

# SIXTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MISSOURI BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

**William C. Rowe, Secretary**

This report summarizes records evaluated by the Committee between 5 October 2002 and 27 September 2003. 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 American Ornithologists' Union's Checklist of North American Birds, Seventh Edition (1998), and subsequent supplements. For Accepted records, comments are added to indicate the record's significance, and sometimes to mention the details that made it persuasive. For Not Accepted records, observers' 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 the 70 records that were finalized during this period, 51 were accepted and 19 were not accepted, for an acceptance rate of 73%. Two records that had been carried over from the previous year (Red-necked Stint, 2002-46 and 2002-50) were finalized, and no records were carried over into the next year. Members participating in the decisions were Bill Eddleman (Chair), Bill Rowe (Secretary), Bill Goodge, Brad Jacobs, Paul McKenzie, Roger McNeill, and Mark Robbins. Outside reviews (for 2002-46 and 50) were obtained from Lars Jonsson, Paul Lehman, Urban Olsson, Dennis Paulson, and Richard Veit.

From the records covered by this report, two species have been added to the main state list, one that was previously hypothetical (Common Poorwill) and one that was new (Calliope Hummingbird). Thus Missouri's total now stands at 402 fully accepted species, including 6 formerly occurring species that have been extirpated from the state and 2 extinct species. There are an additional 17 hypothetical species on the list. "Hypothetical" means that there are one or more reports of the species that are probably valid and would meet normal acceptance criteria, but none that meet the more stringent criteria for a first state record.

In general, the Committee reviews records of species that have been found fewer than 15 times in Missouri and are thus considered "casual" or "accidental" statewide (examples: casual, Varied Thrush; accidental, Common Poorwill). It also reviews records of species that are casual or accidental for the season when reported (example: Harris's Sparrow in summer); records of species that are casual or accidental in the part of Missouri where reported (example: Whimbrel at St. Louis); and other records of unusual interest, including first nesting records.

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 or e-mail him at [rowe@tjs.org](mailto:rowe@tjs.org). The next report will appear in the March 2005 issue of *The Bluebird*.

REDA = Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area  
SCNWR = Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge  
MNWR = Mingo National Wildlife Refuge  
CBC = Christmas Bird Count  
NAMC = North American Migration Count

## **RECORDS ACCEPTED**

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*), 2003-34: Two, 26 April 2003, SCNWR, Holt Co. Found by Steve Dilks; documented by David Easterla (with photographs) and Brad Jacobs; also seen by m.ob. Casual transient; fifth state record.

**ROSS'S GOOSE** (*Chen rossii*), 2003-50: Adult, 12 May and 24 & 31 July 2003, Lewis and Clark State Park, Buchanan Co. Bob Fisher (documentation), Gareth Johnson. Accidental in summer; this is the second record. The bird was presumed not to be crippled because it (and the seven Snow Geese it was with) were seen at widely separated locations on different dates, implying that it must have flown.

**CINNAMON TEAL** (*Anas cyanoptera*), 2003-33: Male, 29 March 2003, Kings Lake, Lincoln Co. Scott Schuette (documentation), Bruce Schuette. Casual in eastern Missouri.

**GREATER SCAUP** (*Aythya marila*), 2003-5: 21 birds, 14 December 2002, Mozingo Lake, Nodaway Co. David Easterla (documentation), Peter Kondrashov. CBC record; documentation required for CBC's, though not for other records.

**SURF SCOTER** (*Melanitta perspicillata*), 2003-11: One in female plumage, 17 December 2002, SCNWR, Holt Co. Mark Robbins (documentation), Frank Durbian. Casual in winter. CBC record.

**SURF SCOTER**, 2003-35: One in female plumage, 10-19 May 2003, Bethel Park, Boone Co. Jean Leonatti (documentation), Carl Gerhardt (photograph), Susan Hazelwood, Joyce and Mike Bathke, Edge Wade, Bonnie Heidy. NAMC record.

**BLACK SCOTER** (*Melanitta nigra*), 2003-6: One in female plumage, 7 December 2002, Mozingo Lake, Nodaway Co. David Easterla (documentation), Peter Kondrashov.

**WESTERN GREBE** (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*), 2002-62: One, 2-4 November 2002, Lake Wapappello, Wayne Co. Doug Willis (documentation), Steve Dilks, Bob Lewis. Casual in eastern Missouri.

**WESTERN GREBE**, 2003-20: One, 8-12 November 2002, REDA, St. Charles Co. Jim and Charlene Malone (documentation), Lou Haynes, Daniel and Michael Friedel, m.ob. Casual in eastern Missouri.

**ANHINGA** (*Anhinga anhinga*), 2003-38: Apparent adult male, 3 May 2003, Platte Co. Roger McNeill (documentation), Charles Andersen, Mike Radar. Originally a summer resident of the Bootheel lowlands, this species disappeared by the early twentieth century and has been only casual in Missouri in recent decades. This appears to be the twelfth modern record.

**GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*), 2003-24: One, 13 January 2003, Otter Slough Conservation Area, Stoddard Co. Bob Lewis. Casual in winter.

**ROSEATE SPOONBILL** (*Platalea ajaja*), 2003-52: Apparent immature, 30 June to 2 July 2003, Boone Co. Discovered by Emily Steffans; documented by her and by Lee Schiffel. Accidental summer visitor; fourth state record.

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*), 2003-42: Adult and juvenile on nest, 6 July 2003, Jacksonville, Randolph Co. Bill Goodge (documentation), Eleanor Goodge; originally discovered by Tom Skinner, Missouri Department of Conservation. There was no evidence that the bird was hacked. The Osprey is only just beginning to return to Missouri as a breeding bird; the first successful nesting in over a century occurred in 2000.

**PRAIRIE FALCON** (*Falco mexicanus*), 2002-59: One, 28-29 October 2002, Little Creve Coeur Lake area, St. Louis Co. Jim Malone & Joshua Uffman (documentation), David Rogles, George Barker, Mary Anne Auer, Mark Paradise. Casual in eastern Missouri. While the descriptions made it clear that this was a Prairie Falcon, some disparity in the details of the underparts left its age uncertain.

**YELLOW RAIL** (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*), 2003-37: Adult, 10 May 2003, Bradford Farm, Boone Co. Paul McKenzie. NAMC record, and the latest spring date for Missouri.

**VIRGINIA RAIL** (*Rallus limicola*), 2002-68: Six, 14 December 2002, near McBaine, Boone Co. Bill Goodge (documentation), John Besser, Ellen Ehrhardt. Accidental in winter. CBC record; heard only, by observers familiar with calls and in location where found in migration and summer, and also December 2000.

**VIRGINIA RAIL**, 2003-44: Two or three, 23 June to 4 July 2003, near McBaine, Boone Co. Bill Goodge. Casual in summer; heard only.

**SORA** (*Porzana carolina*), 2002-67: One, 14 December 2002, near McBaine, Boone Co. Bill Goodge (documentation), John Besser, Ellen Ehrhardt. Accidental in winter. CBC record; heard only, by observers familiar with calls and in location where found in migration and summer.

**SORA**, 2003-43: One or two, 23 June to 4 July 2003, near McBaine, Boone Co. Bill Goodge. Casual in summer; heard only.

**SANDHILL CRANE** (*Grus canadensis*), 2003-21: Seven, 2 February 2003, St. Genevieve Co. Joe Eades, Jim Malone. At the time of the observation, this species was listed as casual in eastern Missouri; now, as of the 2003 checklist revision, it is considered rare statewide and no longer requires documentation.

**WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*), 2003-40: Two, 25 May 2003, REDA, St. Charles Co. Bill Rowe (documentation), Dan Kassebaum, Randy Korotev, m.ob. Casual in eastern Missouri. Although these birds were on mudflats rather far out in Ellis Bay at REDA, Korotev established with reasonable certainty that they were on the Missouri side of the state line, using GPS measurements.

**RED KNOT** (*Calidris canutus*), 2003-46: Adult, alternate plumage, 5 June 2003, Horseshoe Lake, Buchanan Co. David Easterla (documentation), Jack Hilsabeck, Peter Kondrashov, Larry Lade. First summer record for Missouri.

**SANDERLING** (*Calidris alba*), 2003-48: One, 5 June 2003, Horseshoe Lake, Buchanan Co. David Easterla (documentation), Jack Hilsabeck, Peter Kondrashov. Only the third or fourth June record for Missouri.

**LEAST SANDPIPER** (*Calidris minutilla*), 2003-9: One, 14 December 2002, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Mark Robbins (documentation), Roger McNeill. Casual in winter. CBC record.

**PECTORAL SANDPIPER** (*Calidris melanotos*), 2003-2: One, 14 December 2002, Buchanan Co. Ival Lawhon (documentation), Barry Birr, Renee Lawhon, Larry Lade. Accidental in winter. CBC Record.

**AMERICAN WOODCOCK** (*Scolopax minor*), 2003-27: One, 14 December 2002, Boone Co. Paul McKenzie. Casual in winter so far north in Missouri. CBC record.

**COMMON POORWILL** (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*), 2002-60: One, found by Barbara Kluepfel in her yard in Kansas City, Jackson County, 18 April 2002; kept in rehabilitation; identified as a Common Poorwill by Mark Robbins in October and submitted for Committee review; documentation includes photographs. First confirmed state record; formerly hypothetical based on one probably-valid observation from 1945; other previous reports are doubtful (see Robbins and Easterla, *Birds of Missouri*, 1992).

**RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Archilochus colubris*), 2002-65: Immature male, at least 21 November to 4 December 2002, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Murray, Florissant, St. Louis Co. Banded and documented by Lanny Chambers. Latest fall record except for the following.

**RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD**, 2002-72: Immature female, at least 9-15 December 2002, at the home of Mrs. Martha Jolly, Columbia, Boone Co. Banded and documented by Troy Gordon; photographs by Janine Gordon. Latest fall and first winter record of a hummingbird confirmed to be this species, although an unidentified *Archilochus* (either Ruby-throated or Black-chinned) lingered until 22 December 1994 in St. Louis Co. (see eighth Annual Report, *Bluebird*, Vol. 63, #1).

**CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD** (*Stellula calliope*), 2002-61: Immature male, present mid-October to at least 8 November 2002, at the home of Harold and Kathleen Anderson, Columbia, Boone Co. Banded, measured, and documented by Troy Gordon; photographs by Troy Gordon, Janine Gordon, and Jim Rathert; also documented by Bill Goodge, Paul McKenzie, and Chris Snook. First state record. The Committee extends special thanks to bander Troy Gordon for his exceptionally thorough documentation of this bird.

**RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** (*Selasphorus rufus*), 2002-63: Adult female, 6 October to 24 December 2001, home of Anne McCormack, Kirkwood, St. Louis Co. Documented by Anne McCormack with information from bander Lanny Chambers. When captured, the bird was discovered to be wearing a band, number YO2859, that had been applied by Nancy Newfield in Metairie, LA, in November 2000; the bird had been identified at that time as an adult female Rufous. This is the second recovery of a banded Rufous Hummingbird in Missouri (see *The Bluebird*, Vol. 61, #1 for the first). The species remains casual in eastern Missouri, and documentation is requested there.

**RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD**, 2002-66: Immature female, 7 December 2002, home of Mr. and Mrs. Dean Reeves, Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau Co. Banded and documented by Lanny Chambers. Casual in eastern Missouri.

**SAY'S PHOEBE** (*Sayornis saya*), 2003-8: One, 14 December 2002, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Mark Robbins (documentation with photograph), Roger McNeill. Seventh state record. CBC record.

**SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** (*Tyrannus forficatus*), 2003-41: Male, 9 June 2003, Scott Co. Leslie Koller (documentation with photographs), Kathy Cramner. Casual in summer outside of southwestern and west-central Missouri.

**CLARK'S NUTCRACKER** (*Nucifraga columbiana*), 2002-71: One, 21 December through at least 23 December, 2002, Busch Conservation Area, St. Charles Co. Found and documented by Rich Kostecke; also documented by Bill Rowe and Randy Korotev (with photographs) and Michael Grant. Casual winter visitor and resident. First record for the St. Louis area; sixth record for Missouri, and first since 1972.

**HOUSE WREN** (*Troglodytes aedon*), 2003-15: One 4 January 2003, Barton Co. Barry Jones. Casual in winter in southern Missouri. CBC record.

**MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD** (*Sialia currucoides*), 2003-32: Male, 25 March 2003, Taberville Prairie Conservation Area, St. Clair Co. Pete and JoAnn Moroz. Casual in migration and winter; tenth state record, and the first in ten years.

**VARIED THRUSH** (*Ixoreus naevius*), 2003-17: Male, 23 January 2003, Kirkwood, St. Louis Co. Margy Terpstra. Casual winter visitor and resident; eleventh state record.

**VARIED THRUSH**, 2003-18: Male, 26-28 January 2003, Licking, Texas Co. Susan and Ralph Ford (documentation includes photographs). Casual; twelfth state record.

**AMERICAN PIPIT** (*Anthus rubescens*), 2003-10: Total of 71 birds at two sites, 14 December 2002, Four Rivers Conservation Area, Vernon Co. Mark Robbins (documentation), Roger McNeill. Casual in winter outside southeastern Missouri; this was the largest number recorded in Missouri in winter. CBC record.

**ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER** (*Vermivora celata*), 2003-12: One, 28 December 2002, Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery, Taney Co. David Catlin (documentation), Bo Brown, Ann Catlin, Kathy Lee. Casual in winter in southern Missouri. CBC record.

**PALM WARBLER** (*Dendroica palmarum*), 2003-7: One, 28 December 2002, Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, Stoddard Co. Bill Eddleman (documentation), Bruce Beck, Paul Kaufman. Casual in winter. CBC record. This bird was assignable to the subspecies *hypochrysea* (which breeds in the northeast) as it had entirely yellow underparts.

**CONNECTICUT WARBLER** (*Oporornis agilis*), 2003-36: Male, 26 April 2003, Springfield Nature Center, Greene Co. Paul McKenzie. Very early date for this late-migrating species.

**HOODED WARBLER** (*Wilsonia citrina*), 2003-45: Pair, 8 July 2003, Brickyard Hill Conservation Area, Atchison Co. David Easterla (documentation), Tommie Rogers. This observation of a male and female together constitutes indirect evidence of breeding—the first such record for northwestern Missouri. See article in *The Bluebird*, Vol. 70, #3 (September 2003).

**SUMMER TANAGER** (*Piranga rubra*), 2002-64: Apparent adult female, 5-6 December 2002, campus of St. Louis University, City of St. Louis. Nick Barber. Accidental in winter (one previous record).

**VESPER SPARROW** (*Pooecetes gramineus*), 2003-14: One, 4 January 2003, Barton Co. Robert Mangile (documentation), Mavis Benner. Casual in winter in southern Missouri.

**HARRIS' SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia querula*), 2003-49: Adult, seen from 10 July into October at the home of Dean Heflin in Nodaway Co. Discovered by Heflin, documented with photographs by David Easterla. First summer record for Missouri of this subarctic breeding bird; no doubt prevented from migrating by the complete loss of its tail, as noted by Heflin when discovered (the tail subsequently grew back).

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD** (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), 2003-22: Flock of 100, 28 December 2002, Livingston Co. Terry McNeely (documentation), Dena McNeely. CBC record; documentation required on all CBC's.

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD**, 2003-23: Five, 28 December 2002, Livingston Co. Terry McNeely (documentation), Dena McNeely. Though seen on the same CBC as the birds in the above record, these were elsewhere and are treated as a separate record.

**GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus mexicanus*), 2003-1: Nine, 1 January 2003, Bryan Island Stables, St. Louis Co. Bill Rowe (documentation), Tom Parmeter. Casual in eastern Missouri. CBC record at same site where found in 2001.

**EURASIAN TREE SPARROW** (*Passer montanus*), 2003-28: Six, 29 January 2003, Canton, Lewis Co. Bob Cecil. Documented as evidence of the species' residence in the northernmost counties along the Mississippi River. It is also now found in southeastern Iowa. This range expansion is reflected in the revised Missouri checklist (2003).

## **RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED**

It should be understood that "not accepted" does not necessarily 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 bird record committees everywhere.

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), 2003-25: Two juveniles, 14 December 2002, Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, Boone Co. The identification of these birds was most likely correct; yet the committee could not accept the record because there was almost no description of them. The written account did not even establish clearly that they were herons, much less eliminate the rare possibility of an American Bittern or a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron.

**FERRUGINOUS HAWK** (*Buteo regalis*), 2002-13: One, 4 January 2003, Barton Co. Nothing in the description of this bird suggested that it was truly a Ferruginous Hawk rather than a pale Red-tailed Hawk of some type. The observer remarked on the bird's very large size, but the size estimate given was actually too large even for a Ferruginous and was not based on side-by-side comparisons. The bird was observed at a great distance, and other than the general whiteness of the underparts and the tail, none of the important field marks of Ferruginous Hawk was noted. This species, very rare in Missouri and challenging to identify, requires thorough details for acceptance.

**FERRUGINOUS HAWK**, 2003-30: Adult, 9 March 2003, McDonald Co. This bird was observed briefly, from a car traveling on the highway, and without binoculars. The few features seen suggested Ferruginous Hawk, but there were simply too many important details missing for this to be counted as a valid record.

**PRAIRIE FALCON** (*Falco mexicanus*), 2003-51: One, 2 August 2003, Boone Co. This bird appeared to show some features of a Prairie Falcon, but it was observed briefly and at a great distance (estimated at half a mile to a mile). The description thus lacked much detail. A Prairie Falcon so far out of season would need closer observation and fuller detail for acceptance.

**LESSER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa flavipes*), 2002-69: One, 15 November to 5 December 2002, Laclede Co. This bird was clearly a yellowlegs, but no details of plumage, structure, or voice were offered to distinguish it from Greater Yellowlegs. The observer considered it to be too small for a Greater but gave no explicit size comparison with any other bird, such as a nearby Killdeer.

**RED-NECKED STINT** (*Calidris ruficollis*), 2002-46: One in alternate or transitional plumage, 28-30 July 2002, Lake Contrary, Buchanan Co. Photographs. Ultimately, after much research, this potential first state record could not be identified to species. Divided opinions from several expert outside

reviewers left it uncertain whether this bird was a Red-necked Stint, a Little Stint, or even possibly a hybrid. In any case, it was a remarkable record. The complexities of trying to identify it are discussed under "News from the Missouri Bird Records Committee" in *The Bluebird*, Vol. 70, #4 (December 2003).

**RED-NECKED STINT**, 2002-50: One, 20 July 2002, Ten Mile Pond Conservation Area, Mississippi Co. This record was circulated along with 2002-46 to the same outside reviewers. No photographs were available, and the results of the review were equally uncertain, although some reviewers thought the details did suggest a Red-necked Stint.

**SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** (*Limnodromus griseus*), 2003-47: One, basic plumage, 6 June 2003, SCNWR, Holt Co. This bird was clearly a dowitcher, but the plumage characters described were not sufficient to distinguish between the two species with certainty (a difficult task in basic plumage), nor was the voice heard.

**LITTLE GULL** (*Larus minutus*), 2002-70: One, 10 November 2002, Lake Jacomo, Jackson Co. The sketchy description of this bird included some characters of Little Gull but omitted others. Moreover, the observation was very brief (a minute or less), the observer took no field notes, the documentation was not written up until two weeks later, and the observer had had no prior experience with the species. The committee could not feel assured that the bird was a Little Gull.

**CALIFORNIA GULL** (*Larus californicus*), 2002-57: Juvenile, 23 September 2002, Smithville Lake, Clay Co. While it is possible that this bird may have been a California Gull, the documentation did not provide various critical details that would be needed for acceptance; in particular, a one-year-old Herring Gull was not ruled out. California Gull in its immature plumages can be very difficult to identify, and the observer had no previous experience with the species.

**MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eugenes fulgens*), 2002-58: Male, 14-18 August 2002, Lafayette Co. It is quite possible that this was a Magnificent Hummingbird, but the description provided was not detailed enough to meet the criteria for a first state record even at the "hypothetical" level. Some members of the committee believed that Green Violet-ear was not ruled out. Moreover, the observations were made without binoculars, and the documentation was written many days after the bird was last seen.

**ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD** (*Calypte anna*), 2002-56: female, 19-20 August 2002, Miller Co. A series of photographs showed conclusively that this bird was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird. It lacked the overall grayish underparts with green flank mottling shown by typical Anna's. Moreover, its 5 or 6 inner primaries were notably narrower than the outer primaries, a feature of the genus *Archilochus*; the other member of that genus, Black-chinned Hummingbird, was ruled out by the presence of red throat feathers.

**PILEATED WOODPECKER** (*Dryocopus pileatus*), 2003-3: One 14 December 2002, Buchanan Co. Reluctantly, the committee could not accept this record of a very likely Pileated Woodpecker in northwestern Missouri. The report was based solely on voice, which the observer seemed to know well, but the voice was not described. Just as a visual record must contain a description of what the observer saw, a heard-only record must contain a description of the vocalizations. Without this, the committee has no information on which to evaluate the record.

**BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER** (*Polioptila caerulea*), 2003-31: One, 21 March 2003, Big Oak Tree State Park, New Madrid Co. Very few details were offered about this bird, and the description did not rule out other small birds with long tails and decurved bills, such as Bewick's Wren.

**AMERICAN PIPIT**, 2003-16: Four, 21 December 2002, Clinton Co. These birds may well have been pipits, but a majority of the committee did not think the identification was firm. The birds were seen only in flight, briefly, and both the visual description and the voice description seemed ambiguous.

**NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** (*Seiurus noveboracensis*), 2003-29: One, 14 December 2002, Montrose Lake, Henry Co. The observer's description of this bird (including buffy underparts) and its habitat and behavior (walking along a lake shore, bobbing its tail) strongly suggested an American Pipit rather than the unprecedented occurrence of a Northern Waterthrush in winter.

**LAZULI BUNTING** (*Passerina amoena*), 2003-39: Female, 11 May 2003, Tower Grove Park, St. Louis City. Some characters described for this bird (such as unstreaked underparts with tan breast and white belly, and the presence of whitish wingbars) did suggest a female Lazuli Bunting, and the date fits the pattern of the species' previous occurrences. Yet in spite of the average differences between female *Passerina* buntings as illustrated in field guides, they are quite variable, and the extent of overlap in various characters is not fully understood or agreed upon by experts; discussion of this issue comes up from time to time on the listserv "Frontiers of Bird Identification." There is also the issue of hybrids between Indigo and Lazuli, which are fairly frequent and would be difficult to discern in female plumage. The committee believes that, on present knowledge, only a specimen or an excellent photograph could establish the occurrence of a female Lazuli in Missouri.

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD**, 2003-19: Flock (number not stated), 4 January 2003, Barton Co. This identification was questionable. The flock was stated to contain both sexes, but the females' crucial eye color was not noted, and the description of the males did not eliminate Rusty Blackbird or even Common Grackle completely. As is so often the case with reports of Brewer's Blackbird, the documentation was not sufficient to rule out other species.

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD**, 2003-26: Male, 14 December 2002, Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, Boone Co. The description of this bird suggested a young Common Grackle. The bill was described as large. "Purple" head color was mentioned, but not body color, leading the committee to wonder whether the head color was misinterpreted. It is the contrast between dark purple head gloss and blue-green body gloss, among other things, that separates male Brewer's from Rusty Blackbird (little or no gloss, and no contrast) and Common Grackle (rich blue head gloss and bronzy body).