

RECENT ACTIONS BY THE OHIO BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE, March–April 2015

by Paul Gardner

The Ohio Bird Records Committee contributes to the ornithological record of Ohio by reviewing reports of the sightings of review-list species and potential first state records. The review-list can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.ohiobirds.org/site/committee/review.php>.

At the annual meeting on April 18, 2015, the committee approved changes to the official state list. Arctic Loon is added to the review list based on the acceptance of the first state record described below. It joins Neotropic Cormorant and Crested Caracara as additions to the state list since the last “annual” meeting in 2013. In addition, Black-necked Stilt, Eurasian Collared-Dove and Common Raven are moved to the core list from the review-list. The committee no longer asks that sightings of these three species be submitted for review.

Since the last published report (*The Ohio Cardinal* Fall 2014), the committee has resolved nine reports of nine species. Two reports were accepted and seven were not. Acceptance of a report requires approval by at least eight of the committee members. Reports receiving five to seven votes for acceptance are recirculated to the committee for up to three rounds of voting. Reports receiving fewer than five votes to accept are not accepted.

Reports of sightings of rare birds can be documented online using a handy form at <http://www.ohiobirds.org/site/committee/rare-bird-submission.php>. Alternatively, information can be emailed to the secretary at psg0708@gmail.com. While the committee endeavors to glean reports of sightings of rarities from internet sources, some reports never come to the committee’s attention, and many reports found on the internet lack sufficient details to enable review. Direct submission of reports is the only sure way to see that a sighting becomes part of Ohio’s official ornithological record.

The current membership of the committee is Mike Busam, Paul Gardner (Secretary), Rob Harlan, Rick Nirschl, Ed Pierce, Jay Stenger, Sue Tackett, Doug Vogus and Bill Whan. Craig Caldwell serves as an alternate. The terms of Mike Busam, Ed Pierce and Bill Whan expired at the end of the April 2015 annual meeting. All provided able and valuable assistance to the com-

mittee which is gratefully acknowledged. Elected to replace them were Dan Sanders, Jack Stenger and Su Snyder. They will begin voting with the next round of reports.

All common and scientific names, and the taxonomic order in which the records are presented, follow the Fifty-fourth Supplement to the American Ornithologists’ Union Check-List of North American Birds.

Records Accepted

Arctic Loon (*Gavia arctica*) One individual, Dillon Lake State Park, *Muskingum*, 23-24 October 2014. Documented by Brad Perkins, Carlton Schooley and Katie West. Photographed by Anthony Fry, Brad Perkins and Katie West. Vote 9-0. An alternate-plumaged Arctic Loon visiting an Ohio reservoir in mid-October is surely one of the most unexpected sightings imaginable. Fortunately Perkins and West were able to approach the bird on a pontoon boat to a reasonable distance and acquire diagnostic photographs. The committee thanks Jon Dunn, Paul Lehman, Peter Pyle and Thede Tobish for their opinions on the photographic evidence. This is a first state record and the first U.S. record east of Colorado.

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) Two adults and four chicks, Barkcamp State Park, *Belmont*, May 17, 2014. Documented by Scott Pendleton. The details of this successful nesting have been published in the Summer 2014 *Cerulean*, Volume 11(1)2-3. Accepted as a nesting record 9-0. This is the second accepted nesting record in Ohio in modern times, the other being a 2008 record from Jefferson County.

Records Not Accepted

Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*) One individual, Cleremont, 23 September 2013. The description of a reddish eclipse-plumaged teal lacked sufficient details to convince the committee. Vote 2-7.

Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) One individual, Rocky Fork Lake, *Highland*, 19 October 2013. This sighting, which would have constituted a first state record at the time, was of a fly-by cormorant observed from 20 yards or more without optics. Failure to

mention relative neck and tail lengths weighed heavily on the committee's decision. Vote 1-8.

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) One individual, Terrace Park Wilderness Preserve, **Hamilton**, 21 April 2013. In the report, written five months after the sighting, the observer confesses to much confusion at the time of the sighting. The committee was confused as well. Vote 1-8.

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) One individual, Paint Creek Wildlife Area, **Highland**, 3 September 2013. Sightings of Swallow-tailed Kites without optics generally divide the committee. Some feel the morphology of the bird is sufficiently distinctive to justify acceptance; others require supporting details. This report lacked such details. Vote 2-7.

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) One individual, near Lima, **Allen**, 18 April 2013. The committee felt the report, written five months after the no-optics sighting from a moving car, better described an American Kestrel. Vote 1-8.

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*) One individual, BIWA, **Marion**, 9 November 2013. "Heard-only" reports of Yellow Rail are troublesome due to potential confusion with cricket frogs. While the reporter asserts that this was not a cricket frog, he provides insufficient information as to how that conclusion was reached. Further his statement that 500 rails and zero cricket frogs were present is troubling. Vote 2-7.

Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*) One individual, Rocky Fork Lake, **Highland**, 19 October 2013. This report of a flying swallow viewed in the rain may be a correct identification, but some details are wrong and viewing conditions were difficult. One co-observer felt that the bird did not fully match any species. Vote 2-7.