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## **REPORT OF THE GEORGIA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY CHECKLIST AND RECORDS COMMITTEE**

JANUARY THROUGH DECEMBER 2008

### **Committee Members (Reviewed records 2008-01 through 2008-33A/B.)**

Terry Moore (Chairman), Jim Flynn (Secretary), Malcolm Hodges,  
Pierre Howard, Ty Ivey, and Brad Winn

### **Committee Members (Reviewed records 2008-34 through 2008-42.)**

Giff Beaton (Chairman), Jim Flynn (Secretary), Steve Barlow, Walt Chambers,  
Pierre Howard, and Ty Ivey

### **Review Species Report Summary**

During 2008, 45 reports of 30 species were received by the GCRC for review. Of these reports, 36 were accepted, 7 were not accepted, and 2 were deferred to a second round for review. Two species (Green-breasted Mango and Smith's Longspur) were added to the official GOS Checklist bringing the Regular List to 414 species (total includes 3 species considered extinct: Passenger Pigeon, Carolina Parakeet, and Bachman's Warbler). The Provisional List remains at 8 species, for a total of 422 species on the Regular Checklist.

Conventions used in this report include:

- GCRC Record Identifier: Year of the report submission (not the year of the observation) followed by a hyphen and a unique sequential identifier (e.g., 2008-08). If more than one report was submitted by different individuals for the same observation event, a letter is attached to the sequential identifier (e.g., 2008-18A, 2008-18B, etc.).

- Species Name: Follows The American Ornithologists' Union's (AOU) *Checklist of North American Birds*, Seventh Edition (AOU 1998) and incorporates changes in subsequent supplements through the *Forty-ninth Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds* (AOU 2008).
- Location of observation.
- Date(s) of observation.
- Only observers authoring reports or providing supplementary materials (such as photographs) are mentioned in this summary. Other sources, such as "From the Field" (published in *The Oriole*), should be consulted for proper credit of initial discovery.
- Where applicable, the Committee voting results are included with the record, in the form of "accept votes – not accept votes." For example, a vote of 5-1 signifies 5 accept votes and 1 not accept vote.

2008-01 Lapland Longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus*): Private property, Macon Co., 31 December 2007. Jim Flynn submitted a sight/sound-only report including a sketch and field notes of one of 3 individuals of this species observed on a sod farm near Marshallville. The Committee accepted the report 5-0, with Committee member Jim Flynn abstaining.

2008-02 Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*): Private property, Macon Co., 30 December 2007. A sight/sound-only report was submitted by visiting Louisiana birder Justin Bosler. Description of the call notes and previous experience with the species played a key role in the Committee's acceptance of this report, 5-1.

2008-03 Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*): Private property, Gordon Co., 29 December 2007. Joshua Spence submitted a report with photographs that depicted this species with a Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) and Snow Geese (*Chen caerulescens*), providing a useful comparison of size, bill, and head shape. The Committee unanimously accepted the report.

2008-04 Green-breasted Mango (*Anthracothorax prevostii*): Private residence, Dublin, Laurens Co., 29 October 2007. Hummer/Bird Study Group co-founder and hummingbird bander Bob Sargent submitted several photographs of a hatch-year individual of this species in hand, along with the band card containing key measurements. The homeowners first observed the bird on 28 October 2007. The report was unanimously accepted by the Committee. First state record.

2008-05 Brant (*Branta bernicla*): Tybee Island, Chatham Co., 7 February 2008. Although an official report was not authored, the GCRC Secretary submitted 2 diagnostic photographs along with the original e-mail from one of the observers. Unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2008-06 Little Gull (*Larus minutus*): Tidwell Park, Forsyth Co., 4 March 2008. A report and photographs of a first winter bird were submitted by Jim Flynn. The report was accepted by the Committee 5-0, with Jim Flynn abstaining.

2008-07 Alder Flycatcher (*Empidonax alnorum*): Private property, Catoosa Co., 13 May 2008. The Committee received a report that briefly described the distant vocalizations of a bird that was not observed. Most Committee members felt that not enough detail was provided, so the report was not accepted, 2-4.

2008-08 Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*): Private property, Monroe Co., 4 November 2006. Paul Johnson authored a report that included field sketches and notes, plus photographs by Jerry Amerson taken on 26 October 2006, the date of the original discovery by another observer. The Committee unanimously accepted the report.

2008-09 Unused tracking number.

2008-10 Leach's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*): Pelagic Trip, approximately 31°47'46" N, 79°11'17" W, 18 June 2008. A sparse report that included a single photograph was submitted to the Committee. Most Committee members commented that the photograph did not definitively eliminate Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*), and the report was not accepted, 2-4.

2008-11 Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*): Woodruff Dam, Decatur Co., 28 August 2008. Jim Flynn submitted a sight-only report that included field sketches and notes describing an encounter with this species following the passage of Tropical Storm Fay. The report was accepted by the Committee 5-0, with Committee member Jim Flynn abstaining.

2008-12 Alder Flycatcher (*Empidonax alnorum*): Private property, Habersham Co., 7 September 2008. A report including photographs and a description of the call notes was authored by Jim Flynn. The Committee accepted the report 5-0, with Committee member Jim Flynn abstaining.

2008-13 Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*): Cumberland Island, Camden Co., 24 August 2008. National Park Service biologist Doug Hoffman submitted a report with photographs, including several of a bird that perched on the bed of his pick-up truck and accompanied him for about a mile while Doug checked sea turtle nests along the beach. The report was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2008-14 Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*): Private property, Lamar Co., 2 December 2007. Charlie Muise submitted a report with photographs of a hatching-year male of this species that he banded on his property. The Committee unanimously accepted the report.

2008-15 Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*): US Navy Communication Tower R3, 14 September 2008. A sight-only report was authored concerning a juvenile seen perched on the tower during a pelagic trip. The Committee did not accept the report 1-5 due in part to the brevity of the sighting, equivocal details, and lack of corroborating reports.

2008-16 Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*): Private lake, Carroll Co., 17 February 2007. A report with photographs depicting 4 females of this species was submitted by Jim Flynn. The birds were originally discovered by another observer on 16 February 2007. The Committee accepted the report 5-0, with Committee member Jim Flynn abstaining.

2008-17 Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*): Altamaha WMA, McIntosh Co., 10 November 2007. Jim Flynn authored a report that included photographs of this species in flight. The report was accepted by the Committee 5-0, with Committee member Jim Flynn abstaining.

2008-18A, 2008-18B Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*): Jekyll Island, Glynn Co., 29 December 2007 and 1 January 2008. Walt Chambers and Dan Vickers submitted reports accompanied by photographs of a bird originally discovered by Walt. The Committee accepted both Dan's report (2008-18A, 1 January 2008) and Walt's report (2008-18B, 29 December 2007) 5-0, with Committee member Walt Chambers abstaining from each.

2008-19A, 2008-19B Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*): Private property, Macon Co., 24 and 26 December 2007. Walt Chambers submitted a report with

photographs taken by Bob Zaremba and Pierre Howard, both of whom joined Walt at the locale. Pierre was able to photograph the bird with one of its wings outstretched, revealing the predominately white lesser coverts. Dan Vickers also authored a report with photographs taken 2 days later. Dan's report (2008-19A, 26 December 2007) and Walt's report (2008-19B, 24 December 2007) were accepted 5-0, with Walt abstaining. This is the first accepted state record for the species. Note that Smith's Longspur was included on the Hypothetical List in the 2003 edition of GOS's *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds*.

2008-20 Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*): Private property, Baker Co., 19 February 2008. Darlene Moore submitted a report with photographs (by Darlene, as well as by Jerry Amerson) of the bird taken from several different angles, including a very helpful view of the undertail pattern. The bird was originally discovered by the property owner on 17 February 2008. Accepted unanimously by the Committee.

2008-21 Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*): Little St. Simons Island, Glynn Co., 12 October 2007. Jeff Sewell submitted a report of a sight-only encounter with 2 individuals of this species. The Committee unanimously accepted the record.

2008-22 Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*): Altamaha WMA, McIntosh Co., 30 October 2008. John Galvani authored a sight-only report of this species. The report was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2008-23 Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*): Private residence, Dublin, Laurens Co., 17 February 2007. Jim Flynn submitted a report with photographs of a female of this species. The bird was observed visiting a jelly feeder in a yard that was also hosting a Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*, record 2008-25). The Committee accepted the report 5-0, with Committee member Jim Flynn abstaining.

2008-24 Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*): Bradley Unit-Eufaula NWR, Stewart Co., 1 November 2008. Jim Flynn submitted a sight-only report with field sketches and notes. The Committee accepted the report 5-0, with Committee member Jim Flynn abstaining.

2008-25 Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*): Private residence, Dublin, Laurens

Co., 18 February 2007. Ken Blankenship submitted a report with photographs of an adult male of this species that frequented a backyard oriole feeder. The homeowners originally discovered the bird prior to 17 February 2007. The report was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2008-26 Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*): Private property, Bartow Co., 16 March 2008. A sight-only report of a distant bird observed with Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) and Greater White-fronted Geese (*Anser albifrons*) was submitted. The Committee did not come to a consensus on the report, forcing a future second round of evaluation.

2008-27 Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*): Pelagic Trip, approximately 31°32'15" N, 80°14'10" W, 14 September 2008. Bob Zaremba submitted a report with several photographs of an immature of this species as it investigated a flock of gulls attracted to the ship. Unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2008-28 Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*): Private property, Sumter Co., 26 December 2007. Bob Zaremba authored a report with photographs showing the pertinent characteristics of this species. The Committee unanimously accepted this record.

2008-29 Masked Booby (*Sula dactylatra*): Pelagic Trip, approximately 31°12'18" N, 80°6'93" W, 14 September 2008. David Hollie submitted a report with photographs of an adult of this species in flight near the US Navy Communication Tower R3. The report was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2008-30 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*): Private property, Murray Co., 9 September 2006. An observer submitted a belated sight-only report that was not accepted by the Committee, 2-4. Several members felt that key field marks (e.g., eye color) and structural details, such as bill shape, which are necessary to distinguish a male of this species from an eclipse-plumaged Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*), were lacking.

2008-31 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*): Private property, Gordon Co., 25 September 2007. A belated sight-only report of an eclipse male was not accepted by the Committee, 2-4. Several Committee members commented that the report did not include a discussion of how an eclipse-plumaged male Blue-

winged Teal (*Anas discors*) was eliminated, nor did it contain enough details to implicitly eliminate Blue-winged Teal. Some members also noted that the bird was seen at an extended distance without the benefit of a scope.

2008-32 Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*): Pelagic Trip, approximately 31°47'45" N, 79°11'16" W, 18 June 2008. A sight-only report written by Jeff Sewell was accepted by the Committee, 5-1. The report was initially problematic for several Committee members, because a photograph submitted with report 2008-10 (not accepted) of a supposed Leach's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*) from the same trip was a better fit for Band-rumped Storm-Petrel. Despite the fact that this very detailed report was authored some months after the sighting without the benefit of field notes, several members concluded that the species was indeed observed during the trip.

2008-33A, 2008-33B Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*): Walter F. George Dam, Clay Co., 17 and 23 November 2008. Eric Beohm (2008-33B) and Bob Zaremba (2008-33A) submitted reports with diagnostic photographs of an adult of this species that Eric observed initially on 17 November 2008. Both reports were unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2008-34 Calliope Hummingbird (*Stellula calliope*): Private residence, Gwinnett Co., 1 January 2008. Hummingbird bander Julia Elliott submitted a report and photographs of a second-year female of this species in the hand. The Committee unanimously accepted the report.

2008-35 Calliope Hummingbird (*Stellula calliope*): Private residence, Cobb Co., 8 February 2008. A report with several photographs of an after-hatching-year female of this species in the hand was submitted by hummingbird bander Julia Elliott. It was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2008-36 Calliope Hummingbird (*Stellula calliope*): Private residence, Putnam Co., 23 November 2007. A report with photographs of a female or immature hummingbird visiting a backyard feeder was submitted. The Committee was unable to come to a consensus on the identification of the bird; thus, the report will be re-circulated a second time.

2008-37 Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*): Altamaha WMA, McIntosh Co., 10 November 2007. Rachel Cass authored a report with photographs

identifying a female of this species discovered along a brushy impoundment dike. The Committee accepted the report unanimously.

2008-38 Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*): Altamaha WMA, McIntosh Co., 25 November 2008. A sight-only report of a bird thought to be an immature of this species was submitted by Jeff Sewell, and was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2008-39 Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*): Private property, Lamar Co., 3 December 2008. Bander Charlie Muise submitted a report with photographs of the bird in hand that he aged as an after-third-year female. The report was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2008-40A, 2008-40B Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*): Private property, Fannin Co., 11 and 16 December 2008, 20 December 2008, and 4 January 2009. Two observers submitted reports of an immature bird that was discovered feeding with Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) in a cow pasture. Neither of the reports discussed how the possibility of a Ross's x Snow Goose hybrid (*C. rossii* x *C. caerulescens*) was eliminated, and although one of the reports included photographs of the bird, the committee did not accept the reports, 2-4 in both cases.

2008-41 Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*): Barbour Island River, McIntosh Co., 19 December 2008. Visiting birder Warren Harrington submitted a report with photographs of an immature male of this species discovered during the Harris Neck NWR Christmas Bird Count. The Committee accepted the report unanimously.

2008-42 Broad-billed Hummingbird (*Cynanthus latirostris*): Private residence, Sumter Co., 25 July 2008. Phil Hardy submitted a report and a photograph of an adult male of this species that visited the hummingbird feeders in his backyard. The report was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

### **Changes to the Georgia Checklist**

During 2008, the AOU published the *Forty-ninth Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds*. The following changes affected the taxonomic sequence or nomenclature of the official GOS Checklist:



### Taxonomy

- The taxonomic order of Black-legged Kittiwake, Sabine's Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Black-headed Gull, Little Gull, Laughing Gull, and Franklin's Gull was altered in the checklist.

### Nomenclature

The scientific names of the following species were changed:

- Bonaparte's Gull, from *Larus philadelphia* to *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*;
- Black-headed Gull, from *Larus ridibundus* to *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*;
- Little Gull, from *Larus minutus* to *Hydrocoloeus minutus*;
- Laughing Gull, from *Larus atricilla* to *Leucophaeus atricilla*;
- Franklin's Gull, from *Larus pipixcan* to *Leucophaeus pipixcan*.
- The English name of Green Violet-ear was changed to Green Violetear (hyphen removed). Green Violetear appears on the Provisional List.

### Literature Cited

- American Ornithologists' Union. 1998. Checklist of North American birds, 7th ed. American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D.C.
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