THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MISSOURI BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE  
William C. Rowe, Secretary  

This report summarizes records reviewed by the Committee between 1 January and 31 December 2019. It is divided into two sections, Accepted and Not Accepted, with birds listed in phylogenetic order under each of these two categories. Taxonomy and nomenclature follow the American Ornithologists' Union's *Check-list of North American Birds*, Seventh Edition (1998), and subsequent supplements. The latest American Ornithological Society (AOS) list of North and Middle American birds is available online at http://checklist.aou.org/taxa. See "Note on organizations" below, for the change from AOU to AOS.

Accepted records in this report include the names of observers who submitted documentation and/or photographs, or were present with those who documented, along with comments to indicate the record's significance. For Not Accepted records, observers' names are omitted, and a brief explanation is provided as to why the record was not accepted. Statements on the status and distribution within Missouri for each species are based primarily on Robbins, *The Status and Distribution of Birds in Missouri* (2018, University of Kansas Libraries), a free, downloadable reference (https://doi.org/10.17161/1808.26287).

Online documentation of records is the norm, and submission is easy. The observer posts documentation to a secure web site, where the secretary prepares it for review. To get started, go to www.mobirds.org and click on Documentation Form in the “MBRC” pull-down menu. Photographs in .jpg format, audio recordings in .wav format, and written notes in .pdf format, with a size limit of 4 MB, can be uploaded to accompany documentations. Observers are strongly urged to use the online system for both the report and any accompanying media, but if this proves unworkable for some reason, any part of the documentation can be mailed or emailed to the secretary. All recent records have been electronically archived. The Committee once again thanks Ann Johnson for creating and improving this system. In addition, the Missouri eBird team (Lisa Berger, Diane Bricmont, Ryan Douglas, Pete Monacell, Mary Nemecek, and Josh Uffman) deserves great thanks for the long hours they put in as reviewers for our state and for their careful coordination with this Committee, both in requesting documentation from observers when needed and in initiating discussion on various points of bird distribution and identification.

Of the 73 records reviewed during this period, 59 were accepted and 14 were not accepted, for an acceptance rate of 81%. Members participating in these decisions were Lisa Berger, Joe Eades, Brad Jacobs (Chair), Paul McKenzie, Pete Monacell, Mary Nemecek, Mark Robbins, and Josh Uffman. Bill Rowe served as non-voting Secretary. One record (Neotropic Cormorant, 2019-46) received comments from an outside reviewer; see that account.

There were no observations of new species for Missouri this year, and so the state continues to have 423 fully-accepted species as of December 2019; these include three formerly-occurring species that have been extirpated from the state and five extinct species. There are an additional 12 Provisional species on the list, for a total of 435 species. The Annotated Checklist of Missouri Birds, which receives regular updates to reflect changes in Missouri status and distribution as well as the latest taxonomic and nomenclatural changes by the AOS, can be viewed at www.mobirds.org in either the "Birds" or the "MBRC" menu.

The Committee reviews records of species that are considered “casual” (5-14 records) or “accidental” (1-4 records) statewide. It also reviews records of species that are casual or
accidental for the season when reported (example: Least Flycatcher in summer); records of species that are casual or accidental in the part of Missouri where reported (example: Painted Bunting in eastern Missouri); and other records of unusual interest, including first nesting records and extreme arrival and departure dates. The Review List, also maintained at www.mobirds.org ("MBRC" menu), lists all species that require review due to their year-round casual or accidental status in all or part of the state, plus a few for which the Committee still wishes to receive documentation despite their status as only “rare” (example: California Gull). The Review List does not cover out-of-season status; for general information on seasonal occurrence, consult the Annotated Checklist, and for specific earliest and latest dates and other data, consult Robbins (2018).

Note on photographic and audio documentation: Photographs, and in many cases audio recordings, are extremely helpful, and all observers are encouraged to carry a camera and/or a smart phone in the field; using smart phones, both images and audio can often be obtained with relative ease. In some cases (as noted in a few entries below) the absence of a photograph or an audio recording can be a problem for acceptance of a record. On the other hand, photographs can sometimes be misleading as to colors and patterns, and they may or may not show all of a bird’s key characters. For this reason, it remains important for the observer to describe what he or she saw and heard as accurately as possible.

Note on organizations: In December 2016, the American Ornithologists’ Union (AOU) completed a merger with the Cooper Ornithological Society to form the American Ornithological Society (AOS). The AOU’s North American Classification Committee, its Birds of North and Middle America Checklist, its journal The Auk, and all of its other activities and resources are now those of the AOS, along with the journal The Condor and other functions of the Cooper Ornithological Society. The new society’s web site is at www.americanornithology.org.

The Committee extends thanks to the many birders throughout Missouri who submitted their observations, and to the Missouri Birding Society for its continued support and funding of the Committee’s efforts. Observers who would like a status report on their current submissions can email the Secretary at rowemb45@gmail.com. The next report will appear in the March 2021 issue of The Bluebird.

RMBS = Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, St. Charles Co.
LBNWR = Loess Bluffs (formerly Squaw Creek) National Wildlife Refuge, Holt Co.
MNWR = Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, Bollinger/Stoddard/Wayne cos.
CBC = Christmas Bird Count
CA = Conservation Area
SP = State Park
NWR = National Wildlife Refuge

RECORDS ACCEPTED


BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK, 2019-45: Two to three adults with nine young, 14-18 August 2019, retention pond near Jefferson Barracks Park, St. Louis Co. Mike Thelen, Kendell Loyd, Jessie Goodwin (documentations with photographs), Tommy Goodwin. Fifth nesting record, moving this species to casual as a breeding resident.

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK, 2019-50: One or two adults with nine young, 26 August 2019, Duck Creek CA, Wayne Co. Nicole Walker of the Missouri Department of Conservation submitted documentation with photographs on behalf of other MDC staff. Sixth nesting record.

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK, 2019-51: Two adults with seven young, 31 August to 13 September 2019, Little Creve Coeur Marsh, St. Louis Co. Anne Kirkpatrick (documentation), Mike Thelen (documentation with photographs). Seventh nesting record. This family was associating with a flock of up to 25 additional adults, one of which was traced by banding number to an origin in Louisiana in 2018, as discovered by photographer Doug Hommert.


AMERICAN WIGEON (Mareca americana), 2019-34: Female, 12 June 2018, LBNWR. Brad Jacobs (documentation with photographs). Casual summer visitant.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (Anas crecca), 2019-41: Adult male, 7 July 2019, county road 713/716, New Madrid Co. Tim Kavan. Casual in summer in southern Missouri.

AMERICAN FLAMINGO (Phoenicopterus ruber), 2019-42: One, 20-21 July 2019, mostly near Donaldson Point CA, New Madrid Co. Tim Kavan, Mike Thelen, Brad Jacobs, Paul McKenzie (documentations with photographs). Accidental; third record. From photographs, it seemed likely that this was the same bird previously in residence for months at St. Marks NWR in Florida, then presumably carried north by Hurricane Barry across western Tennessee, where it was observed on 13 July, and into Missouri. There is, however, no evidence of where the St. Marks bird originated—i.e., whether it came from a natural population in the Caribbean or from a captive population. This means that the species will remain on the Missouri list as Provisional.


PURPLE GALLINULE (Porphyrio martinica), 2019-62: Juvenile, 9 September 2015, near Buckner, Jackson Co. Rod Lentz (documentation with photographs), Josiah Redfearn. Casual transient outside of southeastern Missouri.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER (Calidris subruficollis), 2019-33: Adult, 19-20 May 2019, Mokane Road, Callaway Co. Peter Kondrashov. Casual spring transient in eastern Missouri.


ICELAND GULL (Larus glaucoides), 2019-24: First-cycle bird, 30 March 2019, Smithville Lake, Clay Co. Mary Nemecek (documentation with photographs). Latest spring record. This individual was not clearly attributable to either thayeri or kumlieni; it was light tan overall with wing coverts and tertials mostly bleached white and primaries pale brown.


GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL (Larus marinus), 2019-12: Adult, 3 February 2019, Longview Lake, Jackson Co. Karen Davis (documentation with photographs). Was accidental away from the Mississippi River near St. Louis; this is the fifth record, moving the species to casual.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL, 2019-43: First-cycle bird, 12-19 August 2019, Cora Island Road and RMBS, St. Charles Co. Bill Rowe (documentation), Doug Hommert, Mike Thelen (documentations with photographs). Earliest fall record by three months.


RED-THROATED LOON (Gavia stellata), 2019-4: Adult, 30 December 2018 to 6 January 2019, Stockton Lake, Cedar Co. Kendell Loyd (documentation with photographs). Was accidental in winter; this is the fifth record, moving the species to casual.


NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*), 2019-46: Immature, 17 August 2019, in and near RMBS. Paul McKenzie (documentation with photograph). Casual in eastern Missouri; seventh record. Initial identification of this bird was provided by Van Remsen of Louisiana State University from the photograph.


SWALLOW-TAILED KITE (*Elanoides forficatus*), 2019-52: One, 31 August to 15 September 2019, near Deerfield, Vernon Co. Lisa Berger (documentation of late date with photographs). First found by Tony Elliott; became the latest fall record.


BLUE-HEADED VIREO (*Vireo solitarius*), 2019-7: One, 6 January 2019, St. Francis River Levee Road, Dunklin Co. Timothy Jones (documentation with photographs). Fifth winter record, moving the species from accidental to casual in winter.


WINTER WREN (*Troglodytes hiemalis*), 2019-38: One, 18 June to 3 July 2019, Barrigar residence, Cole Co. Chris Barrigar (documentation with audio and photographs). First
summer record. Audio recording of song eliminated the remote possibility of the very similar Pacific Wren (*T. pacificus*).


**AMERICAN TREE SPARROW** (*Spizelloides arborea*), 2019-57: One, 8 October 2019, RMBS. Mike Thelen. Earliest fall record.


**AMERICAN REDSTART** (*Setophaga ruticilla*), 2019-67: Immature male, 28 October 2019, Carondelet Park, City of St. Louis. Tommy Goodwin (documentation), Chrissy McClarren. At the time, the latest fall record; see next.


**BLACKPOLL WARBLER** (*Setophaga striata*), 2019-17: Immature female, 16 September 2018, Tower Grove Park, City of St. Louis. Matthew Winks (documentation with photographs). This species, which is common in spring but follows a much more easterly migration route in fall, was previously listed as accidental in fall. This is the fifth verified record, moving it to casual.

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*), 2019-8: Female or immature male, 13 January 2019 (but present for about a week prior), Houston residence, Eureka, St. Louis Co. Diane Bricmont (documentation with photographs), Peggy Houston. Accidental in winter; second record.

WESTERN TANAGER (*Piranga ludoviciana*), 2019-28: Adult male, 14-17 April 2019, Bricmont residence, Ballwin, St. Louis Co. Diane Bricmont, Mike Thelen (documentations with photographs). Casual spring transient; tenth and earliest record.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*), 2019-20: Immature male, 7 March 2019, Bricmont residence, Ballwin, St. Louis Co. Diane Bricmont (documentation with photographs). Earliest spring record by one month.


PAINTED BUNTING (*Passerina ciris*), 2019-61: Adult male, 10 June 1998, Katy Trail, Boone Co. Theresa Enderle. At the time, listed as a casual transient outside southwestern Missouri; now listed as rare, with documentation still needed for birds in female-type plumage but no longer required for adult males.

PAINTED BUNTING, 2019-32: Adult male, 18 May to at least 3 June, 2019, private residence and other sites near Emmenegger Nature Park, St. Louis Co. Shelly Colatskie (documentation), Chrissy McClarren, Tommy Goodwin (documentation with photographs), Andy Reago, Kyran Leeker. See above record for status notes.

**RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED**

“Not accepted” does not necessarily mean that the identification was incorrect. In some cases the Committee may indeed believe that the bird was misidentified; in other cases it may seem possible or even likely that the identification was correct, but the information provided is simply insufficient to rule out other possible species. The Committee is unable to accept any record if the description is too sketchy or vague, or if it fails to mention enough critical field marks to eliminate all other species. It is also true that the more extraordinary the report, the stronger the evidence required, and there are some reports that can be accepted only with diagnostic photographs or other physical evidence. Our belief is that a report should go into the permanent scientific record only if it is free of reasonable doubt. This is the standard approach of bird record committees everywhere. All records that the Committee reviews, whether accepted or not, are permanently archived so that future investigators may examine them.

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE (*Bucephala islandica*), 2019-15: Female, 9 February 2019, Stockton Lake, Dade Co. This bird was described as showing some characters associated with females of this species, such as an all-yellow bill and a different head shape than a Common Goldeneye’s. Bill color, however, cannot be used by itself as an identifying feature, and other characters could not be verified from the photographs provided. Clear photographs with good resolution would be a necessity in order to substantiate a female Barrow's Goldeneye versus a female Common or a possible hybrid.
**WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*), 2019-36: One, 13 June 2019, rural New Madrid Co. Photographs submitted did not suggest a Whimbrel.

**LITTLE GULL** (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*), 2019-58: Two, 13 October 2019, Swan Lake NWR. These birds, apparently in juvenile and possibly adult plumage, were observed at a great distance among Ring-billed and Bonaparte’s Gulls. In both cases, parts of the description did not fit the age class, and the Committee believed that Bonaparte’s Gull was not clearly eliminated in either case.

**PACIFIC LOON**, 2019-25: One, 5 April 2019, Smithville Lake, Clay Co. The description provided too little detail to be sure of which loon species was seen, including no mention of bill size and shape and no direct comparison of this bird with a Common Loon. The variability of Common Loon makes this a subtle identification that requires a fully detailed description and preferably a good photograph.

**GOLDEN EAGLE** (*Aquila chrysaetus*), 2019-54: Immature, 23-24 September 2019, Wakonda SP, Lewis Co. Details provided did not separate this bird from an immature Bald Eagle with a bicolored tail; in particular, the underwing pattern, a key point, was described as “mottled,” suggesting a Bald Eagle.

**GOLDEN EAGLE**, 2019-55: Immature, 25 September 2019, Ferguson, St. Louis Co. This may have been a Golden Eagle, but the description was unclear, including the bird’s apparent size; the observer drew comparisons with several different species from Bald Eagle to Broad-winged Hawk.

**BROAD-WINGED HAWK** (*Buteo platypterus*), 2019-71: Immature, 18 November 2019, near St. James, Phelps Co. The details provided did not eliminate other hawks, especially an immature Red-shouldered Hawk. Separating immature Broad-winged from Red-shouldered can be quite difficult and may require a view of the unbarred secondaries, as shown in most field guides. Though Broad-winged Hawks are common early-fall migrants in Missouri, they move south to the tropics for the winter; there is no verified record for November. Any record-late report should be accompanied by photographs.

**GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus crinitus*), 2019-23: One, 29 March 2019, Springfield Nature Center, Greene Co. The description failed to mention some important field marks of Great Crested Flycatcher, raising doubts as to what species was observed, and no photograph was provided.

**HOUSE WREN** (*Troglydtes aedon*), 2019-9: One, 16 January 2019, Louisiana, Pike Co. This may have been a House Wren, but the observation was made without binoculars, raising doubts as to the level of detail that could have been seen. To establish a winter record of House Wren this far north, a photograph would be desirable.

**BACHMAN’S SPARROW** (*Peucaea aestivalis*), 2019-65: One, 26 October 2019, Lake Jacomo, Jackson Co. This species has essentially disappeared from its former breeding range in southern Missouri and was always very rare outside that range. All reports require review. Aside from the extreme improbability of encountering Bachman’s Sparrow at such a late date and at this location, the details provided did not completely distinguish this bird from other sparrows, including the accidental Cassin’s Sparrow. Good photographs, or audio recording of song, would be a necessity for acceptance.

**VESPER SPARROW** (*Pooecetes gramineus*), 2019-10: One, 16 December 2018, Busch CA, St. Charles Co. Possibly a Vesper Sparrow, but the observers were unable to determine whether this bird had white outer tail feathers, and the features described could have been duplicated by some Savannah Sparrows.
**BULLOCK’S ORIOLE** (*Icterus bullockii*), 2019-31: Adult male, 18 May 2019, LBNWR. The details provided for this sighting were sufficient to suggest a Bullock’s Oriole (an accidental species, recorded only twice in Missouri) but not to establish it fully or to rule out a hybrid Bullock’s x Baltimore. This combination is frequent enough, where the breeding ranges overlap in the western Great Plains, to be a concern with any report of Bullock’s.

**YELLOW-RUMPED "AUDUBON'S" WARBLER** (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*), 2019-14: One, 8-10 February 2019, Jefferson City, Cole Co. This bird appeared at a residential feeder, and the observer rightly noted that it seemed different in having yellow on the throat. The Committee appreciates receiving documentation of it, with excellent photographs. These, however, showed that it was not a pure "Audubon’s" but most likely an intergrade between that subspecies and the "Myrtle" Warbler, which is the usual form in Missouri. This bird showed two important characters shown by "Myrtle" and not by "Audubon’s": a whitish supercilium (stronger on one side than the other in this bird), and the pale throat color curling up around the side of the neck and framing the auriculars (cheek patch). Also, the throat color was irregular, being whitish on the chin but yellow below that. Intergrades between these two forms occur regularly where the breeding ranges overlap in Alberta. Note: The Committee reviews very few records of subspecies, but "Audubon’s" is different from most in having clear field marks that distinguish it from "Myrtle," and also in being a possible candidate for future splitting as a separate species. There are a dozen or more records for Missouri.

**LAZULI BUNTING** (*Passerina amoena*), 2019-64: Female-type, 26 October 2019, near Prairie SP, Barton Co. Description suggested a possible Lazuli Bunting but lacked sufficient detail, and there was no photograph.