30 Dec (2009.035; JRRS, GN:p). There was some discussion that 2 birds may have been present, but the original observers concluded that there was only a single bird present in a flock of mixed blackbirds numbering 10,000+. Reports of this species at this site persisted until at least 3 January 2010, but there is no documentation of the species after the initial day of observation.

Other accepted records
(*One record of one species*)

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) An adult photographed at Prairie Green FP, Kane Co. on 27 May (2009.013; MB:p; ABH:p).

UNACCEPTED RECORDS

Review List Records Unaccepted
(*one record of one species*)

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) A large falcon photographed at Levee and Mitchie Rd., in Monroe Co., on 4 Sep (2010.016) was identified as a Prairie Falcon by the observers. The committee reviewed the photo and written documentation and concluded that the bird in question was a juvenile Peregrine Falcon of the race *tundrius*. The bird showed a pale superciliary like a Prairie Falcon, but this is shared with young *tundrius*. To the committee, the back looked far too dark for a Prairie Falcon, the dark stripe through the eye was too broad, it lacked white immediately behind the eye, and also lacked the dark mark behind the auriculars typical of Prairie Falcon. Although conditions for seeing the dark axillaries in flight were limited because the bird flew directly away from the observers, this did not help to confirm Prairie Falcon as an identification.

Other unaccepted records
(*one record of one hybrid*)

Blue-winged Teal X Mallard A female duck photographed accompanying a male Mallard at the Little Calumet River, Chicago, Cook Co. on 26 Feb-5 Mar (2010.004) was thought by the observer to represent this hybrid combination. The combination of poor quality photos and limited detail in the written documentation made it impossible for the committee to accept this identification. The majority of the committee was unconvinced that the bird in question was not a female Mallard. Even if a hybrid origin was accepted for the bird, the postulated parentage of Blue-winged Teal x Mallard could not be established. There were no plumage characters that seriously suggested a Blue-winged Teal as a parent.

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See page 56 for journal abbreviations.

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