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1999 (Eleventh) Report of the NOU Records Committee

Joel G. Jorgensen

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, joel.jorgensen@nebraska.gov

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1999 (Eleventh) Report of the NOU Records Committee
compiled by Joel G. Jorgensen, NOURC Chairperson
1218 Jackson St., Blair, NE 68008

The functions and methods of the NOU Records Committee are described in its bylaws (NOU Records Committee 1986). The committee's purpose is to provide a procedure for documenting unusual bird sightings and to establish a list of all documented birds for Nebraska. THE OFFICIAL LIST OF THE BIRDS OF NEBRASKA was first published in 1988 (NOU Records Committee 1988) and has been appended nine times (Mollhoff 1989, Grenon 1990, Grenon 1991, Gubanyi 1996a, Gubanyi 1996b, Gubanyi 1996c, Brogie 1997, Brogie 1998, Brogie 1999). An update of the OFFICIAL LIST OF THE BIRDS OF NEBRASKA was first published in 1997 (NOU Records Committee 1997).

Species that have incurred a change in status

Pacific Loon: Casual to Regular
Red-necked Grebe: Casual to Regular
Black Scoter: Casual to Regular
Common Moorhen: Accidental to Casual
Snowy Plover: Casual to Regular
Mountain Plover: Casual to Regular
Whimbrel: Casual to Regular
Lesser Black-backed Gull: Casual to Regular
Pileated Woodpecker: Accidental to Casual
Hammond's Flycatcher: Accidental to Casual
Blue-winged Warbler: Casual to Regular
Prairie Warbler: Accidental to Casual
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: Casual to Regular

1999 Additions to the State List

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*): Accidental, III.
White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*): Accidental, I-P.
Tufted Duck (*Athya fuligula*): Accidental, I-P.
Gray Flycatcher (*Empidonax wrightii*): Accidental, III.
Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*): Accidental, III.
Hepatic Tanager (*Piranga rubra*): Accidental, I-P.
Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*): Accidental, III.

With these additions, the state list now includes 441 species.

Criteria for Accepted Records

For a record to be accepted, a minimum of six votes in favor is required with no more than one dissenting vote (NOU Records Committee, 1986).

Records in the following classes listed as accepted:

I-S—a diagnostic, labeled specimen exists.

I-P—a diagnostic, labeled photograph or slide exists.

I-R—a diagnostic, labeled recording exists.

II—three or more independently written diagnostic documentations of the same bird exist.

III—on or two independently written diagnostic documentations of the same bird exist.

Each account of an accepted record includes a brief statement noting the species, class, date, location, and the initial of the observer(s).

1999 Accepted Records

Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*)

1. A molting adult was observed at Lake McConaughy, Keith County, on 16 May 1999 (Class III; SJD).

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*)

1. A bird in first-basic plumage was observed at Lake McConaughy, Keith County on 9 January 1999 (Class III; SJD). This sighting represents only the second documented mid-winter occurrence for the species in the state.

2. Two written documentations were received of an individual that was observed at Lake Ogallala, Keith County between 12 and 19 May 1999 (Class III; SJD, BP&LP).

Eared Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*)

1. Two birds were observed at Lake Ogallala, Keith County on 2 January 1999 (Class III; SJD). This sighting denotes the first mid-winter report, documented or otherwise, for this species (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*)

1. An individual was observed at Lake McConaughy, Keith County on 1 January 1999 (Class III; SJD).

Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

1. A juvenile was observed in a ditch north of Keystone Lake, Keith County on 2 January 1999 (Class III; SJD).). This sighting represents

the first mid-winter report, documented or otherwise, for this species (Sharpe et al. 2001).

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

1. An adult in alternate-plumage was observed at Wilkins Waterfowl Production Area, Fillmore County on 24 April 1999 (Class III; JGJ). This is the first accepted Nebraska record for the species.

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*)

1. An individual in first-alternate plumage was observed at Kissinger Basin Wildlife Management Area, Clay County 5-25 July (Class I-P; JGJ, JS)(Class III; BP,LP). This is the first accepted Nebraska record for the species.

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

1. A pair of adults was seen at Sandpiper Waterfowl Production Area, Clay County on 24 August 1999 (Class III; SJD).

Brant (*Branta bernicla*)

1. Two written documentations (Class III; SJD, JF) were received of an individual of the western race, *B.b. nigricans*, located at Lake Minatare, Scotts Bluff County on 23 November 1999.

Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*)

1. Two birds were observed at a sandpit in western Douglas County on 5-7 February 1999 (Class III;NR). NOURC no longer seeks documentation for this species.

Tufted Duck (*Athya fuligula*)

1. A male was observed at Lake Ogallala, Keith County 3 December 1999-26 February 2000. One photographic record (Class I-P; SJD) and several written records (Class III; SJD, WRS, BH, MB) were accepted. This is a first state record for the species.

Common Crane (*Grus grus*) 1. An adult was observed southeast of Gibbon, Kearney County on 6-9 March 1999 (Class I-P; LB)(Class III; RH, SJD).

Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)

1. An individual was observed at Wilkins Waterfowl Production Area, Fillmore County on 8 May 1999 (Class III; BP, LP). NOURC no longer seeks documentation for this species.

Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*)

1. An individual was observed at Lake McConaughy, Keith County on 17 December 1998 (Class III; SJD). This report is the latest, documented or otherwise, on record (Sharpe et al 2001).

American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*)

1. An individual was observed at Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge on 6 November 1999 (Class III; SJD). This record is the first from the Panhandle.

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

1. A total of 3 juveniles were observed at Lake McConaughy, Keith County 18-19 November and 3 December 1999 (Class III; SJD).

Mew Gull (*Larus canus*)

1. An adult was observed at Lake Maloney, Lincoln County on 16 December 1999 (Class III; SJD).

Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)

1. An individual identified as being in fourth-basic plumage was observed at Lake Ogallala, Keith County on 8 March 1999 (Class III; SJD).

2. An individual in second-alternate plumage was observed at Lake Ogallala, Keith County on 24 August and 26 September 1999 (Class III; SJD).

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)

1. An adult was observed at Harlan County Lake, Harlan County on 17 December 1999 (Class III; SJD).

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*)

1. An individual was observed at a feeder in Creighton, Knox County on 23 April 1999 (I-P; MB).

2. An individual was seen in Lincoln, Lancaster County on 8 October 1999 (I-P, DK)

Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*)

1. A singing male was observed at Thomas Ashford Scout Reservation, Thurston County (or possibly in Dakota County-observer's note) on 13-14 June 1999 (Class III; BFH).

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*)

1. An individual was observed at Scotts Bluff National Monument, Scotts Bluff County on 11-12 May (Class III; SJD).

Gray Flycatcher (*Empidonax wrightii*)

1. An individual was observed at Oliver State Recreation Area, Kimball County on 17 May 1999 (Class III; SJD, BP, LP). This sighting represents a first Nebraska record for this species.

Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*)

1. An individual was observed south of Interstate 80 Exit 1, Kimball County on 28 March 1999 (Class III; SJD).

Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*)

1. An individual was observed at Funk Waterfowl Production Area on 5 September 1999 (Class III; RH).

Northern Parula (*Parula americana*)

1. An immature male was observed at Cedar Point Biological Station, Keith County on the very late date of 4 December 1999 (Class III; SJD).

Blackburnian Warbler (*Dendroica fusca*)

1. A very late bird was mist-netted at a 4-H Camp (adjacent to Schram State Park), Sarpy County on 26 October 1996 (RK).

Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*)

1. A male was observed at Oliver State Recreation Area, Kimball County on 1 May 1999 (Class III; SJD). This sighting denotes the first Nebraska record for the species.

Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*)

1. A male was observed approximately 2 miles east of the Alda Interstate 80 interchange, Hall County on 7 May 1999 (Class III; JT).

Hepatic Tanager (*Piranga flava*)

1. A sub-adult male was photographed at Dr. and Mrs. Mlnariks feeder at West Point, Cuming County on 6 January 1999 (Class I; BP, LP). This identification represents the first Nebraska record for this species.

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*)

1. An individual was observed south of Lake McConaughy, Keith County on 2 January 1999 (Class III; SJD).

Baird's Sparrow (*Ammodramus bairdii*)

1. Two or more individuals were observed at Clear Creek Marshes, Keith County on 26 September 1999 (Class III; SJD).

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

1. An adult was observed at 2 miles south and .5 miles east of the Wood River Interstate 80 interchange, Hall County on 2 October 1999 (Class III; RH).

Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*)

1. An additional report was received of an individual spotted at Harlan County Reservoir, Harlan County 18 December 1999 (Class III; SJD). A previously submitted report was accepted in 1998 (Brogie 1999).

Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)

1. A single adult was identified at Little Salt Fork, Lancaster County on 12 April 1999 (Class III; JS)

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

1. Two reports were received of a female coming to a feeder in Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff County 18-19 April 1999 (Class III, PD, SJD). This record is the first for Nebraska for this species.

Lesser Goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*)

1. A "green-backed" male was observed at Oliver State Recreation Area on 24 August 1999 (Class III; SJD)

1999 Unaccepted Records

Records in the following classes are considered unaccepted (NOU Records Committee 1986))

IV-Probably correct, but not beyond a reasonable doubt

V-a record with insufficient evidence to support the identification claimed

VI-a probable released or escaped bird or mistaken identification

Each account of an unaccepted record includes a brief statement noting the species, class, date, location, and reasons for the committee's failure to accept the record.

Pre-1999 unaccepted records

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)

1. An apparent immature *sterna* tern seen at the tailrace and spillway below Gavin's Point Dam, Cedar County on 6 December 1998 (Class IV) was identified as this species. Although suggestive, the documentation lacked details for approval.

Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*)

1. An individual identified and photographed as this species was observed near Wakefield, Dixon County on 19-30 December 1998 (Class IV). While it was agreed that the individual observed was a *passerina* bunting, and indeed very likely an Indigo Bunting, other similar species could not be conclusively eliminated from consideration.

1999 Unaccepted Records

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucoides*)

1. An individual identified as this species was observed at Lake McConaughy, Keith County on 26 March 1999 (Class IV). While very suggestive, the description lacked sufficient detail to eliminate other species from consideration.

Mountain Chickadee (*Parus gambeli*)

1. An individual identified as this species was observed at Oliver Reservoir on 22 August 1999 (Class IV). While very suggestive, the description lacked sufficient details for approval. Some members believed a hybrid chickadee was not eliminated as a possibility.

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*)

1. An individual identified as this species was observed in Otoe County on 20 February 1999 (Class IV). While suggestive, the documentation lacked sufficient details for approval.

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