

# TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MISSOURI BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

William C. Rowe, Secretary

This report summarizes records evaluated by the Committee between 27 September 1998 and 25 September 1999. It is divided into two sections: Accepted and Not Accepted.

Birds are listed in phylogenetic order under each of the above two categories. Taxonomy and nomenclature follow the A.O.U. Checklist of North American Birds, Seventh Edition (1998). For Not Accepted records, observer's names are omitted and a brief explanation is provided as to why the record was not accepted. All photographs will be archived in Mylar envelopes and deposited in the Committee's files, which are currently housed in the Division of Ornithology, University of Kansas Natural History Museum, Lawrence, Kansas.

Of those records that were finalized (including recirculated and unresolved records from prior reports), a total of 73 were accepted, with 22 not accepted, for an acceptance rate of 77%. One record was carried over into 1999-2000 for a recirculation. Members participating in the decisions were Paul McKenzie (Chair), Bill Rowe (Secretary), David Easterla, Bill Eddleman, Bill Goodge, Brad Jacobs, and Mark Robbins. No outside reviews were solicited.

Over the year covered by this report, one new species, Eurasian Collared-Dove, was added to the Missouri state list, which now stands at 398 fully accepted species, including 6 formerly occurring species that have been extirpated from the state and 2 extinct species. There are also 19 hypothetical species on the list (which means that there are one or more reports meeting normal acceptance criteria, but none meeting the more stringent criteria for a first state record).

Worthy of notice is the plethora of observations related to the mildness of the late fall and early winter in 1998: note the number of Turkey Vultures, Blue-winged Teal (or generic teal), shorebirds other than Killdeer, and Sedge/Marsh Wrens documented for Christmas Counts. Also remarkable was the sudden appearance of at least five White-winged Doves (previously an accidental species) all around the state.

The Committee extends its thanks to the many birders throughout Missouri who submitted their observations, and to the Audubon Society of Missouri for its continued support and funding of the Committee's efforts. Observers who would like a status report on their current submissions can write the Secretary. The next report will appear in the March 2001 issue of "The Bluebird"

## RECORDS ACCEPTED

**PACIFIC LOON** (*Gavia pacifica*), 1998-41: Adult, alternate plumage, 10 July 1998, Table Rock Lake, Stone Co. Photographed and documented by Kathy Lee. The purple sheen on the throat, small bill held horizontally, silvery nape, and lack of white flank patch were sufficient in combination to rule out the extremely remote possibility of an Arctic Loon. This is the first summer occurrence for the state. Interestingly, an alternate-plumaged bird appeared 28 June - 6 July, just prior to the Missouri record, in Geary Co., KS (Horned Lark 25:8, 1998)

**PACIFIC LOON**, 1999-37: One, basic plumage, 13 March 1999, Fellows Lake, Greene Co. Greg Swick (documentation), Charles Burwick. Although Pacific Loon has been removed from the Review List because of the number of fall records, it remains accidental at other seasons and should be documented then. As with 1998-41, the possibility of Arctic Loon appeared to be ruled out.

**EARED GREBE** (*Podiceps nigricollis*), 1999-14: One on 18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Chris Hobbs (documentation), Eric Preston. Casual in winter; this is the sixth documented record for that season.

**EARED GREBE**, 1999-81: One on 19 December 1998, Lake Jacomo, Jackson Co. Robert Fisher. Seventh documented winter record.

**GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*), 1999-8: One on 18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Mark Robbins (documentation), Roger McNeill. Fifth winter record.

**TRICOLORED HERON** (*Egretta tricolor*), 1999-42: Adult, 1 May 1999, near I-55 in Pemiscot Co. Jeff Wilson. Casual vagrant to Missouri; about the fourteenth state record. The observer first noted this bird in Tennessee, watched it fly toward the Mississippi River with other herons, and then relocated it at a roost on the Missouri side!

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), 1999-23: 8 immatures, 19 December 1998, near Columbia, Boone Co. Bill and Kay Palmer. Casual in winter; this is the sixth record.

**TURKEY VULTURE** (*Cathartes aura*), 1999-19: One on 18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Ellen Zellmer (documentation), Jim Zellmer. At the time of this record, documentation was required for Christmas Bird Counts outside the Ozarks; this requirement has since been changed to apply to northern Missouri only, since the species is now listed as merely uncommon in southern Missouri.

**TURKEY VULTURE**, 1999-31: One on 18 December 1998, Buchanan Co. Carol and Richard Boehringer (documentation), Michael Robins. Accidental in winter in northern Missouri; this is the northernmost winter record for the state.

**TURKEY VULTURE**, 1999-24: 2 on 19 December 1998, Boone Co. Edge Wade (documentation), Sandy Elbert, Jean Leonatti, Barb Sapp, Jerry Wade.

**TURKEY VULTURE**, 1999-25: One on 19 December 1998, Boone Co. Boyd Terry (documentation), Carolyn Terry. rowe@tjs.org, 1999-69: 3 on 19 December 1998, Cole Co. Roger Randolph (documentation), Anita Randolph.

**FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna bicolor*), 1999-66: One on 8 May 1999, Otter Slough Conservation Area, Stoddard Co. Neal Young (documentation, photograph), Lisa Asmus. Casual transient and summer visitor; about the eighth state record.

**BLUE-WINGED/CINNAMON TEAL** (*Anas discors/cyanoptera*), 1999-9: 2 females, 18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Mark Robbins (documentation), Roger McNeill. Characters observed did not permit distinction between Blue-winged and Cinnamon. At the time of this record, documentation was required statewide for Blue-winged Teal on Christmas Bird Counts; this requirement has since been dropped for southern Missouri, since it is only rare in that part of the state.

**BLUE-WINGED/CINNAMON TEAL**, 1999-78: Female, 19 December 1998, Jackson Co. Mark Land (documentation), Ed McCullough. Same comment as 1999-9.

**BLUE-WINGED TEAL**, 1999-15: Male and female, 18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Chris Hobbs (documentation), Eric Preston. Presence of male permitted easy specific identification. See status comment under 1999-9.

**BLUE-WINGED TEAL**, 1999-30: Male, 18 December 1998, Buchanan Co. Ival Lawhon (documentation), Renee Lawhon. Casual in winter outside southern Missouri.

**BLUE-WINGED TEAL**, 1999-70: Male, 19 December 1998, Jefferson City, Cole Co. Dan and Barb Brueggeman. See status comment under 1999-9.

**BLUE-WINGED TEAL**, 1999-74: Two males and one female, 19 December 1998, Springfield Nature Center, Greene Co. Dean Rising. See status comment under 1999-9.

**GREATER SCAUP** (*Aythya marila*), 1999-16: Female, 18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Chris Hobbs (documentation), Eric Preston. Also observed by Mark Robbins on 17 December. Only rare in winter statewide, but documentation required for Christmas Bird Counts. Observers noted white wing-stripe extending well into primaries, as well as rounded head shape.

**GREATER SCAUP**, 1999-80: 28, mixed males and females, 19 December 1998, Lake Jacomo, Jackson Co. Robert Fisher. Species present at this location and season for many years.

**GREATER SCAUP**, 1999-71: 17, mixed males and females, 20 December 1998, Lake Winnebago, Cass Co. Nancy and Jane Leo. Close study of head and bill details.

**HARLEQUIN DUCK** (*Histrionics histrionicus*), 1999-22: Female, 30 January - 6 February 1999, Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, St. Charles Co. Found and identified by Steve Dilks; documented by Bill Rowe, Kent Lannert, Brad Jacobs, Keith McMullen, and Paul McKenzie, and photographed by Jim Rathert. Four previous definite, dated records for Missouri (one in spring, three in fall, most recent November 1972), plus two undated; this is the first documented winter record.

**SURF SCOTER** (*Melanitta perspicillata*), 1999-49: Female, 8 May 1999, Busch Conservation Area, St. Charles Co. Paul Bauer. Rare transient with very few spring records; documented for North American Migration Count.

**OLDSQUAW** (*Clangula hyemalis*), 1999-60: One on 8 May 1999, Henry Co. Vernon Elsberry. Rare transient; documented for North American Migration Count.

**BARROW'S GOLDENEYE** (*Bucephala islandica*), 1999-21: Adult male, 24-26 January 1999, Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, St. Charles Co. Found and documented by Bill Rowe; also documented by Kent Lannert. Accidental in winter. About the tenth state record. All major diagnostic features of Barrow's were observed, ruling out a hybrid between this species and Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala Clangula*) such as one recent Missouri record proved to be.

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*), 1999-75: One on 19 December 1998, Lake Springfield, Greene Co. Dorothy Thurman (documentation), Lisa Berger, Jo Strange, Susie Thurman, Ruth Grant. The Osprey is casual in winter in Missouri, and many reported at that season are actually white-bellied, pale-headed immature Bald Eagles. This bird, however, was described in enough detail to eliminate the eagle.

**FERRUGINOUS HAWK** (*Buteo regalis*), 1999-10: Immature, 28 December 1998 to at least 8 January 1999, Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Holt Co. Found and documented by Mark Robbins; also documented by Paul McKenzie, Jack Hilsabeck. Accidental in winter; third documented and accepted state record for that season. A very thorough description of all important features, leaving no doubt that this was an immature Ferruginous Hawk.

**SORA** (*Porzana carolina*), 1998-83: One, 8 November 1998, Columbia water treatment cells, Boone Co. Bill Goodge. Latest fall record for the state, although there is a mid-December record (see Eighth Annual Report). Heard only.

**SORA**, 1999-39: One on 28 February 1999 at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, Boone Co. Steven Anderson (documentation), Jeff Rioux. Earliest spring date, if in fact the bird was not actually wintering.

**PURPLE GALLINULE** (*Porphyryula martinica*), 1998-84: Immature, 8 November 1998, Springfield, Greene Co. Betty Dyer (documentation), Kay Johnson (photograph), Lisa Burger, Zelda Ellison. Casual outside southeast Missouri; also latest fall record, although there is an old late-December record.

**PURPLE GALLINULE**, 1999-59: Adult, 27 June 1999, Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, St. Charles Co. Charlene Malone. Casual outside southeast Missouri.

**GREATER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa melanoleuca*), 1999-32: One on 18 December 1998, Buchanan Co. Ival and Renee Lawhon. Third winter record for Missouri.

**LESSER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa flavipes*), 1999-55: One on 28 February 1999, St. Charles Co. Charlene and Jim Malone (photograph). Earliest spring record by several days.

**SOLITARY SANDPIPER** (*Tringa solitaria*), 1999-64: One on 19 June 1999, Pershing State Park, Linn Co. David Easterla (documentation), Eric Hueste. First record for mid-June.

**HUDSONIAN GODWIT** (*Limosa haemastica*), 1999-84: One on 2 June 1999, Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, Boone Co. Jim Rathert (documentation, photograph), Carol Gerhardt. Tied for latest spring migration record.

**WESTERN SANDPIPER** (*Calidris mauri*), 1999-51: One, alternate plumage, 8 May 1999, Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, Boone Co. Tom Curtis. Rare in spring and usually not this late; documented for North American Migration Count.

**WESTERN SANDPIPER**, 1999-52: Two, alternate plumage, 8 May 1999, Boone Co. Edge Wade (documentation), Betty Overall, Bonnie Heldy. See comments on 1999-51.

**WESTERN SANDPIPER**, 1999-65: One on 9 May 1999, Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Holt Co. David Easterla (photograph). Rare in spring and usually not this late.

**WESTERN SANDPIPER**, 1999-85: One on 2 June 1999, Eagle Bluffs Conservaton Area, Boone Co. Jim Rathert (documentation, photograph), Tom Curtis. Latest spring migration record by four days, and first June record.

**LEAST SANDPIPER** (*Calidris minutilla*), 1999-4: 4 on 15 December 1998, Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Chariton Co. Bridget Olson. Late-lingering migrant; fourth winter record.

**LEAST SANDPIPER**, 1999-7: 19 birds on 17-18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Mark Robbins (documentation), Roger McNeill. Fifth winter record.

**DUNLIN** (*Calidris alpina*), 1999-5: One on 17 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Mark Robbins. Late-lingering migrant; second winter record.

**LAUGHING GULL** (*Larus articus*), 1999-63: 2 adults, 4 July 1999, Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, St. Charles Co. Charlene and Jim Malone. Rare, regular transient spring and fall along Mississippi River, but only casual in midsummer.

**CALIFORNIA GULL** (*Larus californicus*), 1999-20: Adult, 18 January 1999, Stockton Lake, Cedar Co. Mark Robbins. Accidental winter visitor. About the twelfth state record, and the second in winter.

**BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE** (*Rissa tridactyla*), 1998-82: Adult, 22 November 1998, Thomas Hill Reservoir, Randolph Co. Edge Wade (documentation), Sandy Elbert, Jean Graebner, Bonnie Heidy, Sandra Kubal, Jean Leonatti, Barbara Sapp. Casual transient away from the Mississippi River. This bird was one of few adults ever seen in the state.

**COMMON TERN** (*Sterna hirundo*), 1999-54: One, 18 April 1999, Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, St. Charles Co. Jim Malone (documentation), Edna Alexander. Earliest spring record and first for April. It was flying with Forster's Terns, and the diagnostic rump and tail patterns were clearly noted.

**EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE** (*Streptopelia decaocto*), 1999-53: Several, from February 1999 on, in Sunset Park, St. Louis Co. Found and identified by Tom Parmeter; documented and photographed by Bill Rowe, Jim and Charlene Malone, and B.J. Rose; also photographed by Paul Johnson. The presence of this species in north St. Louis County was first noted in August 1998 by an experienced birder from out of state (John Parmeter, fide Tom Parmeter); these birds in Sunset Park were first discovered in February 1999. While previous reports of Eurasian Collared-Doves in Missouri were incompletely documented, this record provided enough detail to permit definite separation from the domestic Ringed Turtle-Dove (*Streptopelia risoria*) as well as any native dove. Since its first appearance in Florida over twenty years ago, this dove has become abundant there and has spread through much of the Southeast, with pioneering birds showing up here and there at ever greater distances in recent years, so that most of the central states now have reports accepted by their record committees. A combination of visual marks, and also voice, serve to distinguish it from the Ringed Turtle-Dove. See article by William Smith in *American Birds*, volume 41, #5, pp. 1370-1379 (1987). This report constitutes a First State Record; the species will be added to the Missouri Checklist at the next revision. It remains on the Review List, and for the time being every occurrence should be documented.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE** (*Zenaidura macroura*), 1999-40: One, 1 April to at least 5 April 1999, St. Joseph, Buchanan Co. Documented and photographed by Larry Lade. Accidental vagrant; fourth state record.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE**, 1999-47: One, 10-12 April 1999, near Foley, Lincoln Co. Becky Erickson. With this record, the fifth for the state, the species moved from "accidental" to "casual" in Missouri.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE**, 1999-56: One, 6-7 May 1999, Liberty, Clay Co. Robert McClanahan (documentation, photograph), Marti McClanahan. Sixth state record.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE**, 1999-62: One on 18 May 1999, Johnson Co. B.J. Rose (documentation, photo), Betty Jean Hart. Seventh state record.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE**, 1999-61: One, 10-11 June 1999, Laclede Co. Bonnie Brown (documentation), Ted Brown. Eighth state record.

**Selasphorus, sp.**, 1999-73: Immature male (?), 3-21 December 1998, Springfield, Greene Co. Lisa Berger. Except for adult male Rufous, hummingbirds of the Rufous/Allen's type cannot be positively identified to species unless certain measurements are taken in the hand. In Missouri, these birds are

very likely to be Rufous, but Allens remains a possibility, as does Broad-tailed unless ruled out by visible field marks or measurements. Such generic birds have become frequent enough in the 1990s that documentation of them is no longer requested except in special cases like Christmas Bird Counts (as here). Measurements of this bird, taken during banding by someone other than the documenter, may have been incomplete, and its identification as Rufous may have been premature; so the documenter carefully presented it only as *Selasphorus*, sp.

**RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD** (*Selasphorus rufus*), 1999-83: Adult male, 5-9 August 1999, Jefferson Co. Documented and photographed by Charles and Kathleen Fassler. About the twenty-fifth state record (not counting generic *Selasphorus* records).

**FISH CROW** (*Corvus ossifragus*), 1999-29: 2 on 8 May 1999, Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, Boone Co. Paul McKenzie (documentation), Brad Jacobs. Casual away from southeast Missouri and Mississippi River. Diagnostic calls heard well by experienced observers. There is a recent nearby record from Cole County (see Tenth Annual Report; note that the observer of that record was Eugene Young).

**SEDGE WREN** (*Cistothorus platensis*), 1999-17: Three, 18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Chris Hobbs (documentation), Eric Preston. Casual in winter.

**SEDGE WREN**, 1999-79: One on 19 December 1998, Jackson Co. Randy Knotts (documentation), Larry Rizzo, Neil Minter.

**MARSH WREN** (*Cistothorus palustris*), 1999-18: One on 18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Chris Hobbs (documentation), Eric Preston. Only rare in winter, but documentation was requested on Christmas Bird Counts.

**MARSH WREN**, 1999-26: One on 19 December 1998, Boone Co. John Besser.

**VARIED THRUSH** (*Ixoreus naevius*), 1999-2: Male, 31 December 1998 into 1999, Columbia, Boone Co. Found by Scott and Virginia Brundage; documented by Bill Goodge, Brad Jacobs, Jim Rathert (photograph). Ninth state record.

**BLUE-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora pinus*), 1999-3: One, 4 October 1998, Tower Grove Park, City of St. Louis. Dennis Bozzay. Latest fall date.

**PALM WARBLER** (*Dendroica palmarum*), 1999-6: One on 17 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservaton Area, Vernon Co. Mark Robbins. Late-lingering migrant, casual in winter.

**COMMON YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis trichas*), 1999-1: 4 birds on 19 December 1998 and 2 on 24 December, Oronogo Bottoms, Jasper Co. Larry Herbert. Late-lingering resident; high number for winter.

**WESTERN TANAGER** (*Piranga ludoviciana*), 1999-45: Adult male, 18 May 1999, Columbia, Boone Co. David Witten (documentation), Netta Witten. Casual transient.

**SAVANNAH SPARROW** (*Passerculus sandwichensis*), 1999-77: One on 2 August 1999 near Horseshoe Lake, Buchanan Co. Jack Hilsabeck (documentation), Larry Lade. Accidental summer visitor, and hypothetical summer resident based on nineteenth-century records.

**GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*), 1999-76: Adult, 19 December 1998, Montrose Conservation Area, Henry Co. Rhonda Edmunds. Accidental winter resident; third state record. Description unmistakable.

**LAZULI BUNTING** (*Passerina amoena*), 1997-16: Adult male, 8-15 May 1997, Fairfax, Atchison Co. Evonne and Wilbur Wright. Not accepted in eleventh annual report only because no description had been furnished. This decision was reversed at the last meeting of the Committee in view of accepted record #1999-44 (below), which undoubtedly pertained to the same bird.

**LAZULI BUNTING**, 1999-44: Adult male, 8-15 May 1998 and 7-12 May 1999, Fairfax, Atchison Co. Evonne and Wilbur Wright. Without doubt the same individual, this bird has now appeared four years in a row (1996-1999) at the Wrights' feeder, always in May. The species is a casual transient in western Missouri.

**INDIGO BUNTING** (*Passerina cyanea*), 1999-11: Male, 18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. David Easterla (documentation, photograph), Jack Hilsabeck.

Casual in winter.

**PAINTED BUNTING** (*Passerina ciris*), 1999-82: Adult male, 3 May 1999, Grandview, Jackson Co. Mark Fischer (documentation, photograph), Linda Poindexter, Lindsay Fischer, Roger Johnson. Casual outside its breeding range in extreme southwest Missouri.

**PAINTED BUNTING**, 1999-68: Adult male, 28 May 1999, near Bennett Spring State Park, Laclede Co. Jimmie Kilgore (documentation), Mary Kilgore, Roy Stefl.

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD** (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), 1998-22: 25 birds, mixed males and females, 27 December 1997, Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, Stoddard Co. Paul Bauer, Paul Dunbar. Originally not accepted, this record was resubmitted by the compiler of the Mingo Christmas Bird Count with additional information about the habitat, the winter occurrence of Brewer's in that area, and the circumstances of the observation. It was then accepted.

## **RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED**

It should be understood that "not accepted" does not always mean that the identification was considered to be incorrect. In some cases the Committee did believe the bird was misidentified, but in other cases, while it seemed possible or even probable that the identification was correct, the information provided was insufficient to rule out other species completely. The Committee may be unable to accept even a very likely record if the description is too sketchy or vague, or if it fails to mention critical field marks that would distinguish that species from all others. Our belief is that a report should go into the permanent scientific record only if it is free of reasonable doubt. This is the standard approach of most bird record committees.

**ANHINGA** (*Anhinga anhinga*), 1997-24: Female, 30 June 1997, Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Holt Co. Originally accepted, this record was recirculated at the request of one member, who pointed out that the details offered did not clearly separate this bird from an immature cormorant. The rest of the Committee concurred.

**ANHINGA**, 1999-41: Female, 12 April 1999, Camden Co. This bird was seen soaring at considerable height. Although the observer was experienced, and the description did suggest a possible Anhinga, most of the Committee felt that Double-crested Cormorant was not ruled out. Cormorants do

sometimes soar on thermals, and at such times they can look uncannily like Anhingas, with fanned tail and narrow outstretched neck (as described in "The Loon", Vol. 61, 1989, p. 13).

**SNOW GOOSE** (*Chen caerulescens*), 1998-72: Possible nesting pair, May-June 1998, Holt Co. This potential breeding record for Missouri was not accepted because it was a secondhand report: the writer of the documentation was quoting the actual observer without having seen the birds himself. It is the Committee's policy to consider only firsthand records reported by the actual observer.

**BROAD-WINGED HAWK** (*Buteo platypterus*), 1999-36: One on 13 February 1999, Jackson Co. This bird was seen without binoculars as the observer was driving; identification was based partly on impressions of size and shape (which can be unreliable even under much better viewing conditions) and partly on tail banding. Some features of the brief description suggested a possible Broad-wing, but Red-shouldered Hawk and perhaps other buteo and accipiter species were not firmly eliminated. There is no documented record of a Broad-wing in Missouri in winter, and the evidence did not warrant acceptance of this one.

**FERRUGINOUS HAWK** (*Buteo regalis*), 1999-13: One on 10 January 1999, Boone Co. This was an intriguing report of a bird that may have been a Ferruginous Hawk. The observers, who saw it only in flight at a moderate distance, were clear that it was a Buteo and agreed on several suggestive features including generally white underparts with dark markings on the wing linings, long wings with tapered primaries while soaring, a long tail, and a whitish rump area (characteristic of immature Ferruginous). They did not agree on tail color and pattern, and they were unable to note some other important features such as the large whitish panels on the upper side of the primaries, the very wide gape, or the feathered tarsi of a Ferruginous. The details were even ambiguous as to whether it might have been an adult or an immature bird. Given all this and the species' great rarity in Missouri, the Committee could not conclude that this was unequivocally a Ferruginous Hawk.

**GOLDEN EAGLE** (*Aquila chrysaetos*), 1999-58: 2 on 18 May 1999, Boone Co. The extreme improbability of two Golden Eagles occurring together in central Missouri in May, coupled with a lack of detail in the description and lack of size comparison with other birds, made the Committee unsure what the observer really saw. If indeed eagles, they were likely immature Bald.

**BLACK RAIL** (*Laterallus jamaicensis*), 1999-50: One on 8 May 1999, Boone Co. This bird might possibly have been a Black Rail, but the description provided no plumage details. For a species observed so seldom in Missouri (only about a dozen records altogether), the key field marks should be clearly noted.

**MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eugenes fulgens*), 1998-80: Male, approximately 1 October 1998, Lafayette Co. This was a tantalizing report, for the observers saw a large dark hummingbird that clearly was not a Ruby-throated. Unfortunately the description did not contain enough detail to confirm that it was a Magnificent rather than some other vagrant species (for instance, Green Violet-ear). The report was written about three weeks after the observation; had the bird been reported immediately to the hotline, it is quite possible that a definite identification could have been made.

**BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Archilochus alexandri*), 1999-27: One on 16 August 1996, Atchison Co. This report of an adult male, though interesting, provided much less detail than would be necessary for even hypothetical acceptance as a first state record. Black on the throat was seen, but any male hummingbirds throat may look black in the wrong light, and no purple band below the black (which would suggest a definite Black-chinned Hummingbird) was noted. Moreover, the account was written a very long time after the observation.

**PLUMBEOUS VIREO** (*Vireo plumbeus*), 1999-12: One on 10 November 1998, Kelso Wildlife Sanctuary, Cape Girardeau Co. This report did not offer the detail necessary for even hypothetical acceptance as a first state record. In fact, acceptance of this western species would require either good photographs or a very finely detailed description to eliminate all possibility of the closely related Blue-headed Vireo (a regular migrant in Missouri) and Cassin's Vireo (an equally possible vagrant). This bird showed an overall gray color on the upperparts, a suggestive feature, but was also described as having very white underparts, with no dinginess, and considerable yellowish wash on the flanks. Both of these features are atypical for Plumbeous.

**FISH CROW** (*Corvus ossifragus*), 1998-81: One on 27 October 1998, Bennett Spring State Park, and Dallas Co. This is not a totally improbable location for a Fish Crow, but the observer was previously unfamiliar with the species' call, and the description of the call was not convincing.

**SEDGE WREN** (*Cistothorus platensis*), 1999-38: One on 24 March 1999, Greene Co. This bird may have been a record-early Sedge Wren, but the description was not complete enough to be certain; several Committee members felt that Winter Wren was not eliminated. Habitat described was more typical of Winter than of Sedge Wren.

**CHIPPING SPARROW** (*Spizella passerina*), 1999-28: Flock of 50, 19 December 1998, St. Joseph, Buchanan Co. Given that the Chipping Sparrow is casual to accidental in winter anywhere in Missouri, any report should provide a meticulous description and careful elimination of other similar sparrows; and given that the previous high number ever found at this season is two, a flock of fifty birds would almost certainly be some other species. Both of the descriptions provided with this record strongly suggested American Tree Sparrow, the most likely species to be found in such large numbers.

**FIELD SPARROW** (*Spizella pusilla*), 1999-34: Flock of 20-25, 18 December 1998, near St. Joseph, Buchanan Co. A very sketchy description to support an extremely unlikely record. The Field Sparrow has remained rare in northwest Missouri in winter, with no pattern of increase even during recent warm winter weather; two Christmas Counts that are near this one, with better habitat, have recorded a "combined" total of only three Field Sparrows over the past three years. Given these facts, acceptance (especially of a flock this size) would require a thorough description that clearly eliminated American Tree Sparrow, immature White-crowned Sparrow (which also has a pink bill), and other species that are common at this season in this part of the state. A final problem is that the documentation was written a full three weeks after the observation.

**FIELD SPARROW**, 1999-35: Flock of 7, 19 December 1998, near St. Joseph, Buchanan Co. See comments under 1999-34.

**VESPER SPARROW** (*Pooecetes gramineus*), 1999-46: One on 18 December 1998, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. While this bird may have been a Vesper Sparrow, the description was too incomplete to persuade a majority of the Committee. No mention was made of an eyering, of a rufous shoulder, or even of streaking on the breast.

**BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK** (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*), 1998-79: Female or immature male, 3 October 1998, Iron Co. Some features of this bird did seem consistent with Black-headed Grosbeak (rump buffy-orange, breast buffy-orange with little or no streaking) while others seemed to point to female Rose-breasted (white supercilium, bill all whitish instead of having a dark upper mandible). Some points mentioned were not valid identification marks of Black-headed (bill perceived to be larger than a Rose-breasted, wing-linings yellow). Given the ambiguities in the description and the general difficulty of separating this species from the Rose-breast (except for adult males), a majority of the Committee felt that this bird's identity was not proven.

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD** (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), 1998-21: 6 on 27 December 1997, Wayne Co. This record, originally not accepted, was resubmitted by the compiler of the Mingo Christmas Bird Count with some additional information. Upon review, however, it was still considered unconvincing, because the birds were observed at a distance too great to be sure of fine detail through binoculars, and because the details offered did not rule out other blackbirds, or even suggested other species (for instance, a blue sheen on the head observed at 100 yards suggests Common Grackle, not Brewer's). See, however, 1998-22 under "Records Accepted."

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD**, 1999-72: 3 on 19 December 1998, Daviess Co. Description did not fit Brewer's Blackbird and did not eliminate Rusty.

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD**, 1999-33: One on 19 December 1998, St. Joseph, Buchanan Co. The two descriptions by two observers were sketchy and did not entirely agree. The size, moreover, was described as "larger than a Red-wing" and "nine inches long" with no indication how the comparison or the measurement were made. The committee felt that neither Rusty Blackbird nor Common Grackle was eliminated.

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD**, 1999-48: Several, 3-8 May 1999, Kearney, Clay Co. The observer, who saw these birds in a back yard, was not previously familiar with Brewer's Blackbird and did not note dark-eyed females. There was a strong possibility that these birds were female Common Grackles. The dates are well beyond the normal spring occurrence of Brewer's in the Midwest.

**BULLOCK'S ORIOLE** (*Icterus bullockii*), 1999-67: 2 on 8 May 1999, Thousand Hills State Park, Adair Co. The description suggested young male Baltimore Orioles with black and orange patterns on the head. A record of a species as rare in Missouri as Bullock's Oriole, even an adult male, would require a thorough description including full details of head, wing, and tail patterns to be convincing.