

TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT
THE MISSOURI BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE
William C. Rowe, Secretary

This report summarizes records evaluated by the Committee between 16 December 2013 and 15 December 2014. It is divided into two sections, Accepted and Not Accepted, with birds listed in phylogenetic order under each of these two categories. Taxonomy and nomenclature follow the American Ornithologists' Union's *Checklist of North American Birds*, Seventh Edition (1998), and subsequent supplements. The latest AOU list is available on line at <http://checklist.aou.org>. For Accepted records, comments are added to indicate the record's significance. For Not Accepted records, observers' names are omitted, and a brief explanation is provided as to why the record was not accepted.

Online documentation and review of records is now the norm. Most documentations are posted by the observer to a secure web site, where the secretary prepares them for review; to get started, go to www.mobirds.org and click on Documentation Form under "Bird Records." Photographs in .jpg format, with a size limit of one MB, can be uploaded to accompany documentations. Observers are strongly urged to use the online system for both the report and the photographs, but if this proves unworkable for some reason, any part of the documentation can be mailed or emailed to the secretary. All records from the point of changeover (December 2007) have been electronically archived. In addition, 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 (KUNHM). The Committee once again thanks Patrick Harrison for his continuing work in refining this system, Ann Johnson for her partnership with Patrick in this effort, and Joshua Uffman for his continuing work in assembling data on the occurrence of Missouri birds at www.showme-birds.com.

Of the 66 records that were finalized during this period, 55 were accepted and 11 were not accepted, for an acceptance rate of 83%. Members participating in these decisions were Joe Eades, Brad Jacobs (Chair), Kristi Mayo, Paul McKenzie, Mark Robbins, Bill Rowe (Secretary), and Josh Uffman. Three records (Iceland Gull 2014-15, Thayer's/Iceland Gull 2014-27, and Purple Finch 2014-53) were sent to outside reviewers; see details in those accounts.

No new species were added, and so Missouri's total as of December 2014 remained 420 fully accepted species; these include four formerly occurring species that have been extirpated from the state and four extinct species. There are an additional 11 Provisional species on the list. The Annotated Checklist of Missouri Birds, with its latest updates to reflect changes in Missouri status as well as changes made by the AOU, can be viewed at www.mobirds.org.

The Committee reviews records of species that are considered "casual" (5-15 records) or "accidental" (1-4 records) statewide. It also reviews records of species that are casual or accidental for the season when reported (example: Rose-breasted Grosbeak in winter); records of species that are casual or accidental in the part of Missouri where reported

(example: Northern Shrike in the Ozarks); and other records of unusual interest, including first nesting records and extreme arrival and departure dates. The Review List, also maintained at www.mobirds.org, lists all species that require review due to their year-round casual or accidental status in all or part of the state, plus a few for which the Committee still wishes to receive documentation despite their status as only “rare” (e.g., California Gull). The Review List does not cover out-of-season status; for information on seasonal occurrence, consult the Annotated Checklist.

The Committee extends 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 email the Secretary at rowemb45@gmail.com. The next report will appear in the March 2016 issue of *The Bluebird*.

RMBS = Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, St. Charles Co.
SCNWR = Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Holt Co.
MNWR = Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, Bollinger/Stoddard/Wayne

Cos.

CBC = Christmas Bird Count
CA = Conservation Area
SP = State Park
NWR = National Wildlife Refuge

RECORDS ACCEPTED

MOTTLED DUCK (*Anas fulvigula*), 2014-43: One, 22-30 May 2014, near Hornersville Swamp CA, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). This species was previously listed as an accidental transient and summer visitor, with four records; this record, the fifth, moves it to “casual” status. Photographs showed sufficient detail to eliminate a Mallard x Mottled Duck hybrid.

MOTTLED DUCK, 2014-64: Male, 11 November 2014, SCNWR. Michael Stewart (documentation with photographs). Casual transient and summer visitor; sixth state record. Photographs showed sufficient detail to eliminate a Mallard x Mottled Duck hybrid.

REDHEAD (*Aythya americana*), 2014-16: Male and female, 14 June 2008, Columbia Bottom CA, St. Louis Co. Joshua Uffman (documentation with photographs). First record as a summer visitor outside northwestern Missouri.

PACIFIC LOON (*Gavia pacifica*), 2014-50: Immature, or adult in non-breeding aspect, 15-18 June 2014, Stockton Lake, Dade Co. Steve Martin and Greg Swick (documentation with photographs). Accidental as a summer visitor.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), 2014-24: Four adults, present winter 2013-14, St. Louis Zoo, City of St. Louis. Eric Jeltis (documentation with

photographs). Casual in winter in southern half Missouri, accidental in northern half. The observer documented these birds as of 6-7 February 2014, stating that they “are seen every day of the year on the zoo grounds and are not part of the zoo’s bird collection.” Birds of this species are in the collection but are kept in the 1904 flight cage, not outside around the ponds where these birds reside.

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*), 2014-40: One, 1 May 2014, SCNWR, Holt Co. Dan Cowell (documentation with photographs). Casual transient in western half of Missouri. Found in a flock with almost 30 White-faced Ibis. Photographs clearly showed the dark eye and the thin pale-blue border that went around the bird’s gray facial skin but not behind the eye. Precise details of facial color and pattern are important in separating a pure Glossy Ibis from a White-faced x Glossy Ibis hybrid, which has become more frequent in recent years as the breeding range of Glossy Ibis has expanded westward into White-faced Ibis range.

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*), 2014-59: 7 or more birds, 19-30 October 2014, Eagle Bluffs CA, Boone Co. Karen Wosilait, Andrew Kinslow, Steven Pearson (documentation with photographs), Jack Foreman (documentation). Latest fall record of *Plegadis* ibises identified to species. This group contained 11 birds, at least 19-23 November; out of these, Kinslow determined that seven were identifiable as White-faced by their red eyes and/or a reddish tint to the facial skin, features that were visible in some of the photographs. By 30 November, the group was apparently down to 6 birds (Pearson). In general, dark ibises in fall are almost certainly White-faced, as there is no documented record of a Glossy after August; nonetheless, a solid identification requires noting of characters (red eye, reddish facial skin) whose absence may leave the identification in doubt, since juveniles of both species initially have brown eyes and dull facial skin.

WOOD STORK (*Mycteria americana*), 2014-49: 1-2 immatures, at least 8 June to 1 August 2014, Four Rivers CA, Vernon Co. Chris Daniel and Steve Martin (documentation with photographs). Casual summer visitor. Initial reports were of one bird, but the number reported rose to 2 by at least 27 June.

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*), 2014-61: One, 11 October 2014, 350 Highway, Jackson Co. Larry Rizzo. Locally accidental; probably a first record for Jackson County.

FERRUGINOUS HAWK (*Buteo regalis*), 2014-22: Juvenile, 29 January 2014, along Mississippi River, New Madrid Co. Mark Greene (documentation with photographs). Transient and winter visitor, accidental in eastern Missouri. The photograph submitted showed several key characters; together with the description, they distinguished this species from Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks, with which it is easily confused.

WHOOPIING CRANE (*Grus americana*), 2014-66: Adult and immature, 15 November 2014, Stockton Lake, Polk Co. David Blevins. Casual transient. Despite the absence of photographs (always especially desirable for records of this federally endangered species), the description provided thorough detail and left no doubt that the birds were

Whooping Cranes. In addition, correspondence with Eva Szyszkoski of the International Crane Foundation established that the birds did not come from the experimental population established in Wisconsin, and therefore must have come from the wild population that migrates from Canada to the Texas coast.

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis dominica*), 2014-28: 21 birds, 22 February 2014, County Road 723, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). Record-early spring arrival date.

WILSON'S PLOVER (*Charadrius wilsonia*), 2014-41: Female-plumaged bird, 4 May 2014, RMBS. Found and documented by Larry Beeson; also documented by Charlene and James Malone and by Allen Smith (with photographs). Accidental transient; second state record of this southern coastal species.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*), 2014-29: 8 birds, 23 February 2014, County Road 730, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). Very early spring arrival date.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER (*Calidris fuscicollis*), 2014-55: One, 17 September 2014, Cora Island Road, St. Charles Co. Allen Smith (documentation with photographs). Casual fall transient. This species, fairly common in late spring, takes a different migration route in fall; the bulk of the population moves east to the Atlantic coast before turning south.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER, 2014-56: One, 20 September 2014, RMBS. Found and documented by Bill Rowe; also documented by James Malone (with photographs) and Charlene Malone. See comments on 2014-55, above. This individual appeared to be different from the one in 2014-55, though the locations are within a mile of each other.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER (*Tryngites subruficollis*), 2014-47: Adult, 23-24 May 2014, Eagle Bluffs CA, Boone Co. Brad Jacobs (documentation with photographs), Sherry Leonardo (documentation). Casual in eastern and central Missouri in spring.

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*), 2014-35: Two adults, 13 April 2014, County Road 723, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). Casual transient away from the Mississippi River.

LAUGHING GULL, 2014-54: Juvenile, 14-22 September 2014, Smithville Lake, Clay Co. Mary Nemecek (documentation with photographs), Marky Mutchler. Casual transient away from the Mississippi River.

ICELAND GULL (*Larus glaucoides*), 2014-15: First-cycle bird, 29 December 2013, Long Branch Lake SP, Macon Co. Brad Jacobs (documentation with photographs). Accidental away from the Mississippi River. With medium-brown head and body, tertials of the same tone, and somewhat paler-looking primaries (brown centers and wide white

edges), this bird represented the darker end of the extremely variable “Kumlien’s Gull,” currently treated as the North American subspecies (*kumlieni*) of the Iceland Gull. To substantiate this identification more fully, photographs were sent to Bruce Mactavish of Newfoundland and Alvaro Jaramillo of California, both of whom agreed that the bird was *kumlieni* and that it was not a Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*), which it resembled somewhat in plumage but not in structure.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus fuscus*), 2014-42: First-cycle bird, 18 May 2014, RMBS. Bill Rowe. Latest spring record.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus marinus*), 2014-30: First-cycle bird, 24 March 2014, RMBS. James Malone (documentation with photographs), Charlene Malone. Latest spring record. Two or possibly more first-cycle birds of this species were observed on various dates at this location, January-March 2014. While many Great Black-backed Gulls in their second cycle may lack the incoming blackish mantle feathers and thus resemble first-cycle birds, this bird showed indications of being in the first cycle (bill black to tip, wing coverts with bold whitish barring and checkering).

INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*), 2014-9: Two, early December 2013 through 4 January 2014, then one until 5 February 2014, Buffalo, Dallas Co. Greg Samuel and Greg Swick (documentation with photographs). First reported by Lester and Paul Hostetler. Casual transient and winter visitor.

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus calliope*), 2014-65: Immature male, 12-29 November 2014, Swick residence, Ozark, Christian Co. Found and documented by Greg Swick (with photographs); also documented by Allen Smith (with photographs) and banded by Sarah Driver. Accidental transient; second state record. Measurements and photographs taken while banding confirmed not only identification to species but also age and sex. Banding data are provided in Swick documentation.

LEAST FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax minimus*), 2014-36: One, 16 April 2014, Hornersville Swamp Levee Road, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). Earliest spring arrival date. Visual characters all correct for Least, and gave the *che-bek* song.

NORTHERN SHRIKE (*Lanius excubitor*), 2014-23: Adult, 5 February 2014, County Road 103A, Iron Co. Matt Jones (documentation with photographs). Accidental in the Ozark region.

WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus*), 2014-63: One, 29 October 2014, St. Francis Levee Road, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones. Latest fall record.

BLUE-HEADED VIREO (*Vireo solitarius*), 2014-25: One, 8 February 2014, St. Francis Levee Road, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). Accidental in winter.

MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia currucoides*), 2014-17: Adult male, 27 January 2013, near Salem, Dent Co. Rob Francis. Casual transient and winter visitor.

TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE (*Myadestes townsendi*), 2014-19: One, 2-10 February 2014, Young CA, Jefferson Co. Found and documented by Joshua Uffman (with photographs); also documented by Jim Malone (with photographs). Winter visitor, accidental outside of northwest Missouri.

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*), 2014-7: One, 14 December 2013, Yarrow, Adair Co. Peter Kondrashov (documentation with photographs). Casual in winter in northern Missouri.

GRAY CATBIRD, 2014-18: One, 27 January 2014, Raytown, Jackson Co. Joseph Mosley. Casual in winter in northern Missouri.

AMERICAN PIPIT (*Anthus rubescens*), 2014-12: One, 28 December 2013, Smithville Lake, Clay Co. Kristi Mayo. Casual in winter in northern and central Missouri. CBC record.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora cyanoptera*), 2014-62: One, 17 October 2014, Hornersville Swamp Levee Road, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones. Latest fall record.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis celata*), 2014-10: One, 27 December 2013, Hamburg Ferry Access, Pike Co. Scott Schuette. Casual in winter in northern Missouri. CBC record.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, 2014-11: One, 27 December 2013, Norton Woods Access, Lincoln Co. Scott Schuette. Casual in winter in northern Missouri. CBC record.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*), 2014-3: Female-type, 18 October 2013, St. Francis Levee Road, Dunlin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). Latest fall record by five days.

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (*Setophaga pensylvanica*), 2014-48: Adult male, 5-8 June 2014, Domke residence, New Bloomfield, Callaway Co. Henry Domke. Probably to be considered a record-late spring migrant, not a potential breeding bird.

PALM WARBLER (*Setophaga palmarum*), 2014-8: One, 19 December 2013, Ten Mile Pond CA, Mississippi Co. Bill Eddleman (documentation), Keith Pulles. Casual in winter. CBC record.

PALM WARBLER, 2014-44: Male, 27-28 May 2014, Creve Coeur, St. Louis Co. Josh Uffman (documentation with photographs). Latest spring record.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (*Setophaga dominica*), 2014-4: One, 18 October 2013, St. Francis Levee Road, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). Latest fall record by five days.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER, 2014-58: One, 14 October 2014, Simpson Park, St. Louis Co. David Rudder. Another very late record (see 2014-4, above).

CANADA WARBLER (*Cardellina canadensis*), 2014-5: Female-type, 19 October 2013, St. Francis Levee Road, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). Very late fall record; latest since 19-21 October 1944.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*), 2014-2: One, 16 October 2013, St. Francis Levee Road, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). Latest fall record by four days.

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*), 2014-6: One, 14 December 2013 through 5 January 2014, Alwood residence, Ferguson, St. Louis Co. Cornelius Alwood (documentation with photographs). Casual in winter in northern and central Missouri.

SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*), 2014-51: One, 23 June to 3 July 2014, Highway A and Barry Road, Moniteau Co. Chris Barrigar (documentation with photographs). Accidental as a summer visitor and possible nesting summer resident. Heard singing from a grassy pasture through the period stated above.

NELSON'S SPARROW (*Ammodramus nelsoni*), 2014-33: One, 11 April 2014, Eagle Bluffs CA, Boone Co. Susan Hazelwood (documentation), Betsy Garrett. Second-earliest spring record, and far earlier than typical for the relatively few Nelson's Sparrows seen on spring migration in Missouri, which usually occur in mid- to late May.

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*), 2014-32: Female, 11-12 April 2014, Peculiar, Cass Co. Ginny Culver (documentation with photographs). Record-early spring arrival date.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*), 2014-14: Immature male, 13 January to 26 February 2014, Haas residence, Jackson, Cape Girardeau Co. Mark Haas (documentation with photographs), Kathy Haas. Accidental winter visitor.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK, 2014-34: Adult and immature males, 12 April 2014, Goodwin residence, near Jackson, Cape Girardeau Co. Mark Goodwin (documentation), Crystal Goodwin. Earliest spring record. It is possible that the immature bird was the individual in 2014-14, above.

BOBOLINK (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*), 2014-60: Adult, 22 October 2014, Litzinger Ecology Center, Ladue, St. Louis Co. Linda Tossing. Latest fall record. The bird was banded, #2711-01608.

PURPLE FINCH (*Carpodacus purpurea*), 2014-53: Juvenile, 8-13 September 2014, near Spring Lake, Adair Co. Peter Kondrashov (documentation with photographs). Earliest fall record. Photographs were sent to Tony Leukering for an outside opinion on the possibility of a vagrant Cassin's Finch; he confirmed it as a Purple Finch.

RED CROSSBILL (*Loxia curvirostra*), 2014-1: Groups of males and females, 26 April to 1 August 2013, Chamberlain residence, Marshfield, Webster Co. Greg Samuel (documentation with photographs), Linda Chamberlain (homeowner). Casual summer visitor. From a high count of 15 in late April, birds were observed daily by the homeowner and periodically by Samuel through June and July, with 9 on 5 June, dwindling to 2, late June through July, and a final observation of one on 1 August. An audio recording by Samuel was sent to Mark Robbins and diagnosed as Type 2.

LESSER GOLDFINCH (*Spinus psaltria*), 2014-26: Green-backed adult male, 15 February to 23 March, Berg residence, Stone Co. Greg Samuel (documentation), Emily Berg (photographs). Casual transient and winter visitor.

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW (*Passer montanus*), 2014-21: Two, 2 January to 4 February 2013, farm of Eldon and Cindy Walter, Jackson Co. James Gorski (documentation with photographs). Casual away from St. Louis and the northern Mississippi corridor.

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

“Not accepted” does not necessarily mean that the identification should be assumed to be incorrect. In some cases the Committee may indeed believe that the bird was misidentified, but in other cases, while it seems possible that the identification was correct, the information provided is insufficient to rule out other species completely. The Committee may be unable to accept even a 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.

GLOSSY IBIS, 2014-46: Two, 4 May 2014, Eagle Bluffs CA, Boone Co. The description of these birds eliminated pure White-faced Ibis but did not eliminate a Glossy x White-faced hybrid.

WHOOPING CRANE, 2014-45: One, 29 April, Excelsior Springs, Clay Co. This bird may have been a Whooping Crane, but it was observed without binoculars and the details were incomplete.

THAYER'S/ICELAND GULL (*Larus thayeri/glaucooides*), 2014-27: First or second-cycle bird, 15 February 2014, Little River CA, Dunklin Co. In a series of photographs of this bird, a couple of images appeared to show an underwing pattern consistent with

Thayer's Gull, but otherwise the bird appeared to be a Herring Gull. The images were sent to David Irons of Oregon, who agreed with the identification as Herring Gull.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flaviventris*), 2014-38: One, 27 April 2014, County Road 645, Cape Girardeau Co. The description suggested a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, but due to the difficulties of identification in this genus, any early or late report of any *Empidonax* will nearly always require photographic evidence, and often also a voice recording or accurate description of the voice. It is not sufficient simply to note that the voice matched an audio recording.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER, 2014-39: One, 27 April 2014, Independence, Jackson Co. Description included a number of anomalous details, such as an estimated length of 6-7 inches (size of a phoebe or pewee) and also an estimated size slightly larger than Acadian Flycatcher (no indication how determined; in any case, Yellow-bellied is smaller than Acadian, not larger). There was no way to determine what species may have been observed.

FISH CROW (*Corvus ossifragus*), 2014-20: Two, 2 February 2014, Lake Jacomo, Jackson Co. The voice described was not recognizably that of a Fish Crow. Differences in size and shape from American Crow were described, but it was not clear that these were observed in side-by-side comparison.

SPRAGUE'S PIPIT (*Anthus spragueii*), 2014-52: One, 3 September 2014, Levasy Bottoms, Jackson Co. While the description was hard to interpret at some points, it seemed clearly to refer to a juvenile Horned Lark, which can easily be misidentified as Sprague's Pipit. The described patterns of the head and the back were much more like those of a Horned Lark than a Sprague's Pipit, and the "dark brown primaries" mentioned were also a lark character, as the primaries of Sprague's and other pipit species are nearly or fully covered by the tertials and thus are not usually visible in the field. One good source of comparative photographs is found at <http://prairieice.blogspot.com/2010/07/spragues-pipit-or-horned-lark.html>.

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER (*Setophaga castanea*), 2014-37: Male, 19 April 2014, Phelps Co. Some important details were not observed (pale neck patch) or were not mentioned in the description (black face, olive back with dark streaks). More information would be needed for a date that would be a new early record for this species.

BLACKPOLL WARBLER (*Setophaga striata*), 2014-57: One, 6 October 2014, Blue Springs Wetland Mitigation Bank, Jackson Co. Some of the characters described did fit a fall Blackpoll Warbler, but the details were insufficient to rule out other species, notably a Pine Warbler. There was no mention of streaked or unstreaked back, leg color, or other details that might have identified it as a Blackpoll.

SCARLET TANAGER (*Piranga olivacea*), 2014-31: Male, 10 April 2014, county road in Phelps Co. This may have been a record-early Scarlet Tanager, but the bird was

viewed without optics and the description left some uncertainty (bill color was described as yellow).

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), 2014-13: Flock of 30, 4 January 2014, rural Butler Co. The details offered were insufficient to identify these birds as Brewer's Blackbirds. While the observers felt they had eliminated Common Grackle, parts of the description suggested that species. The birds were said to be "glossy blue, purple, and green" with no indication what parts of the body showed these colors (a bird with a glossy blue head would be a grackle). The call note, as described, sounded more like that of a grackle than a Brewer's. Moreover, all members of this flock of 30 were black with pale eyes; this would be true of any grackle flock but extraordinary for a similar-sized flock of Brewer's, which would almost certainly contain some brown females (with dark eyes). CBC record.