

**REPORT OF THE NORTH CAROLINA
BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE
1992**

This report enumerates the decisions of the Carolina Bird Club's North Carolina Bird Records Committee during 1992.

ACCEPTED AS VALID. The reported identification is judged to be accurate and the bird is judged to be of wild origin.

WESTERN GREBE (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*). One was seen on 28 December 1969 along the shore near Carolina Beach by John Irvine (Chat 35:27-29). At the present time, this is the only record that has been accepted as valid by the Committee, despite a handful of sight records. The species is moved from the Unresolved category to the Provisional List.

HERALD PETREL (*Pterodroma arminjoniana*). One individual in light-phase plumage was seen by a group of birders on 6 June 1992 in the Gulf Stream off Oregon Inlet. The Committee reviewed written descriptions from Ed Kwater, Jerry McWilliams, and John Drummond and accepted the report, the first for the state (and probably in North American waters) of the light phase. The species is already on the Official List, with a specimen and photographs available.

HERALD PETREL. An individual in intermediate plumage was seen and photographed (Am. Birds 45:511) off Cape Hatteras on 22 May 1991 by Robert Ake, Killian Mullarney, and several other birders. The previous reports for North Carolina had been of birds in the dark phase; this might be the first report of the intermediate phase for North American waters.

NORTHERN GANNET (*Sula bassanus*). An individual seen plunge-diving into Falls Lake in Durham County on 30 November 1991 was one of the few inland records for the state and is the first such inland record reviewed and accepted by the Committee. Leslie Todd made the initial sighting and provided the description to the Committee.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Ajaia ajaja*). An immature was observed by Richard Davis at Calabash Creek in Brunswick County on 13 July 1992, and presumably the same bird was later observed by many observers at Eagle Island near Wilmington. Though there are at least eight to ten previous state records, and the species has long been on the Official List, this is the first state record in perhaps ten years. Photos provided by Robert Merrick have been deposited at the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences, which previously had no specimen or photographs available as tangible evidence.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*). One bird in basic plumage, of the nominate *lapponica* race, was seen and photographed by Stephen Dinsmore at Portsmouth Island on 8 and 9 May 1992. This is the first spring record for the state and about the fifth overall for North Carolina. The species is already on the Official List, with photos to document the species.

RUFF (*Philomachus pugnax*). One was observed by Richard Davis, Bob Lewis, and others at an impoundment at Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge on 29 December 1991 and for a few days thereafter. This is a remarkable record for the season and is believed to be the first winter record for North Carolina. There are numerous records for the state during the warmer months.

PARASITIC JAEGER (*Stercorarius parasiticus*). An individual was seen on several dates in November 1991 at Jordan Lake in Chatham County, for one of the very few inland records for the state. Stephen Dinsmore made the initial sighting, but the Committee reviewed and accepted the description by Paul Saraceni.

SAY'S PHOEBE (*Sayornis saya*). One was seen and photographed near the Pony Pens on Ocracoke Island on 11 October 1991 by Hugh McFadden. The photograph was judged to validate the sighting, though only sparse details accompanied the photograph, which has been deposited at the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences. This is the third accepted record for the state, moving the species from the Provisional List to the Official List. The two other records are from the central portions of the state (Wake and Harnett counties).

CAVE SWALLOW (*Hirundo fulva*). Two birds were seen among a flock of several other species of swallows on the unusual date of 16 December 1991. John Fussell, Larry Crawford, and Bob Holmes saw the birds at a quarry at New Bern. No photographs were taken, and the birds could not be found on later dates. This report, the second for the state but the first accepted as valid, places the species on the Provisional List.

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER (*Dendroica nigrescens*). One was observed by Clyde Sorenson at Greensboro on 24 February 1992. However, he was unable to photograph the bird when he later returned with a camera. This is the third report, and second accepted sighting, for North Carolina. The species remains on the Provisional List.

CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR (*Calcarius ornatus*). One individual, believed to be a female, was observed in late February and early March 1992 at the Charlotte Motor Speedway, near Harrisburg. Taylor Piephoff made the initial observation; David Wright, Kevin Hennings, and other local birders observed the longspur, as did six of the seven members of the Committee. Colors photos taken by Mary Welty and David Wright, as well as several written details, were reviewed by the Committee, which accepted the record. This is the first record of the species for North Carolina, and the species is placed on the Official List. The photos have been deposited at the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences; however, full details should be published to complete the documentation of the record.

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*). Four males were observed by Philip Crutchfield at a shopping center in Fayetteville on 30 October 1991. The birds were compared with nearby Brown-headed Cowbirds (M. ater). This is the third record of Shiny Cowbird for the state; the species is already on the Official List, based on a specimen from New Bern in 1990 (Chat 56:53).

UNACCEPTED SIGHTING. The bird is judged to be a species other than that reported, or the bird is insufficiently documented for identification to the species reported.

WESTERN GREBE (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*). One reported from the southern coast in early 1991 was not accepted. Though many or most of the details seem to point to the species, there were some bothersome circumstances surrounding this and other reports of the species made by the same observer in the general area on previous occasions.

WESTERN GREBE. One reported at Myrtle Grove Sound in 1971 (Chat 35:22) was not accepted. Five of the seven Committee members felt that the reported details were incomplete and that the record was thus inadequately documented.

WESTERN GREBE. Another report of Western Grebe, of two birds at Wrightsville Beach in 1976 (Chat 41:38), is also not accepted. Other species of grebes or loons were not satisfactorily eliminated, based on the published description.

VARIED THRUSH (*Ixoreus naevius*). One was reported from the southeastern coast in early 1992; the bird in question was seen in a flock of American Robins (*Turdus migratorius*). The Committee did not accept the report, with concerns about the observer's experience and the unlikelihood of this species appearing near the southeastern coast, away from a feeder. Nearly all records of Varied Thrush from the Eastern states are from feeders in the mountains or piedmont, typically near conifers. It was also not able to be re-located by other observers, despite some effort. There are still no accepted records of this species for North Carolina.

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER (*Dendroica kirtlandii*). One reported from Ocracoke Island in the fall of 1991 (Chat 56:21-29) was not accepted. The Committee did not accept the original report on a Rare Bird Sighting form (Chat 56:55), nor did the published description change the decision of the Committee. The Committee was simply not convinced that an individual of this exceedingly rare, and Federally listed as Endangered, species was present, despite published details that were not obviously incorrect for Kirtland's.

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER. An individual reported from Rocky Mount on 2 September 1936 (Chat 56:21-29) was also not accepted. Several Committee members felt that the published description was inadequate to thoroughly review the record, whereas the majority considered the bird to be incorrectly identified.

UNRESOLVED. Further consideration by the Committee is needed.

BULWER'S PETREL (*Bulweria bulweria*). One was observed in the Gulf Stream off the Outer Banks during summer 1992. This is apparently the first reasonably well-described report for the species in North American waters. However, the bird was not photographed. Though none of the seven Committee members has any field experience with Bulwer's Petrel, the majority of the Committee members accepted the record. However, one Committee member felt the report was inadequately documented (a few field marks were not seen) and another member abstained from voting. By rules of the Committee (more than 50% Accepted votes yet at least 25% Non-accepted votes), the report must be submitted for outside review; details will be submitted to persons familiar with the species.

CAVE SWALLOW. One was reported from a coastal site in early winter 1987. However, the report was not submitted for Committee consideration until after the 1991 sighting was made. Though there were no Unaccepted Sighting votes, the report did not meet the required 75% level of acceptance (because of two Inadequately Documented votes) and thus details have been submitted for outside review.

Committee members: Harry E. LeGrand, Jr., Chairman
Richard J. Davis
John O. Fussell III
J. Merrill Lynch
Simon R.B. Thompson
Michael H. Tove
John S. Wright

REPORT OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE 1992

The South Carolina Bird Records Committee held a meeting in Charleston on 11 April 1992 to establish its basic operating rules, which in great part follow those used by our North Carolina counterparts. Due to the large size of the committee (9), it was decided that a record would be accepted as valid so long as it received a minimum of six (6) accept votes, but not more than one (1) reject vote (misidentified or insufficient details). Excess abstentions, should they reduce the accept votes to less than six (6), would also reject a record. Rejected records will be retained in the file, and if a new species to South Carolina, will cause the species to be placed on the "hypothetical" list.

During the year a total of twenty-three (23) records have been circulated to the members. Of these, action is complete, or sufficiently so to establish an outcome, on fifteen (15). Of these twelve (12) have been accepted, and three (3) have been rejected. One of the latter, Black-chinned Hummingbird, will probably be added to the Hypothetical list. The attached table details these actions. The record number is coded by month, year, and order of receipt for that month by the secretary. As will be noted, several relatively early records still require action. This is mainly due to late submittal of these records to the committee, rather than to inaction by committee members who are, however, not always as prompt as I, the secretary, might desire.

While I feel that this is a very promising beginning, wider participation by CBC and ABA members, as well as birders in general is most important if we are to obtain a complete picture of birdlife in South Carolina. In general, any unusual, out of season, or out of place bird should be reported, and a record made of it. Many birds are on the state list on the basis of a single specimen or very few sightings, and more needs to be known of their seasonal and geographic distribution, as a tool for their eventual preservation and perpetuation. So, if in doubt, submit it, and I'll be glad to inform you, individually, of the committee action.

Peter L. Worthington, Secretary
South Carolina Bird Records Committee