

1997 Report of the North Carolina Bird Records Committee

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This report enumerates the decisions of the Carolina Bird Club's North Carolina Bird Records Committee during 1997.

ACCEPTED AS VALID

The reported identification is judged to be accurate, and the bird is judged to be of wild origin. Photographs and written descriptions of all accepted records have been deposited in the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences.

GREATER SHEARWATER (*Puffinus gravis*). One was seen in the cool waters inshore of the Gulf Stream off Cape Hatteras, Dare County, on 9 February 1997. Harry LeGrand, Brian Patteson, Ned Brinkley, and many other birders observed the bird. There is one previous winter report for the species in North Carolina, but that report has not been reviewed by the Committee. The species is already on the state's Official List.

SOOTY SHEARWATER (*Puffinus griseus*). One was seen from shore at Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover County, on 3 January 1997 by Ricky Davis. The species is already on the Official List, but this might be the first winter record for the state.

SOOTY SHEARWATER. Two or three were seen off Cape Hatteras in cool waters inshore of the Gulf Stream on 9 February 1997 by Brian Patteson, Ned Brinkley, and others. This is the second winter record for the state, closely following the record above, made a month earlier.

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*). One was observed by Gene Howe at Atlantic Beach, Carteret County, on 14 October 1996. This is the first record for the state. As no photograph was taken to document the record, the species is placed on the Provisional List.

ANTILLEAN NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles gundlachi*). One was seen, but not heard, at Cape Hatteras point, Dare County, on 23-24 May 1996. Ned Brinkley submitted both a written description and black-and-white photos. The written description was accepted, but not enough votes were received on the photos to comprise a verdict. Nonetheless, the species is already on the Accepted List, based on a description and taped recording of the call of a bird at the same

location in 1994 (Chat 60:145-146). In fact, the same individual might have been involved in both records. This is the second state record.

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD (*Stellula calliope*). A female Calliope was found at Betty and Frank Scott's feeder near Hampstead in Pender County. It was identified by Derb Carter on 24 February 1997 and was seen by many other birders into early March. The only photo available to the Committee was considered by the Chairman to be misrepresentative (back and breast colorations distorted by light conditions) and was not used in the voting. This is the second accepted record of Calliope Hummingbird for the state. Since the first record (Chat 61:52-53) was documented by excellent photos, the species is already on the Official List.

UNACCEPTED SIGHTING

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

YELLOW-NOSED ALBATROSS (*Diomedea chlororhynchos*). One reported flying over the surf, seen from shore on the Outer Banks in April 1997, was not accepted. Committee members called attention to several field marks described that are inconsistent with any species of albatross; a sub-adult Northern Gannet better fits the description. The statement that "Another report of Yellow-nosed Albatross is now available for North Carolina," made by David S. Lee (Chat 62:67), likely refers to this report. There are no accepted records of Yellow-nosed Albatross for the state.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL (*Larus cachinnans*). A "yellow-legged gull" (slang for a Herring-type gull with yellow legs) was reported from the Outer Banks in February 1997, but the report was not accepted to this species. Several Committee members considered the bird to be a likely hybrid between Herring and Lesser Black-backed gulls. Yellow-legged Gull is currently on the Official List, based on an adult photographed at Cape Hatteras on 13 March 1995 (Chat 60:153-156). This latter record, however, might be re-evaluated in light of recent information on separating this species other gull species, as well as from hybrid gulls.

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus alexandri*). An adult male hummingbird, reported as this species from the mountains during June 1991, was not accepted. The Committee was concerned that the bird was reported as being larger than a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, yet sizes of these two species should be nearly identical. In addition, males of the latter species can appear to have black/purple gorgets in poor light. The species remains on the Provisional List, with one accepted sight record.

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD. Two reported at a feeder on the Outer Banks in December 1996 were not accepted. One was reported as an immature male, and the other was reported as either a female or an immature male. Because of the great difficulty of identification of this species and Ruby-throated, and because other observers who viewed hummingbirds at the same feeder reported only Ruby-throateds or were confused over the birds' identities, the Committee was not convinced that Black-chinneds were present at the feeder.

EASTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus tyrannus*). One reported from the Outer Banks during the winter of 1996-97 was not accepted. Although the details seemed to be consistent with the species, the details were too brief for the extreme rarity of this species in North America during the winter.

VEERY (*Catharus fuscescens*). One reported from the northern mountains during the winter of 1996-97 was not accepted. As with the Eastern Kingbird, this species does not generally occur in North America during winter. We are not aware of any previous winter reports from the state. This is the first winter report reviewed by the Committee.

UNRESOLVED.

Further consideration by the Committee is needed.

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*). A male was reported from the Piedmont province in the fall of 1996. The report received a Send for Outside Review verdict. The species is already on the Official List, but this is the first report from the Piedmont.

Status of the North Carolina Bird List. The voting results for 1997 resulted in adding only one species to the North Carolina Bird List: Groove-billed Ani has been added to the Provisional List. The current Official List is 420 species, and the Provisional List is now 17 species.

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