

California Bird Records Committee

Minutes of the annual meeting conducted 14-15 January 2000 at the offices of H.T. Harvey and Associates in San Jose, California (prepared by M.T. Heindel and Richard A. Erickson)

FRIDAY NIGHT (14 January 2000)

Present: R.A. Erickson (Chairman), R.A. Hamilton, M.T. Heindel (Vice Chairman), Alvaro Jaramillo, Guy McCaskie, Joseph Morlan, M.A. Patten, Peter Pyle, M.M. Rogers (Secretary), and S.C. Rottenborn. S.B. Terrill (non-voting) joined after the election.

1. Called to order at 1900 (Chairman presiding).

2. Election of members.

2a. Discussion of the future membership and the need to continue to search for potential candidates throughout the year.

2b. Election. The terms of Erickson, McCaskie, Morlan, and Rottenborn expired.

Nominations:

Jon L. Dunn (Heindel, Morlan)
Kimball L. Garrett (Morlan, Patten)
Bert McKee (Erickson, Pyle, Rogers)
Scott B. Terrill (Erickson, Heindel)
John C. Wilson (Heindel)

After discussion, Dunn, Garrett, McKee, and Terrill were elected.

3. Election of Secretary (one year term).

Nomination: Michael M. Rogers (Erickson)

Rogers was elected. Due to the workload, Rogers will likely retire next year; members need to be considering options.

4. Election of Chair (one year term).

Nominations:

Dunn (Erickson)
Heindel (Erickson)

After discussion, Dunn was elected; Heindel is moving to Texas. A transition, with the assistance of Garrett and Erickson, will occur during the first half of the year, since Dunn is not yet settled in California.

5. Election of Vice-Chair (one year term).

Nomination: Garrett (Erickson)

Garrett elected.

6. Miscellaneous.

6a. (from 8b below) Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel 1997-137, 6 Sep 97, SW of San Miguel I. VEN (Pyle). After slides and a lengthy discussion, Pyle/Jaramillo motion to continue circulation (10-0).

6b. (from 8c below) Red-tailed Tropicbird 1989-099, 11 Aug 1988, 220 nmi ssw. San Nicolas I. VEN (Patten, Pyle). Patten/Hamilton motion that, pending calculation of coordinates thought outside our waters, this accepted record will be withdrawn (10-0).

6c. (from 8k below) Bridled/Gray-backed Tern 1993-144, 12 June 1993 Bolsa Chica ORA

(Pyle). In light of recent records of Bridled Tern at Bolsa Chica, Pyle/Erickson motion to review again (10-0).

- 6d. (from 8l below) Bridled Tern 1998-105, 17 Jul 1998 Bolsa Chica ORA (Patten). Concern was expressed over the amount of white in the tail as described, which seems to indicate that either this was an Atlantic bird or the variation in this character in Pacific birds is not understood. This should be dealt with cautiously in the report. Record stands as accepted, first for California.
- 6e. (from 8p below) Greater Pewee 1998-116, 1 Jun 1998, SE Farallon I. SF (Rogers). After slides and discussion, Rogers/Jaramillo motion to continue circulation (10-0).
- 6f. (from 8r below) Blue-headed Vireo 1998-216, 20 Oct 1998, San Nicolas I. VEN (Pyle). Pyle will request additional documentation from Ryan Burnett before the record circulates again.
- 6g. Patten discussed three skeleton records and a feather record. A Snowy Owl at MVZ from 2 December 1916 (CBRC uncatalogued) stands as accepted with an asterisk. Kimball Garrett will submit details on a Brown Booby skeleton at LACM. Also, an unreviewed Hudsonian Godwit skeleton from the Salton Sea is at LSU and an unreviewed Upland Sandpiper feather is at WFVZ (examine at the annual meeting in 2001?).

7. Adjournment at 2200.

SATURDAY (15 January 2000)

Present: Erickson (Chairman), Hamilton, Heindel (Vice Chairman), Jaramillo (until 1500), McCaskie, Morlan, Patten, Rogers (Secretary), Rottenborn, and Terrill (non-voting).

1. Called to order at 0920 (Erickson presiding).

The order of agenda items was shuffled a bit to be sure to cover items in need of Jaramillo's input before his departure. Votes with 8 decisions reflect his absence (along with Pyle's, when he did not leave voting instructions).

2. Approval of 1999 minutes (Morlan/Rottenborn motion, passed 9-0).

3. State of the Committee.

- 3a. Annual reports.
 - 1996 records (McCaskie and San Miguel) – published in WB 30(2).
 - 1997 records (Rottenborn and Morlan) – to be published in WB 31(1).
 - 1998 records (Erickson and Heindel) – for inclusion in WB 31(3)? Hamilton will replace Heindel.
 - 1999 records - Jaramillo and Rogers will co author.
- 3b. Circulation (email). Rogers reports that circulations are moving reasonably well. A discussion of using more computer technology (e.g., voting online, automatically dumping into a database) occurred. Jaramillo will try to see if there are potential candidates to help us move forward.
- 3c. Budget. Rogers reported that he was slightly over, but no serious concerns.
- 3d. Secretary's comments and duties. Rogers warned that the meeting and recent fall report will make for a very busy start to the year.

- 3e. Work load reduction (Rogers, Erickson). Various conversations over the two days can be synthesized into a statement that Rogers felt something needed to be done to lessen the load on the Secretary (he estimated spending 20 hours a week on Committee work). A number of items were discussed, but no definitive conclusions were reached. A further division of labor may be necessary.
- 3f. Assignments/volunteers.
- 1) Public relations on the Internet - Rogers and Garrett need to communicate on who is responding on Calbird, for example. Garrett will take the lead. San Miguel, as determined at last year's meeting, will respond to basic questions generated from the CBRC website.
 - 2) Maintaining and updating the CBRC photo gallery - volunteer needed. Morlan did a nice job of updating the website but he pulled slides as record batches circulated to him. With his term expired, an alternative is needed, but no easy answer was found. Hamilton will scan prints and send them to Morlan. Slides will have to be dealt with later, but members were asked to look for alternatives.
 - 3) Presentation at the WFO Annual Meeting - Heindel will present at Kern in 2000 and Jaramillo will present in Reno in 2001 "unless he is not there."
 - 4) Web site, including proposed search engine- the database issue is still in limbo and is a tedious manpower issue. But, the ability to search older records is a low priority expected to be addressed to some extent by the CBRC book.
 - 5) Handling of online submissions, and others of dubious value. See 3f1 above.
 - 6) Merging of the databases. See 3f4 above.
 - 7) CBRC involvement with local birds clubs- Heindel was scheduled to give a talk to the Inyo Bird Study Group on 5 February 2000 but that is doubtful due to "work" conflicts. Heindel and McCaskie will put together a carousel presentation for others to use.
 - 8) CBRC cooperation with other records committees - Heindel summarized: a) others who will comprise the planning committee (i.e., Dunn, Garrett, Patten, Ned Brinkley, Paul Buckley, Donna Dittman, Greg Lasley, Paul Lehman, Gary Rosenberg, Thede Tobish, and a couple others) have been contacted; b) an outline of topics has been reviewed; c) a list of to-do items has been developed. Heindel will keep members posted.
 - 9) Update on an attempt to address spatial and temporal rarities within California - Heindel reviewed the three main options: a) CBRC to review such records; b) to review on a request basis; and c) CBRC to assist in establishment of a few small local committees to handle these records. Although no action was taken, there was a general consensus that option c seemed attractive.
 - 10) CBRC Archive - Erickson discussed the need to keep all relevant items of CBRC business for archiving at WFVZ.

4. Proposed Bylaw Changes

K.L. Garrett: "I recall quite clearly that we all agreed [16 Jan 1999] it would take a 9-1 or 10-0 vote to add an introduced population to the state list—I'm a little less clear on the logic, but it seems to me that Joe or someone made a good case as to why this should be so, and I agree we should be as conservative as possible. No official action was taken because the consensus was that this was covered in the by-laws (though it certainly isn't explicit and perhaps ought to be)." (Erickson).

Morlan read the bylaws and noted that a 9-1 vote is required. Thus, no action was necessary.

5. Introduced Bird Subcommittee.

- 5a. No report given.

5b. Appointment of 2000 Subcommittee (no change): Garrett, Morlan, San Miguel.

6. Proposed Review List changes.

To aid in these deliberations, Rogers provided a useful analysis of recent trends of borderline species.

Additions:

MURPHY'S PETREL (Rogers)

Discussions from both days resulted in a 1-9 vote, so the species will remain off the Review List. Rottenborn will work with researchers to try to get better documentation..

HARRIS'S HAWK (Rogers)

Due to the confounding effects of birds in captivity and the cyclic nature of the species' occurrences in California, it was agreed to handle records in a different fashion. It was agreed that records of this species will be archived and reviewed every five years to better appreciate long term patterns. Heindel/Hamilton motion, passed 8-1.

Deletions:

MANX SHEARWATER (Rogers)

After discussion 0-10; it remains on the review list.

GRAY CATBIRD (Rogers) "We have 101 accepted records with 4 more still awaiting a decision. The ten-year average is 5.2." 10-0; records of this species after 1999 will not be reviewed.

MOURNING WARBLER (Rogers) "We have 102 accepted records with 12 more awaiting a decision. The ten-year average is 4.2."

After discussion, 2-8; it remains on the review list.

7. Records for which Chairman/Secretary need direction or assistance.

7a. Manx Shearwaters. A decision was made not to respond to recent comments in *Birding* regarding the lack of specimens from the west coast.

7b. Emperor Goose 1997-091, 28 Dec 1996, Garcia River flats MEN. One bird only is accepted.

7c. Northern Bobwhite 1998-113, (3) 15 Mar 98, 11 Aug 98, Confidence TUO. Erickson and Rottenborn asked that this record be rejected based on identification; will be recirculated.

7d. Iceland Gulls (see 9 below): and others).

30 Dec 1984 - 18 Jan 1985	Bodega Bay, SON	1985-007
17-26 Jan 1986	Otay dump, SD	1986-015
6-23 Feb 1987	Arcata, HUM	1987-072

After a surprisingly brief discussion, the Otay bird stands as accepted, the first for California. The Bodega and Arcata records will recirculate. A record from the Santa Clara River estuary (1991-168) will recirculate as a new record, based on a 9-0 vote. Rogers, Rottenborn, and Jaramillo will continue to work on this difficult issue and, along with Howell's summary, try to define parameters to help in the definition of this "species." Motion by Erickson/Rottenborn to review subsequent Iceland Gull records annually, as opposed to the normal method, passed 9-0.

- 7e. Sooty Tern (1997 specimens from San Diego Bay in SDNHM). Still awaiting photographs of the SDNHM specimens before circulation begins. Patten will obtain photos soon.
- 7f. Long-billed Murrelet specimens: SDNHM #41,544; MVZ #169,134; UMMZ #224,651; UMMZ #224,652. Patten obtained photos of the MVZ specimen, but the others remain outstanding. Rogers will put the MVZ record on a fast track for review as the CBRC has not yet accepted any specimen record..
- 7g. Ruddy Ground-Dove 1994-072, 26 Nov 1992, 22 km N of Blythe RIV (#LACM). Patten compared this specimen with those at the Moore Laboratory of Zoology and confirmed it as *eluta*. Record stands as accepted, the only specimen record for California.
- 7h. Historical Blue-headed Vireo records. Rottenborn is compiling and will review with Heindel. When ready, they will present a package for consideration by the entire Committee.
- 7i. Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows. Several old specimen records were never reviewed. It was decided that, for the CBRC book, the specimens should be included, but do not require review.
- 7j. Varied Bunting 1996-100, 21 Apr 1996, Lancaster LA. Recirculating for 4th and final vote.
- 7k. Black Rosy-Finch specimens:
 - 1) California Academy of Sciences 15167 (Bodie, MNO 15 Jan 1904) - no photo/review yet.
 - 2) Museum of Vertebrate Zoology 159188 (Bodie, MNO 22 Nov 1968). Patten photographed the specimen and it will circulate soon.
 - 3) MVZ 81656 and 81657 (SE of Chats, LAS 30 March 1941, cf. McCaskie et al. 1979: "actually taken ... in Nevada"). Patten will contact MVZ and advise the Committee.
 - 4) San Bernardino County Museum 5107 (Westgard Pass, INY 11 Nov 1972). Patten will pursue.
 - 5) two from Deep Springs Valley, INY in 1947? (Condor 71:433). Publication doesn't say where specimens are. Will see if they are at CAS.

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

- 8a. Manx Shearwater 1999-021, 8 Aug 1998, Monterey Bay SCZ (Patten). Patten reviewed Iliff documentation and now is comfortable with the record; stands as accepted.
- 8b. Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel 1997-137, 6 Sep 1997, SW of San Miguel I. VEN (Pyle). See Friday agenda item 6a; on to 4th and final circulation.
- 8c. Red-tailed Tropicbird 1989-099, 11 Aug 1988, 220 nmi ssw. San Nicolas I. VEN (Patten, Pyle).

See Friday agenda item 6b; Rogers will pursue.

- 8d. Reddish Egrets 1998-101 (11 Jul-1 Aug 1998, Johnson Rd., near Mecca RIV) and 1998-114 (2-8 Aug 1998, Obsidian Butte, IMP) (McCaskie, Patten). Will be merged as a single record (9-0).
- 8e. White Ibis records 1976-045 (10-24 Jul 1976, n. end Salton Sea RIV and 5 Aug 1976, s. end Salton Sea IMP) and 1978-049 (25 Jun-14 Jul 1977, Unit 1, Salton Sea NWR IMP) (Patten).
After discussion, Erickson/Hamilton motion to merge passed 7-2.
- 8f. American Black Duck 1987-365, 25 Feb-3 Mar 1980, Upper Newport Bay ORA (Patten). Patten noted that the record, rejected on identification, pertains to a bird with a pinioned wing. A note to this effect will be attached to the record and reflected in the CBRC book.
- 8g. Common Pochard 1995-082, 26 Dec 1994 (2), Bolsa Chica ORA (Heindel).
Morlan gave further information on this record and will attach those comments to the record, which will go to a 4th and final round.
- 8h. Harris's Hawks (Erickson, Patten).
See 9 below. Patten and Erickson will attach a final draft of their paper to these records.
- 8i. Zone-tailed Hawk 1997-084, Lake Casitas VEN (Morlan).
Morlan: "This returning Ojai bird was accepted for prior and subsequent years. Published as rejected by 4-6 vote on second round." After discussion, no action.
- 8j. Yellow Rail 1998-132, 5 Oct 1995, Glass Beach, Ft. Bragg MEN (Rogers).
After discussion, no action; stands as not accepted.
- 8k. Bridled/Gray-backed Tern 1993-144, 12 June 1993, Bolsa Chica ORA (Pyle).
See Friday item 6c; resubmitted.
- 8l. Bridled Tern 1998-105, 17 Jul 1998, Bolsa Chica Preserve ORA (Patten).
See Friday item 6d; stands as accepted.
- 8m. Black-billed Cuckoo 1980-235, 24 Sep 1974, Big Sycamore Canyon VEN (Patten, Heindel).
After discussion, vote to reconsider the record passed 6-1 with one abstention.
- 8n. Broad-billed Hummingbird 1986-023, 1 Dec 1985-5 Jan 1986, Balboa Park SD (Erickson, Patten). After brief discussion concerning same bird issues, no action was taken.
- 8o. Xantus's Hummingbird 1987-174, 27 Dec 1986, Yaqui Well SD (Patten).
After discussion, Patten/Erickson motion to reconsider the record passed 6-1 with one abstention.
- 8p. Greater Pewee 1998-116, 1 Jun 1998, SE Farallon I. SF (Rogers).
See Friday item 6e; will recirculate.
- 8q. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher 1991-035, 7 Jun 1989, Torrance LA (Heindel, Erickson).
Erickson contacted the observer in an effort to receive additional information; nothing yet received, thus, no action.

- 8r. Blue-headed Vireo 1998-216, 20 Oct 1998, San Nicolas I. VEN (Pyle).
See Friday item 6f; awaiting additional documentation before recirculation.
- 8s. early Pine Warblers (Erickson, Heindel, Patten):
21 Sep 1973 Southeast Farallon I. SF 1973-084
25 Sep 1985 Briceland HUM 1987-218
1 Oct 1987 Riverside RIV 1988-052
After discussion, Heindel/Hamilton motion to reconsider passed 6-2.
- 8t. Scarlet Tanager 1986-108, 23 Aug 1964, Dana Pt. ORA (Heindel, Erickson).
After discussion, Patten/Hamilton motion to reconsider passed 8-0.
- 8u. Pyrrhuloxias (Heindel, Hamilton, Erickson):
10 June 1998 Pt. Loma SD 1999-044
23 Jul 1982 (2) Corona RIV 1983-013
7-10 May 1983 vic. Lancaster LA 1983-117
26-27 May 1983 Encinitas SD 1986-089
19-23 Jul 1990 San Miquel I. SBA 1990-140
Since the Costa Mesa record is still in circulation, a decision was made to hold this discussion for next year's meeting.
- 8v. Painted Bunting update (Hamilton, Erickson). See 9 below; no action.
- 8w. Common Grackle 1993-186, 29 Sep 1993, vic. Bishop INY (Heindel). After discussion concerning Ken Parkes' published comments on the record, motion to reconsider passed 8-2.
- 8x. Black Rosy-Finch 1995-033, 11-15 Feb 1995, Aspendell INY (Morlan, Erickson).
Correspondence from Ian Paulsen and Richard Johnson questioning the accuracy of this record (based on examination of photographs on the CBRC website) prompted a discussion. Patten reviewed the slides and will work with Johnson to resolve the issue. The picture scanned in does not well represent the bird and thus the Committee felt there was no need for action.

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

Manx Shearwater	5 May 1996	Pigeon Pt. SM	1996-077A
Brown Booby	17 Nov 1997	Shelter Island Pier, Pt Loma, San Diego SD	1998-008
King Eider	29 Jan 1997+	Pt. Reyes MRN	1997-061
Harris's Hawks (see 8h above)			
	26 Nov 1994 - 29 Feb 1995 (2)	Santee SD	1996-080C
	27 Jun - 23 Jul 1995	Riverside RIV	1996-080F
Iceland Gulls (see 7d above):			
	30 Dec 1984 - 18 Jan 1985	Bodega Bay SON	1985-007
	17-26 Jan 1986	Otay dump SD	1986-015
	6-23 Feb 1987	Arcata HUM	1987-072
	Otay bird accepted, the other two will recirculate.		
Yellow-green Vireo	5 Oct 1996	Marin Headlands MRN	1997-049
Worm-eating Warbler	6 Jan 1997	Ventura VEN	1997-085
Mourning Warbler	20 Sep 1997	Chorro Cr. SLO	1998-038
Scarlet Tanager	10 Nov 1997	Furnace Creek INY	1998-060
Painted Buntings (see 8v above):			
	9 Jun 1996	Big Pine INY	1996-105
	12 Oct 1997	Victorville SBE	

10. Supplemental List.

Additions:

GRAY SILKY-FLYCATCHER. After a discussion, Erickson/Hamilton motion to add passed 7-2.

11. Miscellaneous items.

11a. Status of the California Rarities book. Patten gave an update. Some accounts are still due, particularly the warblers. McCaskie will help out on these and coordinate with Patten. Patten, Erickson, Roberson, and Hamilton will push and try to have the book ready for the WFO meeting in Kern County in July 2000.

11b. State List:

1) Publication in *California Fish and Game*. Erickson discussed the editors' request to publish the CBRC state list. A draft, incorporating the latest revisions, will be submitted after the meeting.

2) Nesting annotations. Aside from some grumbling, it was agreed to use the nesting annotations prepared by Erickson. These will be included in the *California Fish and Game* publication.

3) California Condor - extirpated status stands for now.

11c. Trumpeter Swan Society statements, survey, etc. (Patten). From Bruce Deuel: "Just a comment about the Turnbull and Malheur-marked swans: Trumpeters from both areas have been reproducing successfully for about 40 years. I'm not sure why 'establishment of introduced population questionable' is appropriate in these 2 cases." It was the CBRC's understanding that these populations are intensely managed (including continued introductions), leaving the Committee unswayed by Deuel's comments.

11d. K.L. Garrett: "Our records at sea should always carry a set of latitude/longitude coordinates. This is what is important." (Erickson). The Committee agreed; no particular action.

11e. When is a record accepted? - the webmaster's perspective. Morlan led a good conversation to make sure records are not placed on the site prematurely. Good communication needs to exist between the Secretary and webmaster.

11f. Solicitation of known documentation (Erickson, Rogers). The annual discussion on whether the Committee is getting most of it. Many reports on RBAs suggest we are not getting all of it, but there was a general comfort level with the situation, although the Committee should always strive to improve contributions.

11g. Video annotations should also include audio annotation when applicable (Erickson). Members need to keep this in mind and let the Secretary know of relevant cases. For practical purposes, "V" is part of "P."

11h. Consolidation of video documentation onto fewer tapes? (Erickson, for Garrett). Great in concept, but not practical as someone would need to have two recorders and deal with this. Members were encouraged to watch for options to address this issue. Rogers will punch out video tabs to ensure there is no inadvertent taping over documentation.

11i. Citing of websites in annual reports (Erickson, for Steve Howell). Websites used now

will likely not be in place, or will be different, in the future and thus they should not be cited usually.

- 11j. Handling of records of species where similar – but much less likely – species are not necessarily eliminated (e.g., Mongolian Plover, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Northern Wheatear). Rottenborn led a good philosophical discussion leading to a motion (passed 9-0) to remove the last “slash category” on the CBRC review list: White/Black-backed Wagtail.
- 11k. Voting philosophies: Are we judging whether or not a particular event occurred or whether that particular event has been adequately documented? Rottenborn led another good philosophical discussion but no action was taken.
- 11l. Additions to the list of CBRC publications?:
Heindel, M. 1999. The Yellow Wagtail in North America. *Birders Journal* 8:182-193.
Heindel, M., and P. Pyle. 1999. Identification of Yellow-bellied and “Western” flycatchers. *Birders Journal* 8:78-87.
Jaramillo, A. 1993. Subspecific identification of Yellow-throated Warblers. *Birders Journal* 2:160.
McCaskie, G. and M. San Miguel. 1999. Report of the California Bird Records Committee: 1996 records. *Western Birds* 30:57-85.
Patten, M. A. and R.A. Erickson. in press. Population fluctuations of the Harris’s Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) and its reappearance in California. *Journal of Raptor Research*.
Patten, M.A., G. McCaskie, and J. Morlan. 1999. First record of the American Woodcock for California, with a summary of its status in western North America. *Western Birds* 30:156-166.
There were at least two theories on this: be more restrictive, covering issues directly derived from CBRC work; or be more expansive. Garrett and Dunn (as “co-chairs”) and Patten (as editor of the book that will list all publications) will manage this as there was no consensus.
- 11m. Addition of disclaimer to the CBRC website file entitled *Discussion of County Lines Offshore* (Erickson, Patten). The following disclaimer has been added to the website at the suggestion of Brian Daniels. “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. “
- 11n. Eurasian Collared Dove. After a discussion of ways to handle this species, nothing was resolved and no action was taken. For now, records are directed to the Introduced Birds Subcommittee.
- 11o. Alder Flycatcher. For the specimen records, we still need a letter from Phil Unitt with his conclusions.

12. Closing.

- 12a. Site and date of next meeting set for Camarillo, 13 January 2001.

12b. Appreciations:

Peg Stevens, and WFVZ - for ongoing support in archiving CBRC records;
Erickson, McCaskie, Morlan and Rottenborn - for varying years of service to the CBRC;
Rottenborn, Terrill, and others at H.T. Harvey and Associates for hosting the weekend's
festivities.

12c. Adjournment at 1855.