

CALIFORNIA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the annual meeting conducted 16 January 1999 at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology in Camarillo, California (prepared by M.T. Heindel and Richard A. Erickson)

Present: R.A. Erickson (Chair), K.L. Garrett, M.T. Heindel (Vice Chair), Guy McCaskie, Joseph Morlan, M.M. Rogers (Secretary), S.C. Rottenborn, Mike San Miguel, and D.S. Singer. [R.A. Hamilton and M.A. Patten joined later - see item 3b below] For the record, member S.N.G. Howell resigned effective 16 November 1998 and Rogers was made a Voting Member at that time, by special election.

1. Called to Order at 0912 (Chairman presiding).

2. Approval of 1998 Minutes and the Latest Minor Bylaw Changes.

2a. Approval of 1998 minutes - San Miguel/Heindel motion (9-0). At Morlan's suggestion, and by consensus, a bracketed editorial comment by Erickson was removed under 15d9.

2b. Approval of Bylaw changes - Morlan/Erickson (9-0). The latest minor Bylaw changes were reviewed by Morlan and approved by consensus (as they were verbiage related, not substantive issues): 1) section III-H was doubled, so the paragraph on Compensation is changed to section "III-I;" 2) section VI-H used the acronym "CBRC," which was not otherwise defined, so it is replaced by "the Committee."

2c. As a point of clarity, Heindel noted that in the 1998 minutes, item 15d3, the committee reaffirmed the fact that no discussion is to occur between members during the first circulation. The committee had amended the original bylaw and, as stated in the 1989 meeting, such discussions can occur, as long as there is no attempt to lobby or persuade another member.

2d. The minutes for the meeting in Arcata were approved - Morlan/Erickson motion (9-0). There was a minor amendment to the end of the minutes (under Item 3) that was approved by an Erickson/McCaskie motion (9-0): "Morlan requested attachment of the ABA Checklist Committee comments."

3. Election of members.

3a. Discussion of the future membership.

We discussed our perennial problem of determining who are the potential members to be watching/coaching? We seem to have plenty of candidates in the northern half of the State, but are continually concerned about the lack of candidates from southern California. We need to remain vigilant in seeking these

people out and determining how we can cultivate interest.

- 3b. Election. The terms of Garrett, San Miguel, and Singer expired at the end of the meeting. Nominations for the three openings were:

Chris Corben (Morlan)
Robert A. Hamilton (Erickson, San Miguel)
Nick Lethaby (Rottenborn)
Bert McKee (Rogers, Rottenborn)
Michael A. Patten (Erickson, Garrett, Heindel, San Miguel)
Peter Pyle (Erickson, Garrett, Heindel, San Miguel)
Scott B. Terrill (Heindel)

After voting, the three new members were Hamilton, Patten, and Pyle. Hamilton and Patten, present at the museum, joined the meeting in a non-voting role at this time.

4. Election of Secretary (one year term).

Nomination: Michael M. Rogers (Erickson). Elected 9-0.

5. Election of Chairman (one year term).

Nomination: Richard A. Erickson (Heindel) Elected 9-0.

6. Election of Vice-Chairman (one year term).

Nomination: Matthew T. Heindel (Erickson) Elected 9-0.

7. State of the Committee.

7a. Annual reports.

1995 records (Garrett and Singer) - published in WB 29:133-156.

1996 records (McCaskie and San Miguel) - to be published in WB 30(2).

1997 records (Morlan and Rottenborn) - first draft needed by 15 August 1999 for inclusion in WB 31(1).

1998 records (Erickson and Heindel) - first draft planned for 15 February 2000 for inclusion in WB 31(3).

- 7b. Garrett (8.26.98): “.. some (Dan Gibson, especially) have suggested that our reports should be considered to be authored by the “California Bird Records Committee” rather than by individual author(s). This makes the reports easier to find in bibliographies/reference lists, and reflects the fact that the whole committee puts a lot of work into the reports. On the other hand, it might diminish the hard work the volunteer authors have to put into the report (and make it harder to find members to volunteer to write the reports?). Also, the citations for the committee reports are easily found on our web site. So there are pros and cons, but I suggest we think about this and discuss it at our meeting next January. In fairness to those already preparing the next report(s), perhaps we should have such a change take effect with the next unclaimed report, if we even opt for such a change.”

After discussion, no action was determined to be necessary. Reports will be listed under "California Bird Records Committee" in Western Birds indices.

- 7c. Circulation (email). See discussion below (7f). It was also noted that members need to keep records in the order in which they are assembled. Heindel noted getting the Iceland Gull records in disarray.
- 7d. Budget was exceeded by \$150 on mail charges. Garrett will discuss with the WFO Board but in general, everyone agrees that Rogers should not incur any financial drain. Garrett asked Rogers to supply receipts to Dori Myers, WFO Treasurer.
- 7e. Secretary's comments and duties. (See 7f)
- 7f. Work load reduction (Rogers).

Rogers, understandably, explained the rather time-consuming nature of his duties. An area of interest, in that it would make the Committee more productive and make data easier to manage, is automation. But, volunteers and easy solutions are not forthcoming. Morlan will discuss this with Pete LaTourette.

Rottenborn will oversee a request for volunteers. Rogers will provide verbiage for a paragraph inviting volunteers for what we need. Rottenborn will field responses and share them with Rogers to determine a next step. We also discussed the potential (subject to the availability of funds) of hiring someone to help us get automated.

Another issue needed members' attention. If a member needs additional material for a record (particularly if the record is in jeopardy), Rogers insisted that members seek this information directly. Rogers will help with addresses, phone numbers, etc., but cannot handle requests from all of us.

Due to Rogers' email overload (a mixed blessing as it suggests interest on the part of the public), we agreed that Morlan would have the website changed to direct rarity descriptions to Rogers and general questions and comments to San Miguel. In turn, if a question would be more appropriately handled by someone else on the Committee, San Miguel will forward it accordingly. A link to Morlan's website will accommodate those with more general interests in California birding.

- 7g. Assignments/volunteers.

1. Resignation of David Blue as Technical Support Specialist. Heindel wrote: "Due to unanticipated demands at work, David has not been able to assist in the technical work both he and the Committee were expecting. Therefore, he will resign this unofficial position and the Committee will search for other(s) to assume some of these important duties."

2. Public relations on the Internet. Garrett will remain the point person and will

coordinate with Erickson and others to ensure message consistency.

3. Presentations at WFO Annual Meetings:

Alaska 1999 - unlikely, Garrett will advise.

Kern 2000 - Heindel.

4. Web site, including proposed search engine (see 7g5).

5. Merging of the databases- Morlan reviewed the situation relative to our moving into the information age. In general, we have significant problems with the database and need to find a way to get this addressed (see 7e). Patten suggested possibly using the data format used in the book to see if this would help, and it might. We need the script from Blue and will see how compatible these are.

Morlan also discussed abandoning the two-format master list and returning to the old word processor system, but there was little support for that, in part because, all the records from recent years would need to be input to the old system.

6. CBRC involvement with local bird clubs - Heindel discussed developing a CBRC presentation for local bird clubs as a method of broadening interest, educating, and acting as a PR effort. Garrett pointed out that other audiences might be interested (e.g., local Audubon chapters) may welcome the idea, but the level of information might need to be adjusted. The Committee agreed with the concept and Heindel will develop two basic presentations, along with a list of slide dupes to use in these presentations. Members should supply a list of potential groups and forward to Heindel. Garrett will share his experience on these issues. Morlan said that he may be willing to serve as a presenter.

7. CBRC cooperation with other records committees - Heindel discussed his involvement with members of the AZ committee and encouraged a more proactive role with other committees. The exchange can only strengthen our conviction on things that we believe we do well and challenge in areas where we ought to reconsider our methods. One suggestion is that we specifically seek out members from other committees at WFO meetings and have informal discussions.

Further, we discussed a more formal approach to expanding cooperation between committees. One potential outcome would be to generate participation in a regional or national rarities committee conference. Heindel will contact key members of other committees and gauge the interest in this project. Patten and others will assist in this venture.

8. Guidance on an attempt to address spatial and temporal rarities within California- Heindel presented the latest discussion of this topic with an overview of options. The goal (in accordance with one of our purposes as stated in the Bylaws) is to increase the knowledge of birds in California. The problem with

such an attempt has been primarily due to two reasons: confusion and workload. Potential solutions to these issues were discussed including, for the first time, the consideration of finding means outside of the committee, to assist in this pursuit. The Committee agreed that Heindel (along with Rogers and Patten) should continue looking into this to present at some future point.

8. Proposed Bylaw Changes.

- 8a. Heindel proposed to change the word “validate” to “endorse” at the beginning of Section II.A. Heindel/Erickson motion (9-0). Morlan will change this on the website. Erickson/San Miguel motion (9-0) to change “validation” form to “voting” form (sections III.D.4.e, VI.F.2.c, and VI.G.1).
- 8b. Erickson proposed a change of Bylaws language and other internal language concerning “Reject” vs. “Not Accepted.” All verbiage in bylaws will be changed from “rejected” to “not accepted” (or do not accept, depending on grammatical requirements). Erickson/ Heindel motion (9-0). Affected sections: III.E.4.f, VI.D.1, VI.D.2, VI.E, VI.G.2.b, VI.G.5, VI.G.7, VI.G.10-12, VI.H, and VI.I.3.
- 8c. Change the first sentence of Article VI, Section D.2 from “Records previously receiving a final rejected decision must receive all or all but one ‘accept’ votes to reverse that decision and become accepted” to “...must receive all or all but one ‘accept’ votes to reverse a record not accepted on identification or establishment of population, or all but two ‘accept’ votes to reverse a record not accepted on natural occurrence grounds, with the exception that two ‘not accept’ votes based on identification will always result in a decision of ‘not accepted, identification not established.’” Garrett/Erickson motion (9-0)
- 8d. Garrett pointed out the need to change what must be a typo from the bylaws in VI.B.6 to change “temporarily” to “temporally.” Garrett/Erickson motion (9-0).
- 8e. See also 2b above.

9. Report of the Introduced Birds Subcommittee.

- 9a. Chairman Garrett has completed a status review of the Red-crowned Parrot and will consult with other Subcommittee members before presenting it to the entire Committee. Garrett sought, and received, agreement from Committee members that they will review the package objectively, without bias against introduced birds or parrots in particular.
- 9b. In an effort to gain greater visibility and support for the Subcommittee, Erickson suggested that the Subcommittee develop a page on the existing CBRC site. The Committee agreed; Morlan will begin work on this.

- 9c. Appointment of the 1999 Subcommittee: Garrett, Morlan, and San Miguel will continue to serve.
10. Proposed Review List changes.
(actually discussed at the end of the meeting, following Item 13).
Additions:
 American Golden-Plover (Howell)
 Bohemian Waxwing (San Miguel)
 Cape May Warbler (San Miguel)
 No motions were offered on any of the above-mentioned species. If they intend to discuss the addition of a species, members were strongly encouraged to provide some form of analysis (i.e., reports from recent years) for the discussion.
 Deletions:
 Manx Shearwater- no action
 Tricolored Heron- Erickson/Rogers motion failed 4-5
 Reddish Egret- Rogers/San Miguel motion failed 3-6
 Zone-tailed Hawk Rogers/McCaskie motion passed 6-3
 Little Gull- no action
 Dusky-capped Flycatcher- no action
 Gray Catbird- Rogers/San Miguel motion failed 3-6
 Philadelphia Vireo- San Miguel/Rogers motion passed 6-3
 Yellow-green Vireo no action
 Yellow-throated Warbler no action
 Worm-eating Warbler no action
 Mourning Warbler- Rogers/Morlan motion failed 3-6
 Scarlet Tanager- Rogers/ San Miguel motion failed 2-7
 Snow Bunting- no action
 Zone-tailed Hawk and Philadelphia Vireo are removed from the Review List.
 Records after 1998 will no longer be reviewed.

11. Records for which Chairman/Secretary need direction.

- 11a. Eastern Wood-Pewee - 21 Oct 86 Cayucos SLO 26-1987-13 vote to recirculate passed 6-3
- 11b. collared Trumpeter Swans from managed populations:
 2 Feb 87 (2) Lower Klamath NWR SIS1987-153-15 (accepted, but never published)
 1 Jan-15 Feb 88 L. Almanor PLU
 23 Jan 92 Tecopa INY 1992-206 (ph.)
 24-28 Dec 92 (3) Thibaut Pond, nr. Independence INY
 and 5 Apr 93 Klondike L. INY 1993-065 (ph.)
 30 Nov - 26 Dec 1993 (2) Modoc NWR MOD 1994-004 (published as “not accepted, natural occurrence questionable” in WB 29:153)
 The Committee agreed that records from managed/manipulated populations are to

be “not accepted, establishment of introduced population questionable.” Records will not be circulated if, based on a neckband, the bird in question is known to come from such a population. [A formal vote to overturn the three records with final decisions was actually obtained via a special email vote taken 25-27 January 1999.]

- 11c. Ruddy Ground-Dove - 26 Nov 92 22 km N of Blythe RIV 1994-072
(#LACM) no action
- 11d. Common Redpoll - 23 Dec 1899 PLU 1992-051 (#SDNHM). We are not certain of the specimen locality. Rottenborn will check with Dennis Paulson to see if any further light can be shed. Then, the record will recirculate.
- 11e. Eurasian Kestrel - May 1973 Humboldt Bay HUM 1996-005 (ph.)
The record will recirculate with copies of correspondence between Garrett and Clayton M. White..
- 11f. Solander's Petrels (1985-068, 1986-402, and 1986-404).
These records were never published as rejected Solander's. They were subsequently reviewed as Murphy's. They will also be published as “not accepted” Solander's.
- 11g. Red-footed Booby 1996-117 Santa Barbara Channel SBA stands as rejected.
Heindel/Garrett motion to recirculate as Brown Booby (9-0).
- 11h. Manx Shearwater - Report authors must synthesize data and make decisions on how many were on Monterey Bay, in this case, in 1996.
- 11i. Blue-footed Booby (1996-110) 1 Sep - 6 Oct 1996 Salton Sea, RIV/IMP -
how many? Erickson will amend the report as McCaskie spelled out in Field Notes.
- 11j. Little Gull - how many at the N end of the Salton Sea in 1996? The Committee agreed 5-4 that there were “3, maybe 4.” Erickson will adjust the report.
- 11k. Yellow-green Vireo (1996-172 and 1997-051) Carmel River mouth MTY October 1996 - subsume the latter in the former? Since the CBRC thought these records pertained to the same bird (and since some of the local birding community thought otherwise), we will publish both records.
- 11l. Gray Silky-flycatcher 1993-146 Pt. Loma SD June 1983 - Decision (Not accepted, identification not established) reached 31 March 1994, but never published. This will be published in a subsequent report.

11m. Tricolored Heron - the birds from Bolsa Chica and Seal Beach (record #'s needed) will be treated as the same bird (9-0).

12. Records brought to the meeting at the request of a member.

12a. Worm-eating Warbler (1988-022) 28 May 1981 SE Farallon I. SF (Erickson) moved to Appendix B for statistical purposes in 1998 in error, see 12c. Since a formal vote was required, Morlan motioned to move to Appendix B at this time, but there was no second. Will stand as "Not accepted."

12b. Worm-eating Warbler (1996-065) 21 Oct 72 Pacific Grove, MTY
Stopped in circulation and moved to Appendix B Erickson/Heindel motion (9-0).

12c. "The Roberson Ten" (nine records from 1980 and earlier plus the Worm-eating Warbler discussed previously - 1988-022). Formal approval of last year's decision to move these from "Not accepted" to Appendix B - "Unreviewed" was needed (no vote was taken/recorded, as required). The records through 1980 were approved to move to Appendix B - Erickson/Heindel motion (9-0). The records to be moved are:

Reddish Egret (1989-094) 18 Aug 1969 Pt. Mugu lagoon VEN
Emperor Goose (1989-094) 14-29 Dec 1968 (2) Limantour Estero MRN
Tufted Duck (1989-326) 23 Feb 1980 Cape Mendocino HUM
Yellow-throated Warbler (1989-093) 21-28 Sep 1969 Carmel R. mouth MTY
Yellow-throated Warbler (1988-020) 4 June 1978 SE Farallon I. SF
Yellow-throated Warbler (1988-021) 2-7 May 1980 SE Farallon I. SF
Prothonotary Warbler (1987-152) 30 Sept-11 Oct 1979 Malibu LA
Worm-eating Warbler (1987-204) 5 June 1973 SE Farallon I. SF
Snow Bunting (1987-251) 26 Oct 1972 SE Farallon I. SF

12d. Manx Shearwater (1979-029) 27 Aug 1977 Monterey Bay MTY (WB 19:156-157) Morlan/Rogers motion to recirculate (6-3). Will be resubmitted.

12e. Band-tailed Gull (1988-076) 9 Nov 1987-22 Jan 1988 San Nicolas I. VEN (WB 26:21-22). Morlan/San Miguel motion to recirculate, given the recent accepted record (8-1). Will be resubmitted.

12f. Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel (1997-137) 6 Sep 97 SW of San Miguel Island, VEN
Rottenborn/McCaskie motion to recirculate and send on 3rd round.

12g. Yellow-green Vireo (1994-142) 2 Oct 94 Consumnes R. Preserve SAC
Morlan/Erickson motion to send on 4th and final (see Item 13).

12h. Common Pochard (1995-082) 26 Dec 1994 Bolsa Chica, ORA Morlan/Erickson motion to recirculate for 3rd round.

12i. Three-toed Woodpecker (1985-146)- Heindel/Erickson motion to re-review this accepted record, passed 6-2, 1 abstention. Will be resubmitted.

12j. White-winged Crossbill (1979-005) - Heindel/Garrett motion to re-review this accepted record, failed 4-5. Will stand as "Accepted."

13. Records without a decision after completion of the third round.

(actually discussed at the end of the meeting, prior to Item 10). All will be sent to the existing Committee for a fourth and final round.

Yellow-billed Loon (1995-019) 6 Jan 1995 Morro Bay SLO (John Sterling)

Parkinson's Petrel (1996-076) 7 Jun 1996 SW of SE Farallon I, SF (Ainley, Pyle)

Zone-tailed Hawk (1994-203) 23 Oct 1994 Los Angeles LA (G. Phillips)

Crested Caracara (1993-196) 14 Dec 1993 Westmorland, IMP (Roger Higson)

Little Gull (1996-149) 9 Nov 96, Sunset SB, SCZ (David Suddjian)

Broad-billed Hummingbird (1995-006) 1 Nov 1994 Huntington Beach ORA
(Steve Morris)

Thick-billed Kingbird (1995-043) 22 Apr 1995 Puente Hills LA (Larry Schmahl)

Yellow-green Vireo (1994-142) 2 Oct 1994 Consumnes R. Preserve SAC
(Trochet/Langham) - see Item 12g

Northern Wheatear (1995-116) 26 Sep 95, Bodega Bay, SON (photo, the Spitalniks)

Yellow Wagtail (1995-129) 4 Sep 95, Tomales Bay, MRN (Todd Easterla)

Pine Warbler (1996-056) 24 Oct 95, Iron Mtn. Pumping Plant, SBE (photo, Gene Cardiff)

Mourning Warbler (1994-154) 15-18 Sep 1994 Galileo Hill KER (Heindel, Dunn, McCaskie)

Painted Bunting (1995-013) 3 Sep 93, Huntington Beach, ORA (Morris/Willick)

Black Rosy-Finch (1995-033) 11 Feb 95 - 1 Apr 95, Aspendell, INY [1 April only
- Nick Freeman]

14. Supplemental List - no action.

15. Miscellaneous items.

15a. Elliott's Storm-Petrel report just outside our waters (Erickson) no action

15b. Status of the California Rarities book- Patten reviewed the draft and asked for general feedback. He has a list of volunteer work needed and people need to communicate with him as to what they can do. The introduction needs more work and we need to be consistent in format between the various authors. Patten will continue to coordinate.

15c. State List:

Nesting annotations- Erickson received support for his proposal that we note

nesting species on the State List. In general, this is not believed to be a work-intensive project. Hamilton and Patten will assist.

California Condor - extirpated status? (Erickson)- no action

Barred Owl - A tape of record 1982-026 was played for the Committee - the tape will be archived at WFVZ. A "T" will be added to Barred Owl on the State List - Erickson/Heindel motion (9-0).

- 15d. Review of all Lesser Black-backed Gull records- Heindel discussed all records he reviewed of this species. By consensus, the committee agreed that we will add a disclaimer to the Lesser Black-backed Gull records (as published in reports and in the CBRC book) that Heuglin's Gull (*L. heuglini/taimyrensis*) may not be eliminated.
- 15e. Review of Painted Bunting records 1985-139, 1986-262, 1987-138, and 1996-059 in light of Hamilton's analysis. Erickson/Singer motion to review records passed 7-0, 2 abstentions.
- 15f. Addition of explanatory footnotes to the Bylaws - no action
- 15g. Sharing (posting on internal website?) of second, third, and fourth round comments - cf. British Birds Records Committee Discussed earlier (7g7); the Committee generally saw this as unnecessary.
- 15h. "Problem" observers - informative discussion, but no action desired or taken.
- 15i. Potential additions to the CBRC publications list - brief discussion; no change/no action
- 15j. "Should we consider publishing annual reports on our web site in addition to Western Birds?" The general sentiment was to publish only the most recent report, after it is out to subscribers and ONLY IF it does not impact subscription (some suggested it may actually increase membership); Phil Unitt has agreed to this proposal.
- 15k. Trumpeter Swan Society statements, survey, etc. Rogers and Patten communicate with the TSS. It is difficult to deal with the TSS when they claim the CA wintering population is 50-200 birds. But, we are now getting constant feedback and hope to better understand this, and better control their claims. No written action (in terms of publishing anything contra TSS) without Committee discussion.
- 15l. CBRC Archive? - history, memos, email log etc. Erickson discussed archiving the preceding items and WFVZ is willing to accommodate whatever we decide. No action, although the consensus was not to archive email.

15m. Posting of observers' names on the Internet; in a message to Rogers, Gary Fellers wrote: "I think it is a really poor idea to post the names of folks that you think should have provided documentation to the CBRC. For various reasons I don't care to go into, I rarely write descriptions. If you or others post names of folks who report birds, the effect will be fewer calls to the local rare bird alert. I have no problem with general calls for descriptions including mention of certain birds of interest. What you have done is rather like posting bounced checks at the local drug store. It's ok at the drug store, but it is inappropriate here."

The Committee believed that Rogers did the right thing, and encouraged him to continue posting such messages, in spite of the above complaint.

16. Closing.

16a. Site and date of next meeting planned for Alviso on 15 January 2000.

16b. Appreciations:

David V. Blue - for two years of service to the CBRC, one as Secretary and one as Technical Support Specialist

Jon Fisher, Peg Stevens, and WFVZ - for ongoing support in archiving CBRC records and for accommodating this meeting. Heindel mentioned the need for doing more than written thanks and will find some type of appropriate basket of goodies as thanks from the CBRC. Once completed he will let the Committee know what has been done.

Kimball Garrett, Steve Howell, Mike San Miguel, and Dan Singer - for varying years of service to the CBRC;

Walter Wehtje and family - for hosting the Friday night gathering and housing CBRC members away from home

16c. Adjournment at 1934, at the Motel 6 in Camarillo (after moving there at 1800).