

REPORT OF THE GEORGIA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY CHECKLIST AND RECORDS COMMITTEE

JANUARY THROUGH DECEMBER 2006

Committee Members

Terry Moore (Chairman), Jim Flynn (Secretary), Malcolm Hodges,
Pierre Howard, Ty Ivey, and Brad Winn

Review Species Report Summary

During 2006, 27 reports of 19 species were received by the Georgia Checklist and Records Committee (GCRC) for review. Of these reports, 22 were accepted, 3 were not accepted, and 2 were deferred to a second round of review. Two new species (Cackling Goose and California Gull) were added to the official GOS Checklist, bringing the Regular List to 412 species. (Note: The Regular List includes 3 species considered to be extinct: Passenger Pigeon, Carolina Parakeet, and Bachman's Warbler). The Provisional List remains at 8 species, for a total of 420 species on the Regular Checklist.

Conventions used in this report include:

- GCRC Record Identifier: Year of the report submission (not the year of the observation) followed by a hyphen and a unique sequential identifier (e.g., 2006-08). If more than one report was submitted by different individuals for the same observation event, a letter is attached to the sequential identifier (e.g., 2006-09A, 2006-09B, etc.).
- Species Name: Follows The American Ornithologists' Union's (AOU) *Check-list of North American Birds*, Seventh Edition (AOU 1998) and incorporates changes in subsequent supplements through the *Forty-seventh Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds* (AOU 2006).
- Location of observation.
- Date of observation/date of report submission.
- Only observers authoring reports are mentioned in this summary. Other sources, such as "From the field" (published in *The Oriole*), should be consulted for proper credit of initial discovery.
- Where applicable, the Committee voting results are included with

the record in the form of “accept votes – not accept votes.” For example, a vote of 5-1 signifies 5 accept votes and 1 not accept vote.

2006-01 Broad-tailed Hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*): Private residence north of Lake Rabun, Rabun Co., 7 January 2006/10 January 2006. Rusty Trump banded this second calendar year young male and submitted a detailed report with photographs. The Committee voted to unanimously accept this record.

2006-02 Northern Saw-Whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*): Burrell’s Ford Rd., Rabun Co., 15 January 2006/18 January 2006. Ken Blankenship submitted a report that included a description of the bird’s vocalizations. The Committee accepted this record 5-1.

2006-03 Lapland Longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus*): Fite Bend Rd., Gordon Co., 12 December 2004/30 January 2006. A belated sight-only report, based on notes taken at the time of the sighting of one adult and 2 immature birds, was submitted by Bob Zaremba and accepted by the Committee 5-1.

2006-04 Harris’s Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*): Lanier Gardens Retirement Community, Athens, Clarke Co., 24 March 2005/1 February 2006. Bob Zaremba submitted a report with photographs of an adult bird that visited the patio of a resident at the complex. Unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2006-05 Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*): Private residence, Powder Springs, Cobb Co., 10 February 2006/10 February 2006. A report authored by Bob Zaremba with photographs of an adult male bird that had been visiting a suet feeder was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2006-06 Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*): Gray, Jones Co., 8 or 9 December 2005/14 February 2006. The original observer did not submit a report. Michael Beohm learned second-hand that a distressed Snowy Owl discovered on a farm near Gray had been taken to wildlife rehabilitator Annette Hilburn of Lizella. The bird was rehydrated and fed 3 mice, but succumbed 2 days after being rescued. The specimen was taken to Dr. Geoff Hill at Auburn University for preparation as a study skin. Dr. Hill provided photographs of the skin; these photographs and the information provided by Michael Beohm and Annette

Hilburn were submitted to the Committee by the GCRC Secretary and accepted 5-1. The lone dissenting vote agreed with the identification, but questioned the origin of the bird, due in part to the unknown name of the individual who originally discovered the bird.

2006-07 Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*): Private residence, Twiggs Co., 19 February 2006/21 February 2006. Earl Horn submitted a detailed report with photographs of 5 birds accompanied by Canada Geese (*B. canadensis*) discovered on a farm pond along GA 96 south of I-16. The Committee accepted the report 5-0, with Jim Flynn, present with Earl during the initial observation, abstaining. The small-bodied subspecies of Canada Goose (*B. c. hutchinsii*, *B. c. asiatica*, *B. c. leucopareia*, *B. c. taverneri*, and *B. c. minima*) were split by the AOU in 2004, but to this point none had been well-documented in Georgia. It was thought by the observer that these birds belonged to the nominate Cackling subspecies, *B. h. hutchinsii*, also known as “Richardson’s Cackling Goose.” This record, therefore, represents the first state record.

2006-08 Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*): Altamaha WMA, McIntosh Co., 4 February 2006/1 March 2006. A sight-only report of a single bird was submitted by Earl Horn and accepted by the Committee 5-0 with Jim Flynn, present with Earl during the initial observation, abstaining.

2006-09A - 2006-09B - 2006-09C - 2006-09D California Gull (*Larus californicus*): Tybee Island, Chatham Co., 19 February 2006/28 March 2006, 20 February 2006/22 March 2006, 20 February 2006/22 March 2006, and 20 February 2006/14 April 2006, respectively. A very detailed report that included sketches of a single juvenile bird discovered by Steve Barlow was accepted by the Committee 5-1. The other three reports submitted by Bill Lotz, Dan Vickers, and Jeff Sewell were also accepted 5-1. First documented state record.

2006-10 *Aechmorphus* grebe sp.: Cumberland Island, Camden Co., 4 March 2006/27 March 2006. The GCRC does not as a rule review reports of taxon at the genus level. However, the GCRC Secretary requested that the Committee review a submitted sight-only report that included a sketch in case the description was enough to allow a specific identification. The Committee, however, did not accept the record, voting 2-4.

2006-11 Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*): Jekyll Island, Glynn Co., 10 May

2006/23 May 2006. Alan Knue submitted a detailed sight-only report that included field notes and a sketch of an adult bird studied at length. The Committee unanimously accepted this record. Because of a lack of photographs, videos, or specimens, the species remains on the Provisional List.

2006-12 Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*): Little Egg Island Bar, McIntosh Co., 5 July 2005/4 July 2006. A belated sight-only description of an adult male in alternate plumage by GA DNR Shorebird Biologist Brad Winn was accepted by the Committee 5-0, with Brad Winn abstaining.

2006-13 Bicknell's Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*): Private residence, Lilburn, Gwinnett Co., 13 May 2006/20 July 2006. An interesting sight/sound report of this cryptic species was pushed to a future second round vote. The bird's presence was initially noted by the observer through vocalizations emanating from a baby monitor. The observer headed outside, discovered the suspect thrush in the backyard and proceeded to compare the song to MP3 versions of Bicknell's and Gray-cheeked Thrush (*C. minimus*) songs found on the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's web site.

2006-14 Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*): Altamaha WMA, McIntosh Co., 26 July 2006/27 July 2006. DNR State Waterfowl Biologist Greg Balkcom submitted a report with photos of 2 adults of this species that he and DNR Wildlife Biologist David Mixon banded at the Altamaha WMA. Unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2006-15 Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*): Pelagic trip, approximately 31°28'20" N, 80°09'17" W, 27 August 2006/29 September 2006. Earl Horn submitted a report with photos of a juvenile observed chasing Sooty Terns approximately 63 miles east of Sapelo Island. The Committee accepted the report 5-0 with Malcolm Hodges, who also observed this bird, abstaining.

2006-16 Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*): Pelagic trip, approximately 31°26'25" N, 80°08'23" W, 27 August 2006/28 September 2006. A report authored by Earl Horn, that included photos of an adult of this species observed approximately 68 miles east of Sapelo Island, was unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2006-17A - 2006-17B - 2006-17C Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*): Tybee Island, Chatham Co., 14 October 2006/23 October 2006, 14 October 2006/1

November 2006 and 14 October 2006/2 November 2006, respectively. Three reports with varying levels of details of a female of this species that was not photographed. Review of the first reported ended with an unresolved vote, and will be re-submitted for review by the Committee at a later date. The remaining 2 reports were not accepted due to a vote of 3-3. Dissenting Committee members felt that a female King Eider was not sufficiently eliminated.

2006-18 Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*): Flint, Mitchell Co., 29 May 2005/3 November 2006. A belated report that included photographs of 4 of this species was submitted by Earl Horn. The birds were originally identified (and photographed) by Mike Jones, who alerted Bobby Crawford to their presence. The Committee unanimously accepted the record.

2006-19 Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*): Altamaha WMA, McIntosh Co., 28 October 2006/6 November 2006. Bob Zaremba submitted a detailed report of an adult male Shiny Cowbird that included field sketches and notes by him and Deb Zaremba. The report was unanimously accepted.

2006-20 Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*): Altamaha WMA, McIntosh Co., 28 October 2006/7 November 2006. A report of an adult bird was submitted by Bob Zaremba. Although the bird was not photographed, field sketches and notes by Bob and Deb Zaremba were included. The Committee unanimously accepted the report.

2006-21 Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*): Reed Bingham State Park, Cook Co., 17 June 2006/7 November 2006. Bob Zaremba submitted a belated report that included a photograph of this species. Chet Powell, Reed Bingham State Park Ranger, originally discovered the bird in early June and led many birders through the back waters of the park to see this species. Unanimously accepted by the Committee.

2006-22 Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*): Altamaha WMA, McIntosh Co., 10 June 2006/31 December 2006. A belated report of this species by Earl Horn was unanimously accepted by the Committee due in part to photographs of multiple individuals. Up to 25 were observed by the Earl.

Changes to the Georgia Checklist

During 2006, the AOU published the *Forty-seventh Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds*. The following changes affected the nomenclature or taxonomic sequence of the official GOS Checklist:

Taxonomy

- Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, and Lesser Yellowlegs change positions in the checklist.
- Skuas and Jaegers are placed in their own Family (Stercorariidae) and moved between the Larids (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers) and the Alcids in checklist order.
- Brown Noddy, Sooty Tern, Bridled Tern, Least Tern, Gull-billed Tern, Caspian Tern, Black Tern, White-winged Tern, Roseate Tern, Common Tern, Arctic Tern, Forster's Tern, Royal Tern, and Sandwich Tern change positions in the checklist.
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Black-billed Cuckoo switch checklist order positions.

Nomenclature

The scientific names of the following species were changed:

- Willet is changed from *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus* to *Tringa semipalmata*.
- Sooty Tern is changed from *Sterna fuscata* to *Onychoprion fuscatus*.
- Bridled Tern is changed from *Sterna anaethetus* to *Onychoprion anaethetus*.
- Least Tern is changed from *Sterna antillarum* to *Sternula antillarum*.
- Gull-billed Tern is changed from *Sterna nilotica* to *Gelochelidon nilotica*.
- Caspian Tern is changed from *Sterna caspia* to *Hydroprogne caspia*.
- Royal Tern is changed from *Sterna maxima* to *Thalasseus maxima*.
- Sandwich Tern is changed from *Sterna sandvicensis* to *Thalasseus sandvicensis*.

Literature Cited

- American Ornithologists' Union. 1998. Checklist of North American birds, 7th ed. American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D.C.
- _____. 2004. Forty-fifth supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union checklist of North American birds. *Auk* 121(3):985–995.
- _____. 2006. Forty-seventh supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union checklist of North American birds. *Auk* 123(3):926–936.
- Beaton, G., P.W. Sykes, Jr., and J.W. Parrish, Jr. 2003. Annotated checklist of Georgia birds. Georgia Ornithological Society, Occasional Publ. No. 14.

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