

**Minutes for the 2006 CBRC Meeting  
San Jose, 27-28 January 2006**

1. Meeting called to order at 1:15PM (Chairman presiding)  
2005 minutes. No approval needed; approved in March.
2. Broad topics/general discussion

A lengthy discussion occurred where we agreed that a move to on-line voting is an important matter. In addition to helping with quicker movement of batches, it will eliminate lost batches, the need to mail packages, and allows for archiving records. We agreed to make progress towards this end, but to do so in a deliberate fashion to ensure a smooth transition. Morlan will work with McCaskie to identify some of the early steps. Other members will be needed to pursue a few specific tasks.

Identification issues: We had several meaningful discussions on identification characters that are not fully understood. Ideally, these discussions will end in either a "Featured Photo" or full-length article in WB, noted as a by-product of CBRC work.

Glossy Ibis- there is a general sense that it is difficult to determine where to draw the line between potential hybrids and variation within Glossy. Outstanding questions remain whether Glossy can show bare facial skin behind the eye (several New World photos suggest that some do), the extent to which birds in high breeding condition might have a purplish tint to the facial skin, and how different observers perceive the color of the bare facial skin around the face in non-breeding condition (it is clearly bright blue in high breeding condition, but is it whitish in non-breeding condition?).

Golden-Plovers- Pyle provided new measurements and reinforced the problem of using a mark that relies on tertials, since they vary in length by generation (juvinal, basic, 1<sup>st</sup> alternate, definitive alternate, etc.), and are often dropped early. The primaries past tail seems to be the best mark. On SY birds, the presence of a bold white supercilium on a "basic" bird favors American.

Slaty-backed Gull- brief conversation regarding the features of SBGU, as well as some thoughts on how we will draw a line with potential hybrids. We discussed the need to revisit previously rejected records; the sense was, while some of these should be looked at, perhaps another gull season of learning, in conjunction with discussions with Al Jaramillo will need to precede any recirculations.

Long-billed Murrelet- Pyle shared his work on this species, including the value of the sharp demarcation in the face. Underwing coverts, however, are a function of age (dark in young birds, pale in adults) and not a useful criterion.

Archilochus hummingbirds- Iliff had an impressive presentation on the identification of female and immature Archilochus. Great work, and we

encourage him to move forward with an article summarizing these features.

Yellow Wagtail- Heindel summarized the identification problems with immature Eastern Yellow Wagtail, thought to be indistinguishable from Western taxa, such as *flava*, *thunbergi*, and *plexa*. Therefore, we will adopt a caveat that will be noted on our website, and in publications explaining that Yellow Wagtails in California are assumed to be Eastern even though we have not eliminated Western as a possibility for any record. This caveat assumes records to pertain to Eastern Yellow-Wagtail based solely on probability. Committee endorsement of this position was not unanimous; Morlan in particular pointed out the dangers of assumptions of likelihood based on proximity.

Rosy-Finch- Dunn shared some pictures of various species/plumages, including a dull SY Gray-crowned; clearly, more work is needed to understand any overlap in dull plumages of Gray-crowned and Brown-capped.

Committee and the community: We discussed the need to regularly present at meetings with local clubs. Heindel will take a first pass at a mechanical presentation that, once standardized, will serve as the template, with members then able to create their own emphasis. It is clear in talking with many birders that there are misunderstandings aplenty as to our purposes and processes.

Heindel shared parts of a letter sent from Cliff Peterson (a friend from many years ago). Regarding Peterson's thoughts on who provides oversight, Dunn correctly pointed out that WFO plays this role. Cliff suggested we add some verbiage to the photo part of the website (e.g., to direct readers to the Annual report part of the site for further information); Iliff will provide verbiage to Morlan for the website.

In response to some correspondence Heindel had with Brian Daniels regarding how to designate the appropriate county in which a sighting occurred, the committee was unanimous in not wanting to decide how various parties delineate political lines, usually for purposes of keeping lists. Morlan, after the meeting, forwarded the following language from previous Committee work, which accurately reflects our only interest in the use of county information:

"The following discussion about offshore jurisdiction and boundaries is provided solely for educational purposes. The California Bird Records Committee recognizes that there are many different methods to determine at-sea boundaries of a political unit such as a state or county. The detailed discussion that follows includes several such methods, including the one followed by the CBRC for data recording purposes. Please note that the CBRC reviews records only at the state level, such that any records outside of the CBRC designated state boundaries are not considered. By contrast, the CBRC makes no formal decisions regarding the county in which a particular bird at sea may have occurred, beyond listing the nearest point of land in published reports and in its database."

Bylaws: several clarifications were proposed.

A Morlan Dunn motion to reduce membership from 10 to 9 was, after significant discussion, accepted 9-1. New bylaw verbiage will be sent to Pete for addition to the website.

A Heindel/Morlan motion to remove the mention of "100 record" verbiage from the Review List passed 10-0. New bylaw verbiage will be sent to Pete for addition to the website. The committee agreed that given enough time, most rarities on the current review list will accumulate 100 records.

Heindel/Dunn Motion to re route batches upon resignation in the same fashion that batches are re routed in the event of removal. 10-0; we agreed that, in all cases, common sense will prevail to ensure a smooth process and, for batches that already are in the possession of the outgoing member, the Secretary and Chair will discuss the most appropriate handling. Heindel to create verbiage and submit to committee for approval; upon approval, send to Pete for addition to the website.

Heindel/Singer Motion to allow resubmissions to be handled by vote other than at Annual Meeting; specifically, the use of an electronic meeting should be allowed. Motion passed 10-0, with Heindel to create verbiage and submit to committee for approval; upon approval, send to Pete for addition to the website.

Although no members had an interest to appoint a bylaw subcommittee, Dunn asked Heindel to check with Cole on this issue.

3. Election of members.
  - 3a. Discussion of the future membership was held (including Calbird suggestions).
  - 3b. Election. The terms of Pyle, Nelson, Terrill, and Sterling expired.  
Nominations:  
Scott Terrill (Nelson, Heindel, Dunn)  
Dave Compton (Dunn, Nelson)  
Al Jaramillo (Heindel, Nelson, Terrill, Dunn)  
Susan Steele (Dunn)  
Jim Pike (Morlan, Heindel)  
Jim Tietz (Nelson)  
Elected were Terrill, Compton, and Jaramillo
4. Election of Secretary (one year term) - Nomination: Guy McCaskie (Heindel/Garrett), 10-0.
5. Election of Chair (one year term) – Nomination: Matt Heindel (Garrett/Nelson), 10-0.

6. Election of Vice-Chair (one year term) – Nomination: Dan Singer (Heindel/Morlan), 10-0.

The committee adjourned at 935 PM.

The committee reconvened at 815 AM, January 28.

7. State of the Committee.

- 7a. Annual reports.

2004 records: Nelson, Sterling and Cole. Draft in circulation

2005 records: McCaskie and Iliff

2006 records: Heindel and Garrett will author

Note from Phil Unitt: Please include photos/illustrations with the draft report.

Recent annual reports are available on-line at the CBRC website.

We agreed that a second round of review would be helpful to reduce the errors (that, in turn, require a corrigenda). Further, the authors should delegate specific tasks to reviewers, such as ensuring 2-3 members specifically check citations, scientific names, etc. Additional time needs to be built into the review process to accommodate these changes.

Heindel will confirm with Unitt, but we should accelerate the process to have these reports done by year-end.

- 7b. First state records and publication in *Western Birds*

These are not requirements, but offer a chance to highlight species of note. These reports should be reviewed by the CBRC and acknowledged as being a by-product of the committee. Certain species, such as Ringed Storm-Petrel, might be appropriate for other venues.

If authors do not make reasonable progress, and other members are interested in writing on the subject, we need to find a reasonable solution.

Falcatad Duck (Sterling)

Little Shearwater (Pyle and Shearwater)

Cory's Shearwater (Shearwater and McKee)

Crested Caracara (Cole and Iliff)

Magnificent Hummingbird

Oriental Turtle-Dove (Dunn)

Stonechat

Slaty-backed Gull

- 7c. Circulation (McCaskie/Heindel).

– Note member absence if you are holding batch. If you are leaving town, send an email to the entire committee so whoever is holding the batch can write the dates on the routing sheet. To help track batches, when you send a batch, send an email to the intended recipient, along with a copy to Heindel and McCaskie.

– Hold times generally good.

– Take care of the batch- you own it. Review for records in order; do not pour water! Fess up if something bad happens.

– 05C 10.5 weeks, including mailing- average was 3-4 days actual hold time. Incredible!

– Bird parts will not be circulated!

- 7d. Budget McCaskie sent an invoice to WFO
- 7e. Secretary's/Chair's comments:
- 1) do not add documentation to a record during circulation without checking
  - 2) it is not the sole responsibility of the Secretary or the Chair to solicit documentation that members know exists—do it yourself.
  - 3) not all documentation is circulated through the mail and the amount of extraneous material is now too much to view completely at the annual meeting; note that this particularly refers to videotapes;
  - 4) the Secretary may attempt to discourage reports of “obviously misidentified” birds, but if reporters persist, the record will circulate.
  - 5) If you ask for recirculation on “same bird/different bird” grounds, please make an argument one way or the other for the committee to consider.
  - 6) The Secretary and Chair are rather swamped; “You should do this” is not a favorite comment. Suggestions are always welcome, but will be more valuable if accompanied by help.
- 7f. Assignments/volunteers
- Public relations on the Internet (Garrett in 2006).
  - Maintaining and updating the CBRC photo gallery (Morlan in 2006)
8. Introduced Bird Subcommittee.
- 8a. Report Garrett: some progress, but we await to ensure we are adopting the same standards as other committees (e.g., 1000 birds, 15 years, publication requirement, no ongoing human assistance).
- 8b. Appointment of 2006 Subcommittee (Garrett, Morlan, and Iliff).
9. Proposed Review List changes. See attachment for brief explanation.
- Additions: Fulvous Whistling-Duck motion (Dunn/Singer) failed 5-5  
Northern Cardinal motion (Dunn/Singer) failed 5-5  
Rusty Blackbird motion (Heindel/Terrill) passed 10-0. All records of Rusty Blackbird will be reviewed from Jan 06.
- Deletions: Manx Shearwater (Heindel/Nelson) motion failed 4-6  
Red-tailed Tropicbird (Pyle discussion only)  
Yellow-throated Vireo (Nelson/? Failed 4-6  
Blue-headed Vireo- discussion only (Heindel discussion)
10. *Rare Birds of California* update (Heindel will create a sample presentation format for members to use in local community meetings)
11. Miscellaneous items.
- 11a. Group photo (Thanks to Brian Sullivan)
- 11b. State List: new birds include Crested Caracara, Stonechat, and Slaty-backed Gull. With the lumping of the wagtails, and the addition of Ringed

- Storm-Petrel the State List is 630, with Parkinson's Petrel, Solander's Petrel, and Green Violet-ear as potential first records in circulation.
- 11c. Pyle led a discussion on voting on hybrids; we use a scale for oystercatcher, but not for Golden-winged Warbler, Iceland Gull, Glossy Ibis, etc. We could not solve the problem and agree there is inconsistency. But, at a minimum, any future decisions involving potential hybrids will need to be documented in CBRC reports and members should be clear in their comments where they stand on each record of a potential hybrid.
  - 11d. Trumpeter Swan relocation votes: the committee treats swans that are relocated to an area that were not historical breeding grounds, as rejected on the basis of natural occurrence.
  - 11e. Obvious escapee records (European Goldfinch, White-cheeked Pintail, etc). Dunn/Singer motion that the Secretary will bring the file of reports of birds he believes pertain to escapees to the Annual Meeting. By a majority vote of the committee, the committee can circulate a particular record. Motion passed 10-0. The committee should publish the list of species not reviewed (as believed to be pertaining to escapees) in the Annual Report, so there is at least some documentation.  
Dunn/Heindel motion to circulate Bahama Pintail failed 5-5.  
Dunn/Terrill motion to circulate Common Chaffinch passed 6-4.
  - 11f. Missing records from WFVZ- it appears we are in good shape relative to the number of "missing" records; they are most likely filed under the wrong name. WFVZ has an excellent control system in place.
  - 11g. A photographer requested a letter for CBRC "authorization" to take photos, believing it might be of value on sensitive property. Heindel will draft a letter.
  - 11h. 05 Meeting unfinished list  
The Great Kiskadee discussed last year will be circulated.  
The Hudsonian Godwit mentioned is still in unknown whereabouts. Dunn will check potential New Zealand museum sites.  
Heindel will try again to contact Mark Brazil for comment on David Vander Pluym's Whooper Swan.
12. Other records for which the Chairman/Secretary need direction or assistance.  
Iceland Gull- records of Iceland Gull, once held by the Committee in the hopes of better understanding taxonomy and identification, will circulate without delay.  
Harris's Hawk- given the species irruptive pattern, the Committee will review records of this species in 5 year intervals.  
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck from Imperial, rejected on natural occurrence 10-0.
  13. Records brought to the meeting at the request of a member.  
  
Falcated Duck- record 128-1986 from ORA will recirculate Dunn/Garrett 10-0.  
With the elevation of this species from the Supplemental List, the committee agreed to re-review the ORA record.  
Short-tailed Albatross- record 2005-096 accepted; Pyle wants this record along with two others to circulate to resolve the same bird issue. Pyle request (does not need a second, since this was first round)  
Common Black-Hawk Pyle/Morlan recirculate record 2000-156 (Lisa Hug), 10-0,

given the presence of the recent bird in the same area.  
 Golden-Plovers- will circulate with the identification discussion from 1/27.  
 Common Greenshank The observer asked Heindel to see if the committee would review his sighting, since there is now an accepted record. Iloff/Nelson motion to recirculate record 1995-004, 9-1.  
 Mourning Warbler SCI record discussed by Heindel and Iloff; no action.  
 Orchard Oriole Dunn wanted his previously accepted record (18-1973) rejected; the committee obliged and the record stands as rejected.  
 Yellow-throated Vireo SCI 2005-073 2 birds Iloff/Dunn motion to recirculate to consider the record as pertaining to two different birds, passed 10-0.  
 Blue-headed Vireo batch- 5 records to continue circulation.  
 Roseate Spoonbill batch- will continue circulation.  
 Eastern Yellow Wagtail 2004-139 Sterling - tied to ID discussion. No action needed.  
 Veery on Point Reyes MRN 1 Oct 2004 2004-151 Pyle/Iloff motion to continue circulation.  
 Baird's Sparrow 2003-134, Ornithologists from LSU questioned the identification based on the published photograph in WB. After review, the committee felt the photos pertained to a Baird's Sparrow as published. Heindel will obtain other pictures and copies of the record, to send to LSU for their review.  
 Snow Bunting SCI Iloff/Nelson motion to circulate to resolve s/b (since this is a second round, a vote is not needed).  
 Painted Bunting 2004-215 Arcata HUM 14 Dec 2004 Pyle requested recirc, given its occurrence outside the typical pattern.  
 Green Violet-ear 1978-040 30 Jul- 1 Aug 1977 Mt. Pinos KRN Iloff/Dunn motion to recirculate based on "new and substantial" photo evidence, 10-0.

14. Records without a decision after completion of third circulation. In reading record comments, Heindel selected members to lead the conversation of the record.
  - 2003-117 Long-billed Murrelet Trinidad HUM 30 Aug-2 Sep 2003 (Pyle, Nelson)
  - 2003-151 Long-billed Murrelet in SCZ 19-25 Aug 2003 (Terrill, Sterling)
  - 2003-081 Ruddy Ground-Dove at FCR INY 3 Nov 2002-23 May 2003 (Heindel, Iloff)
  - 2003-169 Bulwer's Petrel off San Clemente Island 04 Sep 2003 (Dunn, Pyle, Heindel)
  - 2003-205 Glossy Ibis Glossy Ibis near Calipatria 8 July 2000 (Dunn, Iloff)
  - 2001-057A Black Rosy-Finch Montgomery Creek Ranch near Benton, MNO (Singer, Morlan)
  - 2004-115 Snow Bunting in Tilden Park CC 28 Nov 2002 (Garrett, Terrill)

15. Supplemental List.
  - Barnacle Goose Morlan/Singer motion to elevate Barnacle Goose failed 3-7.

16. Closing.
  - 16a. Site and date of next meeting: – January 26,27 2007 with a location to be determined, probably WFVZ or at Heindel's house in Carlsbad.
  - 16b. Appreciations:
    - Linnea Hall, Peg Stevens, Chrystal Klabunde and WFVZ for ongoing support of archiving records;

Peter LaTourrette for web work  
Pyle, Nelson, and Sterling for time served (and a little appreciation for  
Terrill with a little time served!)  
HT Harvey for phenomenal hosting of our meeting, from excellent  
facilities, food, IT department, etc.  
Linda Terrill for hospitality above and beyond.  
Bill Gabrielson and Trepte Construction for continued support .  
Carla Cicero, Maureen Flannery, Claudia Angle, and Roger Clapp; we  
gain so much from our friends at various museums.  
The Committee owes a special (and belated) thanks to David Vander  
Pluym. David undertook an ambitious project to scan many of the records  
to provide a digital archive. A recent review demonstrated a substantial  
number of records, particularly those of our rarest birds, have already  
been scanned.

16c. Adjournment at 330 PM Morlan/Nelson, 10-0.

Brian Sullivan provided an overview of eBird and solicits our help to gain greater  
participation in the west.  
The upcoming WFO meeting dates have been set for 9/14-17, 2007 in Boulder CO. The  
Records Committee panel is 9/15 and the ID panel is 9/16.

Matt T. Heindel, Chair



Explanation of Review List discussion

Fulvous Whistling-Duck (written by Iliff)

**Status of Fulvous Whistling-Duck in California**

\*From Patten, McCaskie and Unitt (2003):

“In California it formerly bred commonly in the Central Valley and along the coast of southern California, as well as in marshes in the southeastern deserts (Willett 1912; Grinnell and Miller 1944). Even in the mid-1960s at least 20 pairs nested in the Imperial Valley (AFN 20:546). Subsequently the Fulvous Whistling-Duck has become alarmingly scarce. In California this elegant species is currently restricted as a breeder to the Imperial Valley, where it is **on the verge of extirpation**. Most breeding records are from Finney and Ramer Lakes, although the species has been found around the Alamo River delta near Red Hill (AB 42:1339; see below). During most of the 1990s there were fewer than five breeding pairs in the region. By the end of that decade the story was even more grim: a female with three ducklings near Red Hill 27 June 1998 (G. McCaskie) and a female with ten ducklings at Finney Lake 27 July 1999 (NAB 53:432) **provided the only nesting evidence during those summers. Only four adults were detected in summer 2000**, with no evidence of nesting (NAB 54:422), and **only one bird was found in summer 2001** (NAB 56:356), although as many as **nine were in the Imperial Valley from 10 to 28 June 2002** (NAB 56:486).”

“Before 1980 the Fulvous Whistling-Duck wintered annually in the Imperial Valley...it is now casual in winter, averaging one record (often of small flocks) every three to four years.”

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From *North American Birds* (Southern Pacific Coast region) covering spring 2003 through winter 2004-05. Fulvous Whistling-Duck was mentioned only in spring 2003 and spring 2004, when it seemed to occur as a “spring overshoot” only:

“Two Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, now believed extirpated as a breeding bird in California, were near Westmoreland, *Imperial*, 23 Apr [2003] (AK).” (NAB 57:402-3).

“Nine Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were reported in the Imperial Valley, including 7 near El Centro, *Imperial*, 19 Apr [2004] (SNGH). (NAB 58:433)

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Thus, 1999 was the last year with confirmed breeding. I reviewed *North American Birds* from 1998–2005 with the results shown below. The species seemed to draw mandatory mention only from 2000 on, as the 1999 year mentioned only the lone breeding record and the 1998 volumes did not even mention the lone breeding record during that year. Totals records for past six years (# individuals in parenthesis):

1998 – NAB has no mention of species, although lone breeding record cited by Patten et al. (2003)

1999 – NAB mentions only breeding record cited in Patten et al. (2003)

2000 – 2 (4), “two pairs”; 2001 – 1 (1); 2002 – 1 (9) – per NAB 56:486; 2003 – 1 (2); 2004 – 2-3 (9); 2005 – \_\_\_

**Total since 2000 = 6-7 record (25 ind.)**

A couple additional thoughts:

- 1) Escapee issues in the San Bernardino region certainly will complicate review of this species.
- 2) Several records this winter (Santa Barbara, Los Angeles) may approach the 4/year threshold.

**Recommendation:** Although the CBRC typically does not consider species for the review list unless the number of records for the past 10 years is fewer than 4/year, in this case it seems clear that the path of Fulvous Whistling-Duck is that of extirpation from the state. Perhaps even the 1998 and 1999 breeding records could be seen as outliers, and the species almost certainly reaches the <4 records/yr threshold for the past 10 years. However, the fact that it bred in the state continuously until 1999 may mean that it deserves a longer wait time until being added to the review list. Nonetheless, the species should be considered formally within the next 2-4 years, and certainly no later than 2009 (the ten-year anniversary of its extirpation as a breeding bird).

Northern Cardinal

A lively debate ensued over the review of this species. While all members agreed that the species has radically declined as a naturally occurring vagrant to the State, many members felt we would end up reviewing only records from the areas where they are all felt to be escapees (such as from the coastal southern California metropolitan areas). Our current bylaws do not allow for the picking-and-choosing of which records of a species to review.

Rusty Blackbird

Given the decline of the population of this species in its natural range, and the expected concordant decline in records to California, this species was placed on the Review List.

Manx Shearwater

While most of the committee agreed that reviewing this species was a bit trying, there were concerns about moving too quickly. The committee is sensitive to reversing decisions and the inconsistency of a liberal policy of adding and removing a species from the review list. In this case, this species is thought to possibly breed along the Pacific Coast; if a local colony were responsible for our records and that colony were wiped out by predators (which frequently happens), we could easily find ourselves with no Manx Shearwaters.

Red-tailed Tropicbird

Pyle led a discussion on the relatively large numbers of this species over deep waters, at and just beyond our waters. The committee agrees this situation deserves close monitoring as, in spite of the fact the species is a mega-rarity close to land, it appears to be regular far off our coast.

#### Yellow-throated Vireo

Nelson led a discussion reviewing the numbers of this species. The species is close to the threshold of 4/year. But, there have been a couple if years with large numbers of this species, somewhat skewing the numbers. Most of the committee felt it was more conservative to continue to review this species and give the pattern more time to develop.

#### Blue-headed Vireo

Heindel led a discussion on this species, but without an intent to put it to vote. The recent average is <4/yr and while the species can be difficult to evaluate, the committee will give this species more time on the review list.