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2006 (18th) Report of the NOU Records Committee

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2006 (18th) REPORT OF THE NOU RECORDS COMMITTEE

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The functions and methods of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union (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 updated two times (NOU Records Committee 1997, 2004).

The "Official List" has been appended sixteen times: (Mollhoff 1989; Grenon 1990, 1991; Gubanyi 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Brogie 1997, 1998, 1999, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006; Jorgensen 2001, 2002, 2003). This report includes all accounts submitted during the calendar year of 2006, covering 45 records with accession numbers 1131-1175.

All records mentioned here are available to interested persons at the NOU archives at the University of Nebraska State Museum (UNSM), Lincoln, NE. Interested parties should contact the current NOU Librarian, whose address can be found in the latest issue of *The Nebraska Bird Review* (NBR).

State List

The American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds, Seventh Edition (1998) and the Forty-first, Forty-second, Forty-third, Forty-fourth, Forty-fifth, Forty-sixth, and Forty-seventh Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006) contain many taxonomic changes affecting North American birds. The following summarizes all 2006 revisions by the AOU in regards to changes in scientific names and changes in assignments to family and order of species to the most recently published "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska" (NBR 72: 108-126).

Additionally, the list reflects changes in frequency of occurrence as determined by the NOU Records Committee, which reviewed records of bird occurrences in Nebraska for 1997-2006. Frequency of occurrence is indicated by the following terms (NOU Records Committee 1988, 1997, 2004):

- Regular - acceptably reported in 9-10 of the past 10 years.
- Casual - acceptably reported in 4-7 of the past 10 years.
- Accidental - acceptably reported in 0-2 of the past 10 years.
- Extirpated - not acceptably reported in the past 50 years.
- Extinct - no longer found alive anywhere in the world.

The frequency of occurrence for any species that is acceptably reported in 3 or 8 of the last 10 years is discussed by the committee and placed in a category felt most appropriate by the committee.

With this report, the following changes are made to the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska".

Changes in Frequency of Occurrence

1. American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*) Regular to Casual.
2. Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) Casual to Accidental.
3. Mew Gull (*Larus canus*) Regular to Casual.
4. Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora pinus*) Regular to Casual.
5. Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*) Regular to Casual.
6. Cassin's Finch (*Carpodacus cassinii*) Regular to Casual.
7. Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*) Regular to Casual.

Changes Involving Nebraska Species Due to Taxonomic Revisions and/or Changes in English or Scientific Names

1. Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*) becomes (*Tringa semipalmata*).
2. Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) becomes (*Sternula antillarum*).
3. Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*) becomes (*Hydroprogne caspia*).

Changes in Sequence

A change is made in the taxonomic order of the family Scolopacidae in the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska". The new sequence is as follows:

- Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*)
- Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*)
- Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*)
- Willet (*Tringa semipalmata*)
- Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*)

The jaegers are now placed in their own family (Stercorariidae) and will be placed after the family Laridae in the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska".

A change is made in the taxonomic order of terns in the family Laridae in the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska". The new sequence is as follows:

- Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*)
- Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*)
- Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)
- Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)
- Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)
- Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*)

A change is made in the taxonomic order of the family Cuculidae in the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska". The new sequence is as follows:

Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*)
Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*)
Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*)

Criteria for Accepted Records

In order for a record to be accepted, a minimum of six votes in favor are required with no more than one dissenting vote (NOU Records Committee 1986). Records in the following classes are 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 - one 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 initial(s) of observers.

Changes in Firmness of Data

1. Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) Change from Class III to Class 1-P.

2006 Additions to State List

There were no new additions in 2006; the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska" stands at 448 species.

2006 Accepted Records

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

1. An adult male was photographed (Class 1-P, KD) at Chilibaba Pond, Scotts Bluff Co., 18 March 2006. Accession # 1135.

Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*)

1. A single male was photographed (Class 1-P, MAB) above Gavins Pt. Dam, Knox Co., 03 March 2006. Accession # 1133.
2. The above bird was photographed (Class 1-P, PR) above Gavins Pt. Dam, Cedar Co., 04 March 2006. Accession # 1134.
3. The above bird was described (Class III, BH) from Gavins Pt. Dam, Cedar Co., 04 March 2006. Accession # 1154.

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

1. As many as six birds were photographed (Class 1-P; PD) at Harvard WPA, Clay Co., 06 May 2006. Accession # 1136.
2. An adult bird was photographed (Class 1-P; JJ) at Weis WPA, Fillmore Co., 05 October 2006. Accession # 1147.
3. A single adult was observed (Class III, SJD) at Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 15 May 2006. Accession # 1171.

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*)

1. A probable second-year bird was found (JC, SS) east of Ashland, in Cass Co., 02 August 2007 and was photographed (Class 1-P, JJ) on the following day. Accession # 1143. This is the second documented record for this species in Nebraska.

Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*)

1. A pair of birds with two chicks was found (EM) and photographed (Class 1-P, BG) at Facus Springs WMA, Morrill Co., 18 July 2006. Accession #1142.

Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*)

1. A group of four adults and one juvenile bird was photographed (Class 1-P, MAB) south of Creighton in Antelope Co., 12-13 April 2006. Accession # 1173.

Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*)

1. An adult bird in basic plumage and an adult bird in alternate plumage were observed (Class III, TH) at North Marsh Lake, Valentine NWR, Cherry Co., 23 May 2006. Accession # 1138.

Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*)

1. A single molting adult was photographed (Class 1-P, SJD) at Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 26 August 2006. Accession # 1163.
2. A single juvenile was photographed (Class 1-P, SJD) at Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 15 September 2006. Accession # 1164.

Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*)

1. A first-year bird was photographed (Class 1-P; JJ) at Oak Lake in Lincoln, Lancaster Co., 22 October 2006. Accession # 1148.
2. A second-winter bird was observed (Class III; MAB) at Willow Creek SRA, Pierce Co., 27 October 2006. Accession # 1151.

Little Gull (*Larus minutus*)

1. A single juvenile was photographed (Class 1-P, SJD) below Keystone Dam, Keith Co., 27 August 2006. Accession # 1166.

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)

1. An adult bird was photographed (Class 1-P; MI) on Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 01 October 2006. Accession # 1153.
2. An adult bird (most likely the above bird) was photographed (Class 1-P; SJD) on Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 31 October 2006. Accession # 1172.

The NOURC no longer seeks documentation for this species.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)

1. A first-winter-plumaged bird was photographed (Class 1-P; PD) on a small sandpit in Hall Co., 06 December 2005. Accession # 1152.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)

1. A single first summer bird was observed and described (Class II, MAB) at Lake Babcock/Lake North, Platte Co., 26 & 30 September 2006. Accession # 1146.
2. The above bird, initially found and described (Class II, CW) at Lake Babcock/Lake North, Platte Co., 26 September 2006. Accession # 1161.
3. The above bird was described (Class II, BH) at Lake Babcock/Lake North, Platte Co., 30 September 2006. Accession # 1174.
Class II - three or more independently written diagnostic documentations of the same bird exist.

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

1. A light morph juvenile was photographed (Class 1-P; SJD) on Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 17 September 2006. Accession # 1165.

Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*)

1. A single bird that over-wintered was photographed (Class 1-P; TB, JB) in Bellevue, Sarpy Co., 26 February 2006. Accession # 1132.
2. The above bird was described (Class III; BH) from Bellevue, Sarpy Co., 18 March 2006. Accession # 1155.
3. A single bird was photographed (Class 1-P, SJD) at Keystone, Keith Co., 31 December 2006. Accession # 1175.
The NOURC no longer seeks documentation for this species.

Barred Owl (*Strix varia*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class 1-P; via TJW) near North Platte, Lincoln Co., Fall 2006. Accession # 1158.

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*)

1. A single bird was heard and observed (Class III; SJD) west of Dad's Lake, Valentine NWR, Cherry Co., 28 October 2006. Accession # 1168.

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*)

1. An adult male was photographed (Class 1-P, HH) at Wind Springs Ranch, Sioux Co., 24-28 October 2006. Accession # 1157.

Curve-billed Thrasher (*Taxostoma curvirostre*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class 1-P, TH) at Hackberry Lake, Valentine NWR, Cherry Co., 08-09 July 2006. Accession # 1141.

Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class 1-P, JJ) at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 22 November 2006. Accession # 1159.

Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*)

1. An adult male was observed (Class III; TJW) in a mixed grove of pine and cedar trees at the North Platte Fish Hatchery, Lincoln Co., 10 October 2006. Accession # 1150.

McCown's Longspur (*Calcarius mccownii*)

1. A single juvenile was photographed (Class 1-P, SJD) at Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 17 September 2006. Accession # 1167.

Unaccepted Records

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

- IV - probably correct, but not beyond 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.

2006 Unaccepted Records**Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*)**

1. An adult bird was photographed at Harvard Marsh, Clay Co., 30 January 2006. Dispute was not with the identification, but with the provenance of the bird. This species has occurred recently in PA, CT, MA, and NF, and historically in DE and PQ, usually in the company of Snow Goose. Pink-footed Goose is considered relatively rare in captivity, but observers should be attentive to clues that may indicate a captive origin: bands, feather wear, and behavior. Species associations may provide a clue to origin, although neck-collared Snow Geese from the Clay County flock were from the northwest. The NOURC was hesitant to add this species to the "Official Checklist" based upon the decision that a natural origin for this individual could not be established with certainty. Class VI. Accession # 1131.

Brant (*Branta bernicla*)

1. A flock of 30-40, apparently mostly juveniles, was observed just south of Ponca, Dixon Co., 24 October 2006. Although suggestive, the description in this documentation lacked sufficient details for approval. Class IV. Accession # 1170.

Garganey (*Anas querquedula*)

1. A written report was received of a single immature/female seen at Headworks Park, Nance Co., 12 October 2006. Although suggestive, the description in this documentation lacked sufficient details for approval. Class V. Accession # 1169.

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*)

1. A written report of a single bird seen just west of Greenwood along Hwy 6 (Cass Co.) in mid June 2006 may very well have been the same bird discovered near Ashland in August. Although very suggestive, the

description in this documentation lacked sufficient details for approval. Class IV. Accession # 1144.

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*)

1. A "group (assuming family) flew in" along the Missouri River in Cedar Co., 31 July 2006. The description in this documentation lacked sufficient details for approval. Class VI. Accession # 1149.

Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*)

1. A written report was received of an adult bird observed at Fontenelle Forest wetlands, Sarpy Co., 27 August 2006. Although very suggestive, the description in this documentation lacked sufficient details for approval. Class V. Accession # 1156.

Flammulated Owl (*Otus flammeolus*)

1. A bird identified by call was heard at Hackberry Lake, Valentine NWR, Cherry Co., 25 May 2007. Unfortunately, the bird was not seen or tape-recorded, and although the report was very plausible, the NOURC was hesitant to add this species to the "Official Checklist" based on a description of a call. Class IV. Accession # 1139.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*)

1. A single bird was photographed at a feeder in southern Sioux Co., 25 July 2006. Although very suggestive, photographic evidence was insufficient to rule out similar species. Class IV. Accession # 1162.

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*)

1. A single bird was photographed near Refuge Headquarters, Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co., 13 May 2006. Photographic evidence was insufficient to rule out similar species. Class IV. Accession # 1137.

Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)

1. A written description was received of a group of birds northwest of Chadron, Dawes Co., 15 October 2006. Although very suggestive, the description in this documentation lacked sufficient details for approval. Class IV. Accession #1160.

Lesser Goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*)

1. A description of a male bird coming to a feeder in Cheyenne Co., 16 June 2006, was very suggestive but lacking in details. Class IV. Accession # 1140.

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

1. A single bird was observed at Rowe Sanctuary, Buffalo Co., 08 April 2006. Although very suggestive, the description in this documentation lacked sufficient details for approval. Class IV. Accession # 1145.

Acknowledgments

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2006 NOU Records Committee members: Mark A. Brogie (chair), Paul Dunbar, Joe Gubanyi, Joel Jorgensen, W. Ross Silcock, Jerry Toll, and T.J. Walker.

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