
Actions of the Michigan Bird Records Committee for 2007

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This is the 18th report of the Michigan Bird Records Committee (MBRC), covering the Committee's actions in 2007. The members of the Committee in 2007 were Rick Brigham (Allegan Co.), Adam M. Byrne (Clinton Co.), Lathe Clafin (Jackson Co.), Joe Kaplan (Houghton Co.), Brad Murphy (Oakland Co.), Caleb G. Putnam (Kent Co.), and Scott Terry (Oakland Co.), with alternate members Jim Dawe (Oscoda Co.) and Louis Dombroski (Bay Co.). Putnam was Chairman and Byrne was Secretary. Per bylaw E.5, which provides for the use of past committee members when needed in order to attain seven votes for any record, the votes of Jeff Buecking (5 records) were solicited and used during 2007.

During 2007, the committee made 179 decisions on 139 records, with 84 (46.9%) of the decisions being to accept. At least one individual was accepted from 62 (44.6%) of the records. The discrepancy between the number of decisions and the number of records resulted from two circumstances. First, 15 records involved multiple birds, each individual requiring a separate decision. Second, three records were re-reviewed as a different species group following initial rejection; for example, a Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*), which was initially rejected, was re-reviewed as Western/Clark's Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis/clarkii*).

Two species, Black-bellied Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) and Lesser Frigatebird (*Fregata ariel*), were added to the Michigan state checklist with accidental status during 2007. This brings the total state list to 432. Five species were upgraded from accidental to casual status: Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*), White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*), Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*), Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*), and Eurasian Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*), while one additional species, Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*), was downgraded from regular to casual status, returning it to the MBRC Review List. A current version of the checklist and review list may be downloaded at the committee's website.

Two nomenclature changes to the checklist were made during 2007 to bring the list into concordance with the 48th supplement to the American Ornithologists Union *Checklist of North American Birds* (Banks et al.



2007). Namely, the Belted Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*) was moved to the genus *Megaceryle* and the family Cathartidae (New World vultures) was removed from the Order Ciconiiformes and returned to its former order, the Falconiformes.

In 2006 the MBRC noticed a discrepancy in past and current voting standards. Namely, approximately 30-40 records in the MBRC database were originally accepted with tallies of 5-2, 5-1-1, or 5-0-2 prior to 2007 (Putnam 2007). Since these same tallies would currently result in resubmission rather than acceptance, the committee voted to bring all of the old records up to the current standard by re-reviewing them all. This process was continued in 2007, with 34 additional records receiving reconsideration.

The committee received two requests for reconsideration during 2007. In both cases, the observer recanted all or part of his or her initial claim on an accepted record. The committee approved each reconsideration by majority vote; the first of which was circulated to the committee in 2007 (see Glossy Ibis on 13 July 1991 under "Records Not Accepted"), the second of which was not evaluated in 2007.

Bylaws amendments

Two bylaws changes were accepted during 2007 (both unanimously). The first changed section D.1. to: "The committee shall maintain a list of species requiring documentation. When a species changes from accidental or casual status to regular status, it shall remain on the review list for a period of three years after the year it attained regular status. If, after the three year period, the species maintains regular status, it shall be removed from the review list. This list will also include all species that have casual or accidental status in the state, possible first state records, and species deemed necessary by the committee. The review list will be published regularly in Michigan Birds and Natural History or the current state publication."

This change lays out a transition period for those species moving from casual to regular status. Historically, such species were immediately removed from the review list, unless considered a significant identification challenge (i.e., Pacific Loon and Rufous Hummingbird). Some members were concerned that some of these species could easily vacillate back to casual status within a year or two. In such cases, had the species been temporarily removed from the review list, there would be undesirable gaps/discrepancies

between archived materials and published accounts. Thus, instituting a transition period, during which the species remains on the review list, allows time to confirm the long-term validity of the species' status change before considering its removal from the review list.

The second amendment changed the beginning of section E.5 to: "Members will abstain from voting on records for which they have submitted documentation; members will not abstain on any other votes..." This was required to avoid unnecessary delays in the review process and to ensure that all members fulfill their duty to vote on all possible documentation.

Records Accepted

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *(Dendrocygna autumnalis)*

Vote: 7-0

Photographs: Stan Anthony

One individual, a first state record, was shot by Anthony "along the Pine River, just west of Alma," Gratiot Co., on 5 November 2006.

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*)

Vote: 6-1, for five individuals, in the second round

Description: David J. Peters

Four adults and one juvenile were observed at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, Saginaw Co., on 24 October 2006 (35th state record, 5th county record). Some members were concerned about the lack of direct size comparison with a known subspecies of Canada Goose (or other species), and about the possibility that the birds were too large for pure Ross's Geese. However, most felt the head pattern described was consistent with pure Ross's Goose.

Specifically, the observer described a straight "base of bill," no "grin mark," a small culmen, a dull blue/lavender basal half of the bills of the four adults, and rounded heads with relatively small eyes.

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Joe Kaplan

Field Sketch: Joe Kaplan

Photographs and Video: Joe Kaplan

One was observed at Pilgrim River, Houghton, Houghton Co., on 6-12 November 2006 (36th state record, 3rd county record).

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Max Henschell, Gerald Ziarno

Photographs: John Ralston, Gerald Ziarno

One individual, a drake, was observed at Pointe La Barbe, Mackinac Co., on 26 April 2007 (40th state record, 1st county record).



Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)

Vote: 6-1, in the second round
 Descriptions: Doug McWhirter,
 Michael E. Petrucha, Kevin Thomas

One individual, a male, was observed at Marine City, St. Clair Co., on 8-23 February 1995 (2nd state record, 1st county record). This record was at first errantly accepted (Reinoehl 1997a) due to improper vote tabulation, and here given reconsideration to clarify. Initial concern over whether a hybrid Tufted Duck (with Scaup sp. or another *Aythya* as the other parent) could be ruled out was eventually trumped by one observer's mention of the mantle as lacking gray or white vermiculation, and the sentiment of most members that all of the other field marks observed (bill color and pattern, tuft length, flank pattern) were within the range of variation of pure Tufted Duck.

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)

Vote: 5-2, in the second round
 Descriptions: Gerald Annelin, Ron Weeks

One individual, a male, was observed at Nayanquing Pt. Bay Co., on 14 April-3 May 1995 (3rd state record, 1st county record). This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Reinoehl 1997a), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction. At least two members felt that

neither observer was able to clinch the pattern of the upperparts sufficiently to eliminate a Tufted Duck X *Aythya* hybrid, however Annelin's description of the back as "uniform very dark gray (black)" was ultimately deemed sufficient to rule out pale vermiculations, and thus, the suggestion of hybridization. All of the other relevant field marks (bill coloration, nail morphology, tuft length, flank pattern, etc.) were deemed sufficient by most members.

King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*)

Vote: 7-0
 Descriptions: Chip Francke, Caleb G. Putnam
 Photographs: Charles DeWitt, Caleb G. Putnam

A second calendar year male was at Chinook Pier, Grand Haven, Ottawa Co., on 21-22 February 2007 (50th state record, 3rd county record).

Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*)

Vote: 7-0, in the second round
 Photograph: Ron Creiton or Brian Thompson

An adult male was shot at Essexville, Bay Co., on 18 Nov 2006 (12th state record, 1st county record). Some committee members expressed concern that the photo of the specimen did not show the "spur" at the sides of the chest, allowing for uncertainty

as to potential hybrid Barrow's X Common Goldeneye parentage. However, this concern was allayed due to the classic Barrow's-like appearance of several key features: the facial spot, the dark bases of the greater secondary coverts, the extent and pattern of white on the scapulars, and head and bill shape. Given that the committee knows of no evidence that any hybrid or backcross individual can show all of these characters, the vote to accept was unanimous.

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Craig Bateman, Erik Enbody, Joseph Youngman
Field Sketch: Craig Bateman
Photographs: Erik Enbody, Joseph Youngman

One was observed at Keweenaw Bay, L'Anse, Baraga Co., on 5-20 November 2006 (20th state record, 2nd county record).

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Vote: 7-0

Photograph: Skye Haas

One was observed at the Dead River mouth, Marquette, Marquette Co., on 28 February-1 March 2006 (19th state record, 2nd county record).

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Vote: 6-1

Description: Bruce Ventura

One was observed near the Dead River mouth, Marquette, Marquette Co., on 30 December 2006 (23rd state record, 3rd county record).

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Vote: 6-1

Descriptions: Louis Dombroski, Skye Haas

Photographs: John Ralston

One was observed at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 23 December 2006 (22nd state record, 1st county record).

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Philip C. Chu, Wayne Gleiber

One was observed at New Buffalo, Berrien Co., on 22-28 December 2006 (21st state record, 7th county record).

Western/Clark's Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis/clarkii*)

Vote: 6-1

Description and Sketch: Joe Kaplan

One individual was observed on 30 December 2006, at Copper Harbor, Keweenaw Co. Although one member was troubled by the lack of clarity as to whether



the adjacent Long-tailed Duck was larger or smaller than this bird or vice versa (perhaps resulting from a typo or poor grammar) and whether the description ruled out Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*) or even Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*), remaining members felt that the sketch was conclusive and that the statement that Horned Grebe would be “much smaller” than this bird clarified the body size issue.

Western/Clark’s Grebe
(*Aechmophorus occidentalis/clarkii*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Joe Kaplan, Max Henschell

Sketch: Joe Kaplan

Photographs and Video: Joe Kaplan

One individual was observed at Torch Lake, Houghton Co., on 7-11 November 2006 (6th state record, 1st county record). This report was initially rejected as Western Grebe (see below under “Records Not Accepted”).

Lesser Frigatebird (*Fregata ariel*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Calvin Brennan, Tim Smart, Jeffrey R. Schultz

Sketch: Jeffrey R. Schultz

Photographs: Paul Cypher

One individual, an adult male, was observed on 11 September 2005 at Lake Erie Metropark, Wayne. Co. This very

unexpected record is not only a 1st state record, but an apparent 2nd North American record (Brennan and Schultz 2006). The identification of this bird was refreshingly straightforward, as the combination of triangular axillary “spurs,” and the lack of prominent alar bars is unique not only to this species, but to adult males of this species (James 2004), a sentiment shared by the entire committee. Further verification of the identification resulted from correspondences with David James, a world authority on southern hemisphere frigates, and Peter Pyle, who both reviewed the documentation and agreed it was conclusive.

Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Adam M. Byrne

Photographs: Scott Jennex, Greg Norwood, Scott Terry

One individual was observed at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co., on 11 June-4 September 2006 (44th state record, 18th county record).

Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: James C. Dawe

Photograph: Gary Nelkie

One individual was observed at Tawas Point State Park, Iosco Co., on 22 May 2007 (45th state record, 2nd county record).

Members unanimously agreed that the documentation clearly eliminated all other species, and also eliminated a hybrid Tricolored Heron X Snowy Egret (*E. thula*).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron
(*Nyctanassa violacea*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Adam M. Byrne, Brad Murphy

Photographs: Adam M. Byrne

An adult was observed at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co., on 9 June 2007 (101st state record, 25th county record).

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Adam M. Byrne

Photographs: Scott Terry

One individual was observed at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co. on 3-12 June 2006 (16th state record, 5th county record).

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

Vote: 7-0, in the second round

Description: Ron Simcox

Photograph: Ron Simcox

One individual was observed at Lake La Grange, Cass Co., on 4 May 1969 (Simcox 1970) (2nd state record, 1st county record). Initially reported and accepted as White-faced Ibis (Chu 1992), this record was subsequently re-evaluated and rejected as White-faced Ibis (Putnam 2007). It is

here re-reviewed as Glossy Ibis instead of Glossy/White-faced Ibis (per usual MBRC practice), due to the unusual circumstance that the photograph appears to show conclusive evidence that the bird is of the former species (Putnam 2007). Indeed, the committee voted unanimously in favor of this proposition. The record was not without discussion, however. The description clearly indicates that white was present behind the bird's eye, though the photo appears to show otherwise. The committee unanimously argued that the photo trumped the description in this regard. Potential concerns over hybrid White-faced X Glossy Ibis were allayed due to the fact that this record predates the earliest documented occurrence of Glossy Ibises in the breeding range of White-faced Ibis, which occurred in the "mid to late 1980s" in Texas (Patten and Lasley 2000).

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

Vote: 7-0, for three individuals

Description: Philip C. Chu

Four individuals were reported at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co., on 13 July 1991 (7th state record, 2nd county record). These four individuals were initially accepted as Glossy Ibises (Chu 1992), but were here re-reviewed due to a request for reconsideration submitted by the observer. The



request, which pointed out that the description of the facial skin coloration of the fourth individual was inconsistent with the species claimed, was approved by a majority vote of the full committee. In the documentation, the observer describes three ibises with “dark grayish facial skin with narrow bluish-white borders,” and a fourth ibis with “paler, grayish-flesh facial skin without light borders.” The majority of the committee concurred with the observer that the fourth individual was not identifiable to species (see below under “Records Not Accepted”).

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

Vote: 7-0, for ten individuals
 Descriptions: Adam M. Byrne, Allen T. Chartier, James C. Dawe, Brad Murphy, Caleb G. Putnam, Will Weber

Photographs: Allen T. Chartier, Jerry Jourdan, Scott Manly, Brad Murphy, Caleb G. Putnam, Will Weber

Eleven individuals were reported at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co., on 20 May-22 July 2007 (17th state record, 7th county record). The eleventh individual was not accepted (see below under “Records Not Accepted”).

Glossy/White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus/chihii*)

Vote: 6-1, in the second round
 Description: Curt Powell

Five individuals were observed at Erie Marsh Preserve, Monroe Co., on 2 October 1993 (5th state record, 3rd county record). Initially accepted as Glossy Ibises (Chu 1995), then subsequently re-evaluated and rejected as Glossy Ibises (Putnam 2007), these five individuals were here given reconsideration as Glossy/White-faced Ibis. The observer offered the following details: “facial skin (apparent on only four individuals) bluish or grayish [with] line looking thin from eye to bill” and “plumage bronzy/brown all over” with greenish iridescence on the mantle. One member expressed concern that the lack of description of bill length, bill shape, and leg length precluded us from establishing these birds as ibises. However, the remainder of the committee felt that the plumage details were sufficient to that end, and that, further, no other bird could fit the description.

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihii*)

Vote: 7-0
 Descriptions: Adam M. Byrne, Brad Murphy
 Photographs: Allen T. Chartier, Scott Jennex, Jerry Jourdan, Brad Murphy, Will Weber

One individual was observed at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co., on 9-17 June 2007 (9th state record, 3rd county record). This individual was

associating with up to 10 Glossy Ibises present at the same time (see above under "Records Accepted").

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*)

Vote: 6-1, in the second round

Description: Kevin Thomas

One in its second calendar year was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 20 May 1996 (12th state record, 6th county record). This documentation was initially accepted with a 5-1-1 vote (Reinoehl 1997b), and was here re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction. Initial concern by many members centered on the description of an all-black tail on a subadult bird (which, was judged by the streaked underwings), as well as the mention of rufous in the primaries (which should not be present since the primaries would still be juvenal and thus lacking rufous). However, according to Wheeler (2003) many second calendar year individuals have an unbanded tail at this stage of their life, and primary molt in this age class begins in May, conceivably giving rise to rufous edging on the newly attained feathers by the date of the sighting (Wheeler 2003).

King Rail (*Rallus elegans*)

Vote: 7-0, for one individual

Description: Michael A. Sanders

Photograph: Michael A. Sanders

Two individuals were reported at Harsen's Island, St. Clair Co., on 8 May 2007 (121st state record, 4th county record). Members unanimously agreed that the photo, which showed one individual, clearly was of this species. However, the second individual was heard-only, and there was some question as to whether one individual could have produced the appearance of two calling birds. For this reason the second individual went into resubmission and was accepted in 2008 (Putnam, *in preparation*).

King Rail (*Rallus elegans*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Sean Bachman

One individual was reported at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co., on 10 June 2007 (122nd state record, 30th county record).

Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*)

Vote: 7-0, for two individuals

Descriptions: Adam M. Byrne, Philip C. Chu, David C. Vinnedge

Photographs: Rick Brigham, Robert Epstein, Matt Hysell, Scott Jennex, Kip Miller, Andre Moncrieff, Caleb G. Putnam

Two individuals, a male and a female, were observed in Sodus Twp., Berrien Co., on 6 May-6 June 2007 (6th state record, 1st county record).

**California Gull (*Larus californicus*)**

Vote: 7-0, in the second round

Description: Kip Miller

One in its first cycle was reported at St. Joseph, Berrien Co., on 15 November 1994 (10th state record, 5th county record). This documentation was initially accepted with a 5-1-1 vote (Reinoehl 1997a), and was here re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction. Initial concerns over size (described as “approximately the same size or slightly larger than...Ring-billed Gulls [*L. delawarensis*]”) and the inability to rule out a Herring (*L. argentatus*) X Lesser Black-backed Gull (*L. fuscus*) of this age class were overruled in the end. Members unanimously felt that since nothing in the description was clearly inconsistent with the species claimed, there was no reason to invoke hybrid origin. Additionally, it was noted that there is significant overlap in wingspan and length between Ring-billed Gull and California Gull (Olsen and Larsson 2003).

California Gull (*Larus californicus*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Matt Hysell

Photographs: Matt Hysell

One, likely in its second-cycle, was observed at St. Joseph, Berrien Co., on 30 May 2007 (18th state record, 10th county record).

Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Adam M. Byrne, Philip C. Chu, Donald W. Jennette

Photographs: Christopher Neri

One adult was observed at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 29 May 2006 (12th state record, 2nd county record).

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)

Vote: 7-0, in the second round

Descriptions: Paul Dziepak, Bonnie Stout

One juvenile in transition to formative plumage was reported at Whitefish Point and subsequently at the Whitefish Bay Harbor of Refuge, Chippewa Co., on 5 November 1991 (5th state record, 2nd county record). This documentation was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1993), and was here re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction. One member was at first concerned with the description of an obvious carpal bar and dark gray wings as suggestive of Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*), but later rescinded this concern. In the end all members felt that the description matched only a hatching-year Arctic. Perhaps most compellingly, the secondaries were described as being white and paler than the rest of the wing after being observed at a distance of only “five feet.”

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Brad Murphy

One dark morph juvenile was observed at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 14 October 2006 (25th state record, 13th county record). The combination of black-and-white barred uppertail coverts and a dark nape lacking a pale collar are distinctive for this species (Olsen and Larsson 1997).

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)

Vote: 6-1

Description: Curt Powell

One adult was reported at Fairlane Estate, Wayne Co., on 7 May 1995 (14th state record, 1st county record). This documentation was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Reinoehl 1997a), and was here re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction. The description of the central rectrices as projecting farther beyond the outer rectrices than the outer rectrices projected beyond the body was especially compelling.

Ancient Murrelet (*Sythliboramphus antiquus*)

Vote: 5-2, in the second round

Description: Tom Auer

One was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 3 November 2006 (7th state

record, 6th county record). Two members shared a common concern with this report. Namely, that the description never clearly nailed this report down to an alcid. These two members, however, agreed that had it done so, the description of plumage and soft parts coloration would have been diagnostic of Ancient Murrelet. The remainder of the committee, however, felt that even though body size and shape, bill size and shape, and neck length were never clearly enumerated, the description (gray upperparts and wings, black crown, white belly, short tail, white collar extending up to nape, breast and underwing white) could only fit the species claimed.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Adam M. Byrne, Philip C. Chu, Caleb G. Putnam
Photographs: Jon Dunn, Robert Epstein, Lyle Hamilton, Mark Hubinger, Scott Jennex, Caleb G. Putnam

One individual was observed at Tawas Point State Park, Iosco Co., on 17 May 2007 (114th state record, 1st county record).



Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*)

Vote: 7-0

Audio recording: Marvin Budd

One individual was heard in Berrien Twp., Berrien Co., on 2 May-7 July 2007 (6th state record, 3rd county record), the third consecutive season in which one was present at this location.

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Laurence C. Binford

Photographs: Fred Reese

One, an adult male, was observed 2.5 miles west of Eagle River, Keweenaw Co., on 16 May 2007 (18th state record, 1st county record).

Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus/sasin*)

Vote: 6-1

Descriptions: Adam M. Byrne, Thomas A. Hendrickson

One, believed to be an adult female, was reported at Holland, Ottawa Co., on 31 December 1997-11 January 1998 (3rd state record, 1st county record). This documentation was most recently accepted with a 5-2 vote (Reinoehl 1999), and was here re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction. One member expressed concerns that Broad-tailed Hummingbird could not be

ruled out, but the remainder of the committee was comfortable with the documentation provided.

American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Louis Dombroski, Skye Haas, Joe Kaplan

One individual, a male, was observed at Manitou Island, Keweenaw Co., on 1 October 2006 (21st state record, 4th county record).

American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*)

Vote: 7-0, for two individuals (females), in the first round, and 6-1, for a third individual (male), in the second round

Descriptions: Tom Auer, Zach Gayk, Joe Youngman

Photographs: Tom Auer, David Pavlik, Caleb G. Putnam, Joe Youngman

Three individuals were observed in a large burn near Keystone Bay, Keweenaw Co., on 23 November-21 December 2006 (22nd state record, 5th county record). Initial contention over the third individual, a male, centered on the lack of independent description of this individual other than to say it looked like the females but had a yellow crown. In the end, most members agreed that since the bird was seen in the vicinity of the accepted females in a short time frame, it was fully acceptable.

American Three-toed Woodpecker
(*Picooides dorsalis*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Scott Hickman

Photographs: Scott Hickman, Jude Holloway

One individual was observed along FR 2579, about 8 miles southwest of Munising, Alger Co., on 28 December 2006 (23rd state record, 2nd county record).

American Three-toed Woodpecker
(*Picooides dorsalis*)

Vote: 6-1

Photographs: Ryne Rutherford

One individual, a male, was observed at Harlow Lake Pathway north of Marquette, Marquette Co., on 20 February-12 March 2007 (25th state record, 2nd county record).

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Bonnie Stout

One individual was observed at Petoskey, Emmet Co., on 11 May 1991 (5th state record, 1st county record). This record was originally accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1992), but was re-evaluated using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction.

Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Philip C. Chu, Caleb G. Putnam

Photographs: Tom Auer, Adam M. Byrne, Robert Epstein, Scott Jennex, Brad Murphy, Caleb G. Putnam

One individual, an immature male, was at Big Bay, Marquette Co. on 11 October-1 December 2006 (3rd state record, 1st county record).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*)

Vote: 7-0

Photographs: Skye Haas, Max Henschell

One individual was observed near the mouth of the Tahquamenon River, Chippewa Co., on 7-8 May 2007 (29th state record, 13th county record).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*)

Vote: 7-0

Photographs: Joey Kellner

One individual was observed at Tawas Point State Park, Iosco Co., on 25 May 2007 (30th state record, 1st county record).

Black-billed Magpie (*Pica hudsonia*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Zach Gayk, Joe Kaplan

Photographs (of footprints only): Joe Kaplan

One individual was observed near Lac La Belle, Keweenaw Co., on 30 December 2006-10 January 2007 (8th state



record, 2nd county record), spending much of its time scavenging a remote, roadside deer carcass.

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Allen T. Chartier, Philip C. Chu, Caleb G. Putnam

Photographs: Bruce Bowman, Adam M. Byrne, Allen T. Chartier, Tom Dennis, Robert Epstein, Scott Jennex, Jerry McHale, Caleb G. Putnam

One individual, a female, was observed in Clyde Twp., St. Clair Co., on 31 March-4 April 2007 (4th state record, 1st county record).

Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Caleb G. Putnam
Photographs: Robert Epstein, Caleb G. Putnam, Jeffrey R. Schultz
Specimen: Tim Baerwald (UMMZ 240891)

One individual, probably a second calendar year female, was observed at Grand Rapids, Kent Co., on 17-20 January 2007, and subsequently found deceased on 21 January (6th state record, 1st county record).

Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*)

Vote: 7-0

Photographs: Andreas Kanon, Larry Sheldon

One individual, a male, was observed at Ann Arbor, Washtenaw Co., on 24 April 2007 (7th state record, 2nd county record).

“Yellow” Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea*)

Vote: 6-1

Description: Allen T. Chartier
Photographs: Allen T. Chartier

One individual, a second calendar year male, was captured, banded, and released at Metro Beach Metropark, Macomb Co., on 13 May 2007 (4th state record, 1st county record). While most of the committee felt the bird appeared to be of the subspecies claimed, one member expressed concern that the lack of completely yellow underparts and the thinner than average chestnut streaking in the flanks could plausibly be the result not of age (the bird was a second calendar year), but of intergradation with Western Palm Warbler (*D. p. palmarum*). The criteria for separating second calendar year male *hypochrysea* from *intergrades* are far less clear than those for adult males.

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludovicianus*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Scott Hickman
Photographs: Scott Hickman, Dave Kronk, Don Snitgen

One individual, an apparent male, was observed at

Munising, Alger Co., on 6-9 January 2007 (21st state record, 1st county record).

Green-tailed Towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Adam M. Byrne, Caleb G. Putnam, Louis F. Taccolini

Photographs: Robert Epstein, Max Henschell, Caleb G. Putnam, Keith C. Saylor

One individual was observed at a private feeder in Marquette, Marquette Co., on 13 October 2006-5 March 2007 (9th state record, 1st county record).

Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*)

Vote: 7-0

Photographs: Chris Neri

One individual, a male, was observed at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 1 June 2007 (4th state record, 4th county record).

Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: Allen T. Chartier

One individual, a male, was observed in northwestern Berlin Twp., Monroe Co., on 20 June 2007 (11th state record, 1st county record).

Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*)

Vote: 6-1

Description: Jeffrey R. Schultz

One individual, a male, was observed at Manchester, Washtenaw Co., on 25 June 2007 (12th state record, 1st county record).

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)

Vote: 5-2, in the second round

Description: Walter Booth

One individual, a male, was observed at Benton Harbor, Berrien Co., on 30 April 1966 (1st state record). This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1996), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction. In this very brief report, the observer described a "sparrow-sized bird with red unders [sic], blue head" and "green back." Though brief, the description was ultimately deemed only applicable to a male Painted Bunting by most members. At least one member, however, did remain uncomfortable with the brevity of the description (10 words).

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)

Vote: 7-0

Photographs: Mindy Walker

One individual, a male, was observed in Weesaw Twp., Berrien Co., on 19 May 2007 (18th state record, 2nd county record).

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*)

Vote: 7-0

Description: David J. Peters for Glenn Peterson



Photographs: Glenn Peterson

One individual, either first year male or adult female, was observed in Bangor Twp., Bay Co., on 3 December 2006 (5th state record, 1st county record).

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch
(*Leucosticte tephrocotis*)

Vote: 7-0

Descriptions: Lathe Clafin, Caleb G. Putnam

Photographs: Lathe Clafin, Suz Jondreau, Joe Kaplan, Caleb G. Putnam, Kirk Zufelt

Video footage: Joe Kaplan

One individual was observed at L'Anse, Baraga Co., on 17 December 2006-18 March 2007 (5th state record, 1st county record).

Eurasian Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*)

Vote: 7-0

Photographs: Robert Seasor

One individual was observed at Topaz, Ontonogon Co., on 18 April-6 May 2007 (2nd state record, 1st county record).

Records Not Accepted

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*)

Vote: 1-6

one description

One individual, an adult, was reported at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, Saginaw Co., on 26 November 2006. The

observer described a small white goose with a small, rounded head and straight border between the bill base and face. However, the observer mentions that "the distance and dim afternoon light prevented a...good, detailed view of the 'grin patch' or...any other color tinting on the bill." Most members felt that without an accurate assessment of grin patch extent and bill base coloration a hybrid Snow Goose (*C. caerulescens*) X Ross's Goose could not be eliminated.

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*)

Vote: 0-7

photographs

One individual was reported at Crispell Lake, Jackson Co., on 25 March 2007. The committee unanimously agreed that the photos did not allow for an adequate assessment of bill morphology, including the presence/absence of bluish coloration on the bill base, the extent of any grin patch on the tomium, and the extent of curvature to the interface of the bill base and the facial feathering. Thus, a hybrid Snow Goose X Ross's Goose could not be eliminated.

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*)

Vote: 2-5

one description

One individual was reported at Cassopolis, Cass Co., on 27 March 2007. The committee was split on this record, some

arguing that the description (small goose [in comparison to Canada Goose], no grin patch, straight bill base/facial feathering interface, bluish basal coloration to bill) was sufficient to eliminate even hybrid Snow Goose X Ross's Goose, while most felt that the vague size comparison was not useful and that further information on the exact structure of the bill, culmen shape, and the shape of the forehead was necessary to eliminate a hybrid.

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*)

Vote: 1-6

one description

photographs

One individual was reported at the mouth of the Charlotte River, Chippewa Co., on 1 April 2007. Most members felt that the bill and facial morphology of this bird was suspect. Specifically, the bill base/facial feathering interface was too curved, the grin patch was too extensive, and the bill shape and proportions were too large to eliminate a hybrid Snow Goose X Ross's Goose. Most members acknowledged that there is variation among pure Ross's Geese in these characteristics, some perhaps approaching this individual. But, they felt that caution is advised until further field marks are enumerated for separating hybrids and backcrosses from pure Ross's Geese.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One drake was reported at Sutton Lake, Ann Arbor, Washtenaw Co., on 11 April 1972. The only descriptor provided was that the bird's "cinnamon head contrasted sharply with [the] heads of American [Wigeons (*A. americana*)] accompanying it." Members were unanimous in the opinion that an American Wigeon X Eurasian Wigeon could not be ruled out without a detailed description of breast and flank pattern, axillary color, and forehead and auricular coloration. Additionally, several other duck species could be described as having cinnamon heads including Cinnamon Teal (*A. cyanoptera*), Green-winged Teal (*A. crecca*), and Redhead (*Aythya americana*).

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)

Vote: 2-5, in the second round

five descriptions

one video

One drake was reported at Sebawaing Sewage Ponds, Huron Co., on 15-21 April 2006. Most members felt that a hybrid *Aythya* X Tufted Duck could not be satisfactorily ruled out. The most vital field marks for doing this include bill and back pattern. In this case, the bird's back was described in general terms as



“appeared black” or “black” (one observer did mention that the back was “clearly black” and not grayish), but no observer mentioned checking specifically for pale mottling here. Such pale mottling, a clear sign of hybridization, can be very inconspicuous, and the distance of viewing was at closest over 100 meters, making such a determination difficult. Secondly, the bill is described variously as “bluish-gray...[and] darker towards the tip,” “gray,” and lacking the ring of Ring-necked Duck. To be acceptable, a male Tufted Duck must show an extensive blackish nail (e.g. more extensive than that of either scaup), and most individuals show a pale band just proximal to the nail, similar to that of Ring-necked Duck but thinner and less crisp. Most members felt that neither of these traits were documented well enough to rule out a hybrid.

Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*)

Vote: 2-5
one description

One individual was reported at Port Huron, St. Clair Co. on 9 March-9 April 1979. For unclear reasons, the documentation was never reviewed when initially received. The field notes state that this individual was “almost identical to one sketched April...1978” but failed to provide any original

documentation for the 1979 bird, causing most members to reject.

King/Common Eider (*Somateria spectabilis/mollissima*)

Vote: 3-4
one description

One individual was reported at Port Huron, St. Clair Co. on 9 March-9 April 1979, and rejected in the first round as Common Eider (see above under “Records Not Accepted”). It is general practice to re-review rejected King or Common Eider reports as King/Common Eider, which in this case led to a second rejection for the same reasons as in the original report.

Ptarmigan sp. (*Lagopus sp.*)

Vote: 0-7
one description

This report represents a reevaluation of anecdotal historical evidence for the occurrence of Willow Ptarmigan in Michigan, as summarized in Barrows (1912). This evidence was originally rejected as Willow Ptarmigan (Chu 1992), but never reviewed as Ptarmigan sp. until now, per current MBRC practice. Members again rejected these reports based on the lack of a description and the secondhand nature of some of the purported sightings.

Ptarmigan sp. (*Lagopus* sp.)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One individual was reported at Big Powderhorn Ski Mountain, Gogebic Co., on 3 October 1994. Initially reviewed and rejected as Willow Ptarmigan (Reinoehl 1997a) this report was, until now, never given consideration as Ptarmigan sp. per current MBRC practice. Members were unanimously troubled by the lack of description of the bird, which was limited to "grouse-sized" and "brown with white side wings." Most members felt that this description was insufficient to rule out either Sharp-tailed Grouse or Ruffed Grouse, and one member felt it was insufficient to establish the bird as a Galliform. One final line of argument was that by this time of year a Ptarmigan should be largely or entirely white, not brown.

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*)

Vote: 2-5

one description

One individual in alternate plumage was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 5 May 1998. Originally accepted as a Pacific/Arctic Loon (Reinoehl 2000), this report was never considered as Pacific Loon. Most members felt that the observer's inability to judge how far the white of the vent extended up onto the rear flanks precluded the possibility of ruling

out Arctic Loon (*G. arctica*). This record remains accepted as Pacific/Arctic Loon.

Arctic/Pacific Loon (*Gavia arctica/pacifica*)Vote: 0-7, in the second round
one description

One individual, apparently a basic adult (unmarked fuscous upperparts), was reported at Hebard Park, Keweenaw Co., on 8 October 2006. Most members felt that Red-throated Loon was not adequately ruled out by the details provided. Some juvenile Red-throated Loons show a darker back, nape, and crown than is typical, and are easily mistaken for Arctic/Pacific Loons. Such an individual would fit the description very well: unmarked upperparts, dark crown encircling the eye, straight border of black and white on side of neck (lacking the jagged incursion of Common Loon [*G. immer*]), and "broad" white line [on flanks] at waterline. A final problem for some members was that the bird was observed from a distance of "several hundred yards" but no mention of optics was made. If the observer made the observation only with binoculars, the judgment of several of these characters would be extremely difficult, especially the presence/absence of pale spotting on the back.



Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One individual was reported at Wampler's Lake, on the Jackson/Lenawee Co. line, on 5 July 1943 (Findley 1945). Initially accepted as Western/Clark's Grebe (Chu 1996), this record was never given consideration as Western Grebe, as claimed by the observer. The record here received such consideration, but was rejected over the lack of description of face pattern and the resulting inability to rule out Clark's Grebe. The record remains accepted, however, as Western/Clark's Grebe.

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Vote: 3-4

two descriptions

one sketch

photographs and video

One individual was reported at Torch Lake, Houghton Co., on 7-11 November 2006. Although most members agreed this bird was in the *Aechmophorus* camp, the lack of sufficient description of both bill and loreal pattern troubled many members, who felt that Clark's Grebe could not be ruled out. This record was re-evaluated as Western/Clark's Grebe and accepted (see above under "Records Accepted").

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One individual was reported at Washington Harbor, Isle Royale National Park, Keweenaw Co., on 15 June 1976. The observer described seeing a large bird in flight with dark on top, white underneath, and a light bill. Members unanimously agreed that this description was insufficient to rule out several waterbird species including Common Loon, Horned Grebe, and Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*). The committee was also troubled that the description was provided from memory over 30 years after the sighting.

Western/Clark's Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis/clarkii*)

Vote: 0-7

two descriptions

One individual was reported at Keweenaw Bay, L'Anse, Baraga Co., on 18 November 2006. This report recounts the discovery of a distant "long-bodied, long-necked, white-fronted" grebe, while the observers were watching a known Western Grebe (see above under "Records Accepted"). However, the lack of further description of the bird prevented the elimination of several other waterbirds.

Western/Clark's Grebe**(*Aechmophorus occidentalis/clarkii*)**

Vote: 2-5, in the second round
one description

One individual was reported at the D.E. Karn/J.C. Weadock Generating Complex, Bay Co., on 6 February 1996. This report was initially rejected as Western Grebe then accepted as Western/Clark's Grebe with a 5-1-1 vote (A. Byrne, pers. comm.). As described in the introduction, this record was re-evaluated to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observer reported a long-necked bird with black head, back of neck, and body contrasting with "white on front of neck and sides," a cobra-like appearance, a "thin long yellowish bill," and rear (not forward) "white wing stripes" in flight. Most members were concerned about the distance of the observation (800 yds) with only binoculars, but one member pointed out that the bird was actually viewed "close to shore" for the latter part of the observation. Still, several members were concerned that Red-necked Grebe or even Horned Grebe could not be conclusively ruled out without more detail.

Western/Clark's Grebe**(*Aechmophorus occidentalis/clarkii*)**

Vote: 0-7
one description

One individual was reported at Washington Harbor, Isle Royale National Park, Keweenaw Co., on 15 June 1976. This report was initially rejected as Western Grebe (see above under "Records Not Accepted"), and here given reconsideration as Western/Clark's Grebe. As noted in the above decision, members were unanimous in the opinion that several waterbird species could not be ruled out by the brief details provided, including Common Loon, Horned Grebe, and Double-crested Cormorant, among others.

Western/Clark's Grebe**(*Aechmophorus occidentalis/clarkii*)**

Vote: 1-6, in the second round
one description

One individual was reported at Lake Belair, Hillsdale Co., on 12-13 November 1995. This record was initially accepted as Western Grebe (Reinoehl 1997b), then re-evaluated and rejected as Western Grebe (Putnam 2007), and was here given consideration as Western/Clark's Grebe. The observer described a large waterbird with "black or dark gray" back, white front of neck with sharp line of separation from dark back of neck, dark upper half of face encompassing the eye, white lower half of face, and no notes on bill morphology. Members were nearly unanimously convinced that this description failed to rule out Pacific Loon or Common Loon.

**Sulid sp. (*Morus/Sula* sp.)**

Vote: 2-5, in the second round
one description

One individual was reported at Oak Beach, Huron Co., on 24 October 1992. Initially rejected as Northern Gannet (Chu 1995), this record was never given consideration as Sulid sp., now common practice of the committee. Although most members agreed that the overall description of shape was suggestive of a Sulid, they also felt that the plumage described did not match any known Sulid. Specifically, no known Sulid plumage combines a mottled black-and-white outer wing (primaries and primary coverts), a black inner wing (secondaries and secondary coverts), and a white tail. The closest match, a subadult Northern Gannet, would always show a black or partially black tail if it had a mottled inner wing.

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)

Vote: 0-7
one description

One individual was reported at Oscoda, Iosco Co., on 10 May 2007. The bird, seen in flight with Double-crested Cormorants, was described as “an immature...[with a] very dark neck, very dark breast [and looking] heavier” than nearby Double-crested Cormorants. Members unanimously felt that reliance on

size was problematic, in that some Double-crested appear larger (or smaller) than others. Most also were of the opinion that a dark neck and dark breast were incorrect field marks for an immature Great Cormorant.

Frigatebird sp. (*Fregata* sp.)

Vote: 0-7, in the second round
one description

One individual was reported offshore of Weko Beach, Bridgman, Berrien Co., on 30 September 1988. This report was initially accepted as Frigatebird sp. (Chu 1991), then re-evaluated and again accepted as such with a 5-2 vote (Reinoehl 1998). As described in the introduction, this record was again reconsidered here to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The bird is described as large (twice the size of a gull) and black, with a long, hooked bill, a swallow-like tail, and white head. It was also described as swooping above a fishing boat to pick up food remnants. Most members were in agreement that the description was very suggestive of Frigatebird sp., but all were troubled by the fact that the entire description is a second-hand narrative of a phone conversation with the observer, not a first hand description.

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One individual was reported at Middleville, Barry Co., on 9 August 2007. The bird was described as white with brown shading on the neck, "almost as large as a [Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)]," with black legs and greenish yellow feet. The observer states that Snowy Egret was ruled out because Snowy Egret is smaller than the bird in question. The committee unanimously argued that body size is incorrect for the species claimed. It should be nearly identical to that of Snowy Egret, and much smaller than Great Blue Heron. Additionally, in order to rule out Snowy Egret it is necessary to establish clearly the morphology of the loreal skin and bill, and nape plumes. None of these marks are enumerated in the report.

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)Vote: 2-5, for one individual
one description

Four individuals were reported at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co., on 13 July 1991. These four individuals were initially accepted as Glossy Ibises (Chu 1992), but were here re-reviewed due to a request for reconsideration submitted by the observer. The request explained that the facial skin coloration

described for the fourth individual was inconsistent with the species claimed, and the request was approved by a majority vote of the full committee. Three individuals remain accepted (see above under "Records Accepted"), but the fourth individual was rejected. The observer describes three ibises with "dark grayish facial skin with narrow bluish-white borders," and a fourth ibis with "paler, grayish-flesh facial skin without light borders." The majority of the committee concurred with the observer in the conclusion that the fourth individual was not identifiable to species.

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)Vote: 0-7, for one individual
one description

Eleven individuals were reported at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co., on 20 May-22 July 2007. Ten individuals were accepted (see above under "Records Accepted"), but the eleventh individual, which was claimed by only one of the six observers, was never described.

White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One individual was reported at Oscoda, Iosco Co., on 22 May 2007. The observer described a white bird with "black thumbprints" on the underwing at the wrist, and a hooked bill and



dark eyes. It also “tried to hover over the open area...” Members argued that the description was inconsistent with the species claimed. In particular, White-tailed Kites are not fully white below; in addition to the black wrist spot, the primaries should also have considerable dark coloration. Further, the eyes of White-tailed Kite are pale, not dark. Finally, members were concerned about why, at a distance of only 90 feet, the dark coloration in the upperwing was not observed. At least one member felt that a subadult gull sp. was consistent with the description.

Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*)

Vote: 1-6, in the second round one description

One individual was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 25 April 1985. This report was discussed and accepted using unconventional voting practices at the Fall 1989 meeting, and thus re-reviewed here to bring the voting standard for this record up to par with the current MBRC bylaws. Many of the field marks mentioned were considered suggestive of Ferruginous Hawk, though several members argued that pale-morph Red-tailed Hawks (*B. jamaicensis*), such as Krider’s (*B. j. krideri*), could also match the description of this apparent pale morph juvenile.

These included a lack of a patagial mark, a uniformly light-gray tail, and white panels on the upper surface of the primaries, in addition to other field marks. In the end, nearly all committee members were troubled by a further descriptive inconsistency: namely, that the dark wrist crescent was first noted as present (“crescent mark at wrists”) and then subsequently revoked (“no...black wrist crescent”), leaving open the possibility that this individual did not have wrist crescents at all. Any such bird would be inconsistent with the species claimed, excepting a leucistic/albinistic individual, which can be ruled out by the darkly-patterned crown, upperparts, and underwing.

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)

Vote: 2-5 one description

One individual was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 3 May 1982. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1995), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The single description was co-written by two observers, each of whom described a large falcon with “black axillaries,” “darkish crown,” “faint moustachial streak,”

and “tawny color.” Most members agreed that the description was consistent with the species claimed, however there were two overriding concerns. First was the claim that “neither one of us would have written this description without the other’s independent sighting.” This led some members to question whether either sighting was strong enough to ratify the identification. Second was the brevity of the sighting at just 15 seconds.

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One individual was reported at Oscoda, Iosco Co., on 22 May 2007. The bird was described as “falcon-like,” very pale with “spects” [sic] throughout the body, and as possessing “black, upside down Vs on the underside of the wings.” Most members felt that this description did not clearly place the bird in the genus *Falco* (falcons), leading at least one member to suggest a Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) or even a subadult gull was a good match for the description. Also troubling was that Prairie Falcons do not have Vs on the underside of the wings; rather, they have roughly triangular dark patches on the axillaries and greater under secondary coverts and under primary coverts. Finally, there was no description of face pattern, upperpart coloration, or

body size, important prerequisites to proper identification of this species.

Baird’s Sandpiper (*Calidris bairdii*)

Vote: 3-4

one description

One was reported at the Erie Marsh, Monroe Co., on 20 May 1993. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1995), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The committee was divided on this record, with several members arguing that the description, although not complete, was conclusive. Rejecting members, however, were not comfortable with the extent of the description. Particularly lacking, they argued, were descriptions of wing projection, rump color, leg color, and upperpart detail.

Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*)

Vote: 2-5, in the second round
one description

One, a presumed basic adult, was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 20 September 2006. At issue was whether the description sufficiently ruled out a Red-necked Phalarope. The observer described a bird “one third the size of a Ring-billed Gull,”



with clean white underwing, gray mantle, dark eye patch, and a bold white wing stripe. The distance of the observation was given as approximately 75 yards, and it was not specified whether the bird ever landed during the observation. Most members were troubled by the distance estimate, given that the waterbird shack (the point of observation) is currently about 200 yards from the tip of the point. At this distance, and if the bird was only seen in flight, one's ability to confidently assess the features included in this report (especially the presence/absence of streaking/mottling in the mantle and the presence/absence of a very small dark patch on the underside of the wrist) becomes much lower. Other members were troubled by the description of size as being too large for the species claimed.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)

Vote: 3-4, for four individuals 2-5 for a fifth individual, in the second round
one description

Five individuals were reported at Arcadia, Manistee Co., on 25 February 1996. This documentation was initially accepted with a 5-1-1 vote (Reinoehl 1997b), and was here re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to

bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observer described five Ring-billed Gull-sized gulls with light gray upperwing and mantle and black wingtips lacking windows or borders, white underwings (except tips), and "at least one individual [with] a spot behind the eye." The tails were described as "triangular," and the bills of all five birds as slender, completely yellow, and lacking dark markings. Members had numerous concerns with this report, the most significant of which are as follows. First, the observer speaks in the singular while describing the birds, making it unclear as to which field marks refer to which individuals. Second, most members could not reconcile how the observer could see an auricular spot on at least one bird, but not report an obviously paler area on the upper surface of the inner primaries of at least one individual. Finally, some members felt it was not possible to rule out second winter Ring-billed or even Mew Gulls (*L. canus*), the former of which is much more likely to occur in this abundance in Michigan than is Black-legged Kittiwake.

Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*)

Vote: 3-4
one description

One individual was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 23 September

1997. This documentation was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Reinoehl 1999), and was here re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observer reported a one-mile distant gull with a white triangle on the upperwing contrasting with a dark forewing and extending nearly to the leading edge of the wing in a point at the wrist. Most members were troubled that neither mantle color, hand-wing color, or the presence or absence of a nuchal collar were noted, opening the door for a first cycle Black-legged Kittiwake.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*)

Vote: 3-4

one description

One basic-plumaged adult was reported at Lake Lansing, Ingham Co., on 23 November 1997. Due to a vote tallying error, this record was incorrectly rejected (Reinoehl 1999 & A. Byrne, pers. comm.), and is here re-evaluated. The observer reported a gull intermediate in size between Herring and Ring-billed Gulls and with a darker mantle than either of those species. The bird also had a dark eye and hooded appearance. Although some members were satisfied with the documentation, most were troubled by the lack

of description of leg color, which opened the door to Lesser Black-backed Gull X Herring Gull or even a variant dark-backed, dark-eyed Herring Gull.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One adult or subadult was reported at Oscoda, Iosco Co., on 26-27 April 2007. The observer described a gull with black eyes, grayish-green legs, black and red spots on the mandible, and mantle which seemed "just a little darker than the other [Ring-billed] Gulls." Members unanimously opined that although suggestive, the report did not rule out Herring Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, or Herring X Lesser Black-backed Gull. Variant adult Herring Gulls are often found with darker than normal mantles (the appearance of which can also be duplicated by changing the angle of viewing), dark eyes, and even yellowish legs. Confounding any analysis of identification was the fact that the bird was also never clearly aged. Finally, there was no description of several other germane field marks including body size, wingtip pattern (including the amount of black on p8), bill shape, and coloration of head and nape.



Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)

Vote: 3-4
one description

One first cycle individual was reported at Bay City, Bay Co., on 11 December 1996. This documentation was initially accepted with a 5-1-1 vote (Reinoehl 1997b), and was here re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. There were three main concerns with this record. First, the description stated that the bird was within the range of variation of body size of nearby Herring Gulls. If the bird was on the larger end of that spectrum, it would be too large for the species claimed. Second, the lack of a description of dark greater secondary coverts was disconcerting, a feature shown by all first cycle individuals. Finally, the head was described as lacking any well-defined pattern; this age class should show a well-demarcated dark patch around the eye.

Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*)

Vote: 0-7
one description

One adult was reported at Reed's Lake, East Grand Rapids, Kent Co., on 13 May 2006. The observer described a tern similar in overall appearance to Common

Tern and Forster's Tern, but with a long, all-black bill and "flat head." All members felt that although this was suggestive of the species claimed, it was far from conclusive. Lacking were descriptions of any of the following key field marks: 1) the color of the underparts, 2) the pattern of the primaries, both above and below, 3) the color of the inner and outer webs of the outer rectrices, and 4) tail projection beyond primaries at rest.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)

Vote: 3-4
one description

One adult in alternate plumage was reported at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe Co., on 5 July 1982. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1991), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. At least two members were satisfied that the observer's mention of 1) the dark of the primary tips being confined to the "primary tips," 2) the blood red bill without a dark tip, 3) the paler uppersurface of the primaries (compared to adjacent Common Terns), and 4) the gray on the underparts extending higher onto the breast (also compared to adjacent Common Terns), was sufficient to rule out Common Tern.

Other members, however, felt that each of these characters can be shown by some Common Terns, and the description of primary tips was too vague to be of help. Lastly, at least four members were troubled by the lack of any description of the translucency of the remiges, a key feature in the separation of these two very similar species.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)

Vote: 1-6, in the second round
one description

One adult in alternate plumage was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 16 May 1995. This record was initially accepted with a 5-1-1 vote (Reinoehl 1997a), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observer described most of the requisite field marks for identifying an Arctic Tern, but failed to note the translucence of the remiges, arguably the most diagnostic mark for eliminating Common Tern. Many members were also troubled by the claim that even at long distance ("200-300 yards at closest approach") the observer was able to assess that 7-8 outer primaries were tipped in black (rather than 5-6, as in Common Tern) but unable to see at least some black in the outer tail feathers (the observer mentioned an "all-white" tail).

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One juvenile or subadult was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 7 September 1989. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1992), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. Members were primarily troubled with two aspects of this report. First, the rectrices, although described as appearing "round-tipped at closest approach," were not conclusively seen. Indeed, accurately assessing this vital character at 40 yards in flight was viewed by at least one member as extremely prone to error, especially in side profile. Secondly, the observer described and sketched a large white patch on the uppersurface of the outer primaries. Although the observer seems to imply this was a byproduct of the white rachises of p5-p10, several members were concerned that such a patch may actually have represented the bases of those same primary feathers, in which case the bird could only be a Parasitic Jaeger (*S. parasiticus*).

**Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)**

Vote: 1-6
one description

One individual, a purported juvenile, was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 28 September 1989. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1992), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. This brief report described a large jaeger, "not...noticeably different in size" from a nearby Herring Gull it was attacking. Other details provided include: 1) double white underwing flash (primary bases and underprimary coverts) and 2) tail dark with "short, evenly-rounded tail streamers." Many members were concerned with the description of size as too large for the species claimed. They were also troubled that it was not specified whether size referred to length or mass. If the former, even the largest Pomarine Jaegers are significantly shorter-winged than the smallest Herring Gulls (Olsen and Larsson 1997, Olsen and Larsson 2003), while the larger skuas such as South Polar or Great are a closer match. If the latter, both Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers can overlap Herring Gulls in mass (Olsen and Larsson 1997, Olsen

and Larsson 2003), rendering the point moot. Other troubling aspects of this report include the lack of a description of the length of the central rectrix projection, and the reliance on the "double wing flash" on the underside of the hand wing (now known to be shared by some Parasitic Jaegers [Olsen and Larsson 1997]).

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Vote: 1-6
one description

One individual, believed to be an adult, was reported at Port Huron, St. Clair Co., on 12 November 2006. The observer described an either dark or intermediate morph jaeger still retaining "long, twisted center tail feathers," with no further description. Committee members shared two concerns with this succinct report. The first was the lack of sufficient description of the tail feathers, which, it was argued, could have been twisted feathers on a Parasitic or Long-tailed Jaeger, or potentially debris stuck to the tail of a gull. The admitted poor viewing conditions limited the observer to not being able to assess whether the bird was intermediate or dark morph, and may well have played a part in the vague description of this trait as well (e.g. were the feathers broad or narrow?, how long were they in

relation to the bird?). The second concern, voiced by at least two members, was the lack of clarity as to how the observer verified that the bird was in Michigan waters. If the observer was standing at Point Edward, Ontario, this judgment is simple, but if at Port Huron it is much more difficult.

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Vote: 3-4, for two individuals
two descriptions

Two individuals, thought to be juveniles, were reported at Port Huron, St. Clair Co., on 9 October 1993. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1996), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. Although some members were convinced by the documentation provided, most were not. The primary identifying features put forth involved subjective judgments of proportions and “jizz,” including body size (in comparison to Ring-billed Gull and other jaegers), bulkiness, breadth of wings, and flight style. Most members felt that Parasitic Jaeger could not be ruled out without the corroboration of additional features such as central rectrix shape and nape and uppertail/rump pattern. One member felt that the description

of pale bases to the primaries was a better fit for Parasitic than Pomarine.

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Vote: 3-4

two descriptions

One individual, though to be juvenile or second calendar year, was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 29 August 1994. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1996), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observers described a large, barrel-chested jaeger with slow wingbeats, uniformly chocolate overall with obvious white wing patch at base of under primaries. There was no mention of central rectrix shape, and no conclusive ageing of the bird. Most members were troubled by the overreliance on gestalt, stating that Parasitic Jaeger cannot be conclusively ruled out without additional corroboration in the form of plumage detail, central rectrix shape, and other characteristics.



Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Vote: 1-6
one description

One individual, an adult in alternate plumage, was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 4 September 1995. This record was initially accepted with a 5-1-1 vote (Reinoehl 1997b), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. Most members were troubled by the over-reliance on jizz and other subjective characters (barrel-chested, massive, large jaeger, slow wingbeats, steady flight, etc.). The only other field marks given were 1) large white patches on underside of wing, 2) small white patch on upperside of wing, 3) flanks dark with mottled edge, and 4) breast band wide with mottled edge. Most members were unconvinced that Parasitic Jaeger could be ruled out without more information, as jizz and flight style are best considered suggestive but never diagnostic.

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Vote: 3-4
one description

One individual, thought to be juvenile, was reported at St. Joseph, Berrien Co., on 26 August 1996. This record was

initially accepted with a 5-1-1 vote (Reinoehl 1997b), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observer described a brown, Herring Gull-sized jaeger with double white flash on the underprimaries, straight, as opposed to wavy, barring on the undertail coverts, pale nape, pale barred rump, and large pale bill on a dark face. Most members felt that this did not rule out Parasitic Jaeger, which can show all of the field marks mentioned except being as large a Herring Gull, a feature also incorrect for Pomarine Jaeger, which is usually the size of a Ring-billed Gull (Olsen and Larsson 1997).

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Vote: 1-6, in the second round
one description

One individual, thought to be an intermediate juvenile, was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 2-4 October 2006. Most members felt that nothing in the report ruled out Parasitic Jaeger. The age of the bird was never demonstrated conclusively, despite the observer's claim that it was a juvenile; most members felt that the bird could have been a subadult. The observer purported to use

“rounded central rectrices,” underwing barring, pale head and nape, heavy barring on the undertail coverts, a bicolored bill, and pale primary coverts to eliminate Parasitic. At least one member felt that the sketch of the central rectrix shape was a better match for Parasitic Jaeger (i.e. too long, and not rounded enough), and most agreed that the remaining plumage characteristics could be matched by Parasitic Jaeger.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)

Vote: 1-6, in the second round one description

One individual, believed to be a juvenile, was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 18 September 1989. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1992), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. Most members judged the plumage characters mentioned to be consistent with the species claimed, but not unique to this species. No other features given were sufficient to rule out the other two jaeger species. The central rectrices were described as “appearing to be at least an inch long” and “rounded at the ends.” This is appropriate for a juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger, but

not, however, inconsistent with a subadult Pomarine Jaeger, which also shares the mottled underwings, and can share all of the other field marks mentioned. Body size, a potentially clarifying factor, was not deemed sufficient to rule out this possibility. Indeed, the bird was reported to be “the size of a Ring-billed Gull in direct comparison,” a description more appropriate for Pomarine Jaeger. This latter species overlaps widely with the former in both wingspan and mass, while Long-tailed is noticeably smaller in both measurements. The largest non-adult Long-tailed Jaegers fall short of the smallest juvenile female Ring-billed Gulls in wingspan, and overlap somewhat in mass at the extremes of variation (Olsen and Larsson 1997, Olsen and Larsson 2003).

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)

Vote: 2-5, in the second round one description

One individual, an adult, was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 5 June 1990. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1992), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observer described a light morph jaeger lacking a breast

band, with no noticeable white on the upper or under surfaces of the hand wing, a grayish-brown back, rectrices extending “as [a] point well beyond body,” and traces of “lemon-yellow” on the face and throat, among other field marks. The observer also mentions looking for, but not discerning, a contrast between the remiges (which should be darker) and the remainder of the upperwing and back (which should be paler). Initially, several members were comfortable with this description, while others felt it didn’t rule out Parasitic Jaeger. However, in the end, most members were troubled by the inability of the observer to see contrast between the remiges and the forward portions of the arm wing and mantle/scapulars, something which is easily apparent on all adult Long-tailed Jaegers. It was argued that if poor viewing conditions were responsible for this discrepancy, then the lemon-yellow wash on the face and throat should also not have been visible.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)

Vote: 3-4, in the second round
two descriptions

One individual, an adult, was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 8 September 1991. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1992), and was re-reviewed

using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. This individual was described as having grayish-brown upperparts, white underparts without a breast band, no white patches on underwings, and tail streamers projecting either 6 inches (first observer) or 8-10 inches (second observer). Although several members felt that the documentation supported the identification, others were concerned that none of these features fully ruled out Parasitic Jaeger. The tail lengths offered were considered by many as much less objective than judgments of proportions (e.g. “streamer projection beyond tail longer than the length of tail”). Additionally troubling was that neither observer reported a contrast between the darker remiges/hand wing and the rest of the upperwing/mantle on a bird seen very well. This field mark should have been easily visible on an adult.

Jaeger sp. (*Stercorarius* sp.)

Vote: 2-5
one description

One individual, an adult or subadult, was reported at Good Harbor Bay, Leelanau Co., on 2 August 1995. This record was initially accepted with a 5-0-2 vote (Reinoehl 1997b), and was re-reviewed using the current standard

of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. This report consisted of a rough sketch with brief sideliners notes documenting a dark-capped, Herring Gull-sized bird with white face and nape, “streaky” appearance to breast, beak shorter than Herring Gulls, and white underwings. Members were primarily troubled by the purported white underwings, which is incorrect for any subadult or adult jaeger, as is streaking on the breast. Most members considered it much more likely that this represented a ratty, disheveled subadult gull, as most are in early August. The description of size is incorrect for even Pomarine Jaeger, suggesting Herring Gull as one possibility.

Alcid sp.

Vote: 3-4

one description

One individual, initially rejected as Marbled Murrelet (Chu 1992), was here given reconsideration as Alcid sp. per current MBRC practice. The record was again rejected, primarily because the brevity of the description (robin-sized bird, black above, white below, with white “racing stripes” on the scapulars, flying very fast just above the water) was deemed insufficient to rule out other waterbirds or even passerines by several members.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One individual was reported at Green Lake, Grand Traverse Co., on 3 August 1990. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1995), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. This report described a light-colored owl without ear tufts, with a heart-shaped face and long legs. It was seen in a swampy forest over ¼ mile from any open field, at dusk, and first written down two years post-sighting. All members were unconvinced that other owl species could be eliminated without further description. In particular, juvenile Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) and Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) were considered consistent with the description.

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*)

Vote: 0-7

two descriptions
photographs

One individual, a male, was reported at Clarksville, Ionia Co., on “late May”-4 June 2007. The observers described (via a secondhand email) a hummingbird which was smaller and shorter-tailed than Ruby-



throated Hummingbird (*A. colubris*), with a larger, downcurved bill, gray on belly, gray-green on back, and violet and black on the throat. They described the extent of violet on the throat as “less than the amount of red on a [Ruby-throated Hummingbird].” Members unanimously felt that the photographs were not diagnostic, as throat color was not discernable and no other features could be corroborated due to heavy underexposure. At least one member felt that the bill length in the photos appeared to be a better match for Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Further, inconsistencies between the description and the actual appearance of the species claimed rendered the written documentation unacceptable as well; many members stated that determining gorget color in hummingbirds is very prone to error, and thus not convincing on its own. Some also argued that Black-chinned Hummingbird should not be described as smaller than Ruby-throated, but rather as similar in size. Nothing else in the report suggested Black-chinned Hummingbird.

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*)

Vote: 0-7
one description

One individual, a male, was reported at Manistique, Schoolcraft Co., on 30 May-1 June 2007. The bird was described as a “reddish brown hummingbird” with a white throat, black legs, and white rump. Although a reddish-brown hummingbird is suggestive of a male Rufous/Allen’s Hummingbird, most members were uncomfortable with the description of a white rump, a trait not shared by any North American hummingbird species. Many were also troubled by the mention of a white throat, another field mark which is inconsistent with the species claimed (should be red).

American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*)

Vote: 1-6, for two individuals
one description

Two individuals, a male and a female, were reported at Otter Lake, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Benzie Co., on 4 July 1988. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1991), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. This brief report described two Hairy Woodpecker-sized woodpeckers with white spotted upper backs, no red on the head of either, a fine white line

above and to the rear of the eye on both, and a yellow "forecrown" on the male bird only. Several members felt that some juvenile Hairy Woodpeckers can fit the description perfectly, while one member argued that a juvenile Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was also a good match. Several potentially diagnostic characters were also not assessed, including tail pattern, malar pattern, and the pattern of the primaries.

American Three-toed Woodpecker
(*Picoides dorsalis*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One individual, though to be a female, was reported at Baker Woodlot, Ingham Co., on 14 January 2007. The observer described a bird with a barred "underbelly," a black "but speckled" back, a white line extending rear and down from the beak, a white line extending rear from the eye, and a bill apparently larger than that of a Downy Woodpecker. Most members felt that the description did not rule out Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

American Three-toed Woodpecker
(*Picoides dorsalis*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One individual was reported "four miles north of Paradise," Chippewa Co., on 2

September 2003. The observer described the bird as the size of a Hairy Woodpecker but with a smaller bill and larger head. Further, the bird had a "characteristic small streak of white & black" on its back. Members unanimously felt that the description failed to rule out Hairy Woodpecker.

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)

Vote: 1-6

one description

One individual was reported at Sturgeon River, Houghton Co., on 2 May 1974 (Sloan 1975). This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1995), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observer described an Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*)-sized flycatcher with "gray throat" and "definite orange breast," among other characteristics. Members were nearly unanimously troubled by the notion of orange on the breast, a trait which is inconsistent with Say's Phoebe. Say's Phoebes have gray in the throat and breast, while orange is present on the belly and undertail coverts. An additional concern was the description of size; at least two members felt that this species should be smaller than Eastern Kingbird, not the same size.



Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)

Vote: 3-4
one description

One individual was reported at Shoreline Park, AuSable Twp., Iosco Co., on 13 May 2007. The bird was described as slimmer than Northern Shrike (*L. excubitor*), with the eye completely inside the black mask, both mandibles jet black, a black mask over front of face above mandible, and “no slight streaks on breast.” While several members felt this was sufficient to rule out Northern Shrike, other members were concerned that the description never clearly put the bird in the Shrike camp. Other reasons for rejection include the lack of description of contrasts in body color, body size relative to other nearby birds, and bill hook. One member argued that some Northern Shrikes can show black at the base of the maxilla. Most members conceded that the date and location of the sighting favored Loggerhead Shrike, they also argued that this could not be considered diagnostic.

Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)

Vote: 2-5
one description

One individual was reported in Royalton Twp., Berrien Co., on 19 May 2007. The

observer described a roughly Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)-sized bird with “deep dark blue” upperparts, a thick, black mask extending from bill to nape, long tail, “distinctive round hooked beak, similar to that of a falcon,” pale underside, and wing “bordered by a black outline.” While two members were satisfied by the description, most felt that the report was incomplete. Some argued that Northern Shrike couldn’t be ruled out without a description of whether the black masks encompassed the eyes completely and connected over the base of the culmen, whether there was any fine barring on the underparts, and whether the base of the mandible was pale. Other dissenting members were troubled by perceived inaccuracies in the description (blue upperparts instead of gray, wing bordered by black outline instead of gray above and white below, large hooked maxilla instead of barely hooked). Lastly, date was considered suggestive of, but not diagnostic for, Loggerhead Shrike.

Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*)

Vote: 1-6, for six individuals
one description

Six individuals were reported at Copper Harbor, Keweenaw Co., on 12 May 2007. The birds were described as the size of White-throated

Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*), though more slender than that species, with long dark bills, dark eye lines, cream-colored lines above the eyes, grayish backs, streaked breasts, buffy tail tips, buffy flanks, and “short tail.” The birds were described as foraging together on the rocks along the Lake Superior shore, and as uttering a “call similar to shzeeee.” Members were unanimous in the opinion that American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*) was not ruled out by the description, and that the behavioral circumstances of the sighting were indeed suggestive of this species, but not Rock Wren.

Bewick’s Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*)

Vote: 0-7

one description

One individual was reported at Grand Rapids, Kent Co., on 9 July 2007. The bird was described as the size of a sparrow, slender, and with a long tail. It was described as dull gray/brown on the upperparts, lighter on the belly, with a distinctive eyebrow and long, pointed bill. The tail pattern was not noted. The observer stated that Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) was ruled out by the “dull color” of this bird, without specifying where that dull color was located. Most members felt that a Carolina Wren could not be fully

ruled out without a more detailed description of the color of the flanks and the tail pattern.

Townsend’s Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*)

Vote: 2-5

one description

One individual was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 4 November 1996. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (incorrectly listed as 7-0 by Reinoehl 1998, [A. Byrne, pers. comm.]), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. This brief report described a gray bird “slightly smaller than a [American] Robin,” with white edges on the tail and a white eye ring, and lacking white patches on the wing. Most members were troubled by the lack of mention of the buffy wing stripe, given that the observer was able to deduce that there was no white present on the wing. Some felt that Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) was not fully ruled out, and others even felt that Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila caerulea*) and even female Mountain Bluebird were not inconsistent with the short description.

**Townsend's Warbler (*Dendroica townsendi*)**

Vote: 1-6, in the second round
two descriptions

One individual was reported at Hancock, Houghton Co., on 7 November 2006. The observers described a warbler with a dark cap, a dark and well-defined auricular bordered above and below with yellow, a dark green back, "a pattern of yellow on at least the upper breast yielding at some point to white below with streaking," at least some yellow in the throat, a yellow upper breast with "some pattern of streaking," diffuse streaking on the lower (whitish) flanks, two distinct white wing bars, two "totally white" outer rectrices on each side of the tail (with the possibility of a dark shaft streak on one of the two feathers), and yellow nape. This difficult record spurred much debate among committee members, with several disparate lines of argument resulting, mostly not supporting the record. The first centered around field marks which are not consistent with the species claimed: namely, a yellow nape and all-white outer rectrices. No Townsend's Warbler should show a yellow nape; further, two all-white outer rectrices is not correct for any immature or female Townsend's Warbler (which this bird had to be given the lack of obvious back streaking apparent on adult males). A second line of argument

was that Black-throated Green Warbler could not be ruled out because the color of the auricular (dark green vs. blackish) was never ascertained. A final argument was that it was impossible to rule out a Townsend's Warbler X Hermit Warbler (*D. occidentalis*) hybrid or backcross. This hybrid combination is well-known and numerous; indeed, over 60% of all males sampled in the Olympic Mountain range of Washington were found to be hybrids (Rohwer and Martin 2007). As such, this combination must be ruled out in any purported sighting of this species. Indices for separating adult, alternate-plumaged males are straightforward (Rohwer and Wood 1998), but it is not well-established exactly how these criteria step down to basic-plumaged individuals and females. One index for basic-plumaged females exists (Smith and Rohwer 2000). The most crucial field marks in separating out such hybrids appear to be the extent and intensity of yellow on the breast and flanks and the extent and thickness of the streaking in the breast and flanks (pure Townsend's Warblers having the most intense and extensive yellow on the breast and the most heavily streaked flanks). The observers mentioned their inability to be certain of these field marks, stating just that the breast was yellow with "some pattern of streaking," and that the

flanks had diffuse streaking at their lower edge. This does not allow for a proper assessment of these field marks, leaving open the possibility of a hybrid individual.

Kirtland's Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*)

Vote: 3-4, in the second round
one description

One individual was reported at University of Michigan-Dearborn, Wayne Co., on 12 May 1994. This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1996), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observer reported a Yellow-rumped Warbler (*D. coronata*)-sized warbler with gray upperparts, yellow underparts, streaking on the flanks, and a "very obvious broken white eye line." The committee was divided on this report, with several members fully convinced by the documentation. Others were concerned that Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warbler (*D. c. auduboni*) could not be ruled out due to the lack of description of rump color and bill proportions. Still others contended that the description of a broken white eye line was altogether wrong for the species claimed. Rather, they argued, this species should show a broken eye ring.

Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*)

Vote: 1-6
one description

One individual was reported at the Houghton Lake Wildlife Research Area, Missaukee Co., on 27 May 1975 (Lerg 1976). This record was initially accepted with a 5-2 vote (Chu 1996), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observer reported a dark, grosbeak-sized bird with "white wing patches." Little additional description of the bird was given, prompting some members to point out that Crested Myna (*Acridotheres cristatellus*), Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*), and even partially leucistic blackbirds were consistent with the description.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*)

Vote: 2-5, for two individuals
one description

Two individuals were reported at Pt. La Barbe, Mackinac Co., on 8 May 1995. Both were originally accepted as Sharp-tailed Sparrows (formerly *Ammodramus caudacutus*) prior to the splitting of this species into Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow and Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow (currently *Ammodramus caudacutus*). Per



the practice outlined in Putnam (2007), this record was here given consideration as Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. The committee was unanimous in the opinion that the documentation supported a bird in the Sharp-tailed Sparrow camp. However, only two members felt that the description of an orangish breast and throat, diffuse breast streaking, and that the breast streaking was "much less distinct than that of the flanks, was suggestive of Nelson's. The majority argued that Saltmarsh could not be definitively ruled out without additional description. This record remains accepted as Nelson's/Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow.

Nelson's/Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni/caudacutus*)

Vote: 2-5
one description

One individual was reported near Estral Beach, Monroe Co., on 27 April 1997. This record was rejected as Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (Reinoehl 1998) and here given reconsideration as Nelson's/Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow. The observer construes an in-flight only look at a small sparrow with "bright orangey-buff" face and upper breast. Most members agreed that this was not enough to rule out a Le Conte's Sparrow (*A. leconteii*), something which would require a description

of median crown stripe, nape, mantle, or other distinguishing field mark.

Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)

Vote: 3-4
one description

One male was reported at Sturgeon River sloughs, Houghton Co., on 20 May 1997. This record was initially accepted with a 5-1 vote (incorrectly listed as 6-1 by Reinoehl 1999), and was re-reviewed using the current standard of acceptance, as described in the introduction, to bring it into concordance with current MBRC voting standards. The observer described a bird with a prominent white shoulder patch, pattern of "black and white" on side of face, brown on top of head, wide white line through eye, buffy belly and throat extending to sides of neck, and tail with substantial white edges. The committee was split, some satisfied, but others concerned over seemingly incorrect marks for the species claimed. Namely, the top of the head of alternate male Smith's Longspurs is black, not brown, and birds in this plumage do not have a white stripe through the eye (eye line), they have one above the eye (supercilium).

Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*)

Vote: 0-7
one description

One heard-only individual was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 26 May 2007. The observer described hearing two different vocalizations from an unseen bird overhead, the first a single note much like the “tew” of Lapland Longspur, the second a reedy and musical two-noted call. The observer described first definitively matching the sounds to a recording four days after the observation, though it was noted that the two-noted vocalization did not match perfectly with any recording of the species claimed. Members were troubled by three primary things: first, the possibility that the two vocalization types came from different individuals, second, that the recording was first matched four days after the fact, and third, that even in cases where an observer is sure of what they heard it is extremely difficult to convey this information in a diagnostic manner via written word.

Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*)

Vote: 1-6

one description

One individual was reported at Lost Nation State Game Area, Hillsdale Co., on 17 May 1999. This record was falsely rejected (Reinoehl 2000) due to improper application of MBRC voting standards, and is here re-reviewed for clarification. The observer described a heard-only

observation of a “loud, lengthy, [and] warbled song,” broken into short phrases and ending with a burry quality. The observer also mentions that the song sounded precisely the same as the recording on “Stokes Field Guide to Eastern Bird Song.” Members overall were uncomfortable relying on a written description of a heard-only song, given the subjective nature of such communication, the number of similar-sounding species which may have been confused, and even the possibility of a variant song of a more common species. All agreed that even the slightest description of the bird would have strengthened the report substantially.

Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*)

Vote: 3-4

one description

One male was reported in Sharon Twp., Washtenaw Co., on 30 May 2007. The observer described a “radiant” blue passerine with two broad, “striking reddish brown [wing] bars,” a “huge and strong” bill, and with flight feathers darker than the body. Some members were satisfied with this description, while others felt that a second calendar year male Indigo Bunting could not be ruled out. The observation took place at a distance of 120 m for a duration of “5-10 seconds,” a factor which led some to argue that size would have been difficult



to judge accurately in these conditions. Further, they argued, second calendar year male Indigo Buntings can fit the remainder of the description quite well.

Varied Bunting (*Passerina versicolor*)

Vote: 1-6
one description

One male was reportedly collected at Locke, Ingham Co., on 18 May 1874 (Barrows 1912). The specimen, now lost, was identified as this species by Robert Ridgway and A.B. Covert (Barrows 1912), however, no description of the specimen appears to exist. The committee is reluctant to allow such records into the formal archive, because of the uncertainty in collection location, identification, and the unknown potential for such a bird to stem from a domestic origin.

Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

Vote: 0-7
one description

One male was reported at Oscoda, Iosco Co., on 26 May-3 June 2007. The bird was described as 18 inches in length and all “black shinny [sic]” with a hint of being more so on the head and hind neck. Further, it had yellow eyes, a flat head, a black bill longer than the head, and a tail half longer than those

of “the other grackles” standing nearby. Members were concerned by the fact that the observer didn’t specify which sex the accompanying Common Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula*) were, and by the potential for error in the observer’s method of estimating the bird’s length. Specifically, the bird was said to stand in perfect side profile between two dandelions which the observer then measured at 18 inches apart. If the bird was actually shorter than 18 inches in length and standing next to female Common Grackles, they argued, it could have been a male Common Grackle and fit the description. A final line of argument was that Boat-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus major*) could also not be ruled out.

Common Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*)

Vote: 0-7
photographs

Two or more individuals, including at least one photographed female, were reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on “early May-29 May 2006. The identification of the photographed female was well-established; a second or third individual was not documented. The documented bird’s potential origin as a naturally-occurring vagrant was questioned, given that there is as yet no strong evidence the species is prone to such wanderings

into North America. Further, there is evidence of a recent release of Eurasian fringillids, including this species, which took place in the Chicago, Illinois area in or around early 2004 (Chu 2005). This record, the committee argued, was best considered a byproduct of that release pending evidence of the natural occurrence of Common Chaffinch in the Nearctic.

Common Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*)

Vote: 0-7

two descriptions

One male was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on “early May-31 May 2007.” The identification of this individual was confirmed by the descriptions. However, its potential origin as a naturally-occurring vagrant was questioned, for the same reasons as those given for the prior Common Chaffinch record (see above under “Records Not Accepted”).

Common Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*)

Vote: 0-7

photographs

One female was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 25 July 2007. The identification of this individual was confirmed by photos. However, its potential origin as a naturally-occurring vagrant was questioned, for the same reasons as those given for the two prior Common Chaffinch record (see above under “Records Not Accepted”).

Eurasian Siskin (*Carduelis spinus*)

Vote: 0-7

photographs

One individual was reported at Whitefish Point, Chippewa Co., on 23-27 May 2006. The identification of this individual was confirmed by photos. However, its potential origin as a naturally-occurring vagrant was questioned, for the same reasons as the above Common Chaffinch records (see above under “Records Not Accepted”).

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