

**Minutes for the 2007 CBRC Meeting
Carlsbad, 26-27 January 2007**

1. Call to order at 210 PM (Chairman presiding). All members present except Al Jaramillo and Marshall Iliff; Iliff arrived at 235.

2006 minutes. No approval needed; approved in March.

Broad topics/general discussion

The committee was unanimously concerned about an annual meeting occurring without the entire membership. While a family emergency or unavoidable work issue is understandable, the committee feels attendance at this meeting is as important as any other responsibility. The committee directed the Chair to discuss this issue individually with the missing member and it was unanimous that any potential future nominees understand the critical expectation of their involvement in the annual meeting. There are a number of topics discussed that cannot be conveyed in emails or other correspondence, where personal interaction is needed.

On-line voting or electronic batches: we lacked progress in 06 and we discussed the critical necessity of the need to develop methods that will streamline the workload of the Secretary and will help with archiving, eliminate mail, lost batches, etc.

Morlan offered to create an electronic batch as a test. Since most of the information the committee receives is electronic (in the form of word documents, jpegs, etc.) this should be a relatively simple matter. We discussed the potential of making the more straightforward batches electronic batches (those with fewer observers, an entirely electronic submission, etc). If batches are more complex, they will be handled manually.

The ability to vote online is not yet within our grasp, but the committee felt it was important to start making some progress in this electronic world without further delay.

We need to identify means to assist the Secretary in the workload. In part, we can do this by finding an individual (probably through a plea to Calbird, etc) who can understand how we receive data and how we can simplify the process so that the Secretary is not overloaded.

Garrett summarized a recent WFO conference call, which included the desire of Pete LaTourette to step down as webmaster. There are other issues involved (such as finding a new domain name) but our first need is to replace Pete. While the workload is not significant, Pete's support has been invaluable, so a prompt search for a replacement is important. The new webmaster will either have to be the webmaster for both the WFO and CBRC or, if just the latter, have to be able to work with the WFO webmaster.

Committee and the community:

The committee agreed that we should continually seek out opportunities to present to local bird groups. Most groups have been receptive and feedback has been positive; too many birders do not understand the committee purpose and process so clarifying these is of value. Further, many areas of

contention can be improved by some basic explanations. Finally, with the pending printing of the CBRC book, we have a good reason to present to groups this year (see more under #9). The WFO Board has a reasonable expectation of the CBRC being advocates for this book.

Heindel shared a powerpoint printout with the committee of a recent presentation he gave; if other members are interested in this report they are free to use it, change it, etc.

We reviewed the request from a birder who requested we chronicle additions to the website in chronological order with most recent addition last. (We update the first paragraph with the number of species, but do not call out which species are new.) For birders using the web, and not reviewing reports, they have to work harder to see these changes.

The committee recognizes this but decided not to take action. While it is not a lot of work, it still requires someone to take responsibility and members already feel swamped. Secondly, the committee places a lot of important information in its reports and we feel that those ought to be consulted.

Heindel raised an issue relative to natural occurrence questionable: wondering if we are doing all we can here. We discussed the idea of placing a numeric value on vote, in addition to accept/not accept (instead of our current binary up or down answer) in an effort to better guide readers as to the perceived likelihood of a bird occurring naturally. The committee felt putting a number would not be advisable since there is no real way to qualify that number and that it might imply a greater sense of understanding than we really have. Instead, members agreed that we need to ensure we treat difficult decisions fully in the annual report.

We discussed how we deal with hybrids when they involve a review species, for example, with oystercatchers. Since most members feel the oystercatchers on the Pacific coast of CA are hybrids in some fashion, discerning where the line is drawn between "clean" and "suspicious" birds is easily blurred. Given that even dirty birds are still rather American-looking (i.e., not Black Oystercatchers) we do not want to lose this information by rejecting birds that are close to being Americans. Our reject rate is quite high, approximately 50% and there is some variation in how members apply the Jehl scale. At a minimum, it is important we explain our decisions in the annual report.

We discussed some philosophical and ID issues for Iceland, Slaty-backed, and Vega Gulls.

Iceland: Heindel noted that the recent accept decisions represent a notable change in philosophy from previous votes. Given uncertainties over firm identification criteria, he wondered how we would explain this shift and how we would guide birders as to how to know they have a Kumlien's compared to a pale Thayer's, if we really know there is such a thing. While there was a lot of agreement over many Iceland features, there was general acknowledgment that we do have a problem. Morlan reviewed the last published criteria the CBRC used for this identification and Dunn offered that he was more impressed with pale birds early in the season, prior to wear or

bleaching having a chance to take effect. In the end, no real conclusions were reached.

Slaty-backed: a brief conversation about dealing with this species being complicated with potential hybrids, returning birds, etc., but with no specific outcome.

Vega: Members were concerned over the proliferation of reports in the State and with the reports freely floating ideas of "outside the range" of *smithsonianus*, when most members feel that this range is ill-defined at best. Given the expectation that members have of this subspecies reaching species status, we want to collect information on reports of this taxon.

Identification issues: As with last year, we discussed a few species, some with short discussions and pictures, some longer.

Dark-rumped Petrel- the committee benefited greatly from information received from Steve Howell on identification criteria of Hawaiian and Galapagos Petrel. Given the pending publication of this matter, it would not be appropriate to place it in our minutes for public consumption. Garrett provided pictures of a single Galapagos Petrel (well, they were taken off the Galapagos) to compare with a recent presumed Hawaiian, taken off of CA.

Glossy Ibis- or was it a White-faced? Morlan provided pictures of an ibis that underscored the difficulty of ibis identification. He raised the issue that a written description of this individual could easily be accepted and yet it seemed clear this pictured ibis would not get unanimous support.

Blue-headed Vireo- Morlan showed pictures of a reported BHVI, reported as brighter than any CAVI the observer reported. The general sense was that it was indeed a CAVI pointing out the need to get birders to understand that fall CAVI can be quite bright indeed. Heindel shared a photo comparing museum skins of birds that would be difficult to ID out of range. While the throat-cheek contrast difference was there, as were the whiter underparts of BHVI, there is so much variation that he expressed his escalating concern about identifications in this complex. The tails of these two birds showed the classic difference with the white edges of the BHVI compared to the plain edges of CAVI, but Heindel noted that bold CAVI can have an entirely whitish edge to the out rect.

Yellow Wagtail- Heindel presented a summary on whether we can place any confidence in our assessment that wagtails we see are conclusively Eastern Yellow (the only taxa accepted by the AOU). If one believes *plexa* is an Eastern, contra Alstrom and Mild, we probably have less of a problem. But, A&M say that *plexa* is part of *thunbergi* (Western) and is generally indistinguishable from *tschutschensis*. More work is clearly needed. While adult males of the various taxa seem to sort out, we are not likely to see adult males in CA; thus the need for a caveat about the uncertainty.

Smith's Longspur- Heindel presented a small ID piece on the variation in tail pattern of Smith and Lapland Longspurs. There seems to be variation based on age and sex, but what is clear is that the use of white in the outer two rects as a character eliminating Lap is not possible. The only tail feature that is truly helpful is the extensive white on an adult male Smith's, which is sufficiently obvious (even in winter) to render that mark unnecessary. The reduced white in female Laps is outside the range of Smith's, but birders are

not trying to turn a Smith's into a Lap, so is not a problem
These identification issues have potential to be developed into articles for Western Birds and members are encouraged to create relevant topics and take them to publication.

Morlan brought up the fact that we at one point solicited subspecies that were thought to be identifiable in the field. The list included Bewick's Swan, American Brant, Eurasian Whimbrel, Siberian Common Tern, eastern Bell's Vireo, eastern Hermit Thrush, eastern Winter Wren, Siberian American Pipit, Yellow Palm Warbler, White-winged Dark-eyed Junco, and eastern Purple Finch.

The following motions were made regarding these subspecies:

Morlan/Singer to add Vega Gull passed 8-0

Morlan/Iliff motion to add eastern Red-shouldered Hawk passed 8-0.

Dunn/Heindel motion to remove Siberian Common Tern, since it is not known to have occurred in CA, passed 8-0.

It was agreed we would put this on the website and place in the annual report, but that we would make it clear that we are not reviewing these as records. All of the taxa have been reported and we want to archive them for future purposes.

2. Election of members.
 - 2a. There was an extensive discussion of possible future membership, including Calbird suggestions and names surfaced at the meeting. Members felt a sense of confidence with the number and quality of this field.
 - 2b. Election. The terms of Dunn, Iliff, and Heindel expired.
Nominations:
Peter Pyle (Heindel, Dunn, Singer)
Jim Pike (Morlan)
Kristie Nelson (Morlan, Dunn, Singer)
Matt Brady (Heindel)
Luke Cole (Dunn)
Brian Sullivan (Iliff)
After extensive discussion due to the strong slate of candidates, elected were Pyle, Pike and Nelson.
3. Election of Secretary (one year term) – Nomination of Guy McCaskie (Heindel), elected 8-0.
4. Election of Chair (one year term) – Nomination of Dan Singer (Heindel); elected 7-0.
5. Election of Vice-Chair (one year term) – Nominations of Joe Morlan (Heindel) and Dave Compton; Morlan elected 7-1.

The committee adjourned for the evening at 915 PM.

The committee was called to order on Saturday morning at 905 AM.

6. State of the Committee.

6a. Annual reports.

2005 records: McCaskie and Iliff have draft that will be coming soon; comments needed. Specific assignments will be given. Please handle yours!

2006 records: Heindel and Garrett will have draft near year-end.

2007 records: Singer and Terrill volunteered but we thought we would ask Jim Pike if he had an interest; if so, he would replace Terrill.

Note: there is a shift on distribution of passerine/non-passerine records so future authors might want to shift traditional split.

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

Note from Phil Unitt: WB has steady flow of submissions, we do not get a place holder so our submissions get in line. So, timeliness is important.

When completed with your section of the report, RETURN THE RECORDS!!!!

We need to ensure we are complete with acknowledging help from outside contributors. As an example, in a recent corrigenda, help from one person was subsumed into a broad thanks (in this case to Guy. Heindel suggested that the authors start a document of suggestions, corrections, etc and every time someone sends something, the name is captured so we ensure the proper people are acknowledged.

Dunn suggested that when there is an increased level of documentation (e.g., from a photograph to a specimen), in addition to changing the symbol, this increased level of evidence receives a specific mention in the text of a Committee report.

6b. First state records and potential publication in *Western Birds*

There was agreement with the idea of publishing articles of this nature, but we also recognize that little movement is evident. If people who said they were going to write on a particular species for years with no action, members should feel free to pursue it.

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)

Slaty-backed Gull (Jaramillo)

Parkinson's Petrel (given recent piece, do we need it? Most members felt we did not)

Green Violet-ear

Taiga Flycatcher- pending acceptance

Ross's Gull- pending acceptance. Regarding a note already submitted by Guy, Dunn registered concern over the potential publication of a species

prior to acceptance by the committee. Others countered that since the color cover was already printed and that the account could say the record is currently in circulation (unless circulation is completed by publication date), the issue was not critical. Dunn differed with this opinion and was going to talk to the WFO Publications committee to establish a policy in the future. Most of the membership did not share his concern relative to this account.

6c. Circulation (McCaskie/Heindel).

- Note member absence if you are holding batch- this is by far the easiest thing to correct that is left ignored

This is from the 2006 meeting minutes:

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. Let's put it to practice!

Dunn noted he would be out until mid-March. Iliff noted he is generally out until 1 April.

- Hold times usually OK, but 2006 was a slower year than recent history.
- When Guy sends the voting results, please compare with your vote (sometimes mistakes are made and we need to catch them before the record recirculates with the wrong cover sheet and vote tally).
- For batches emanating from the Annual Meeting, we will change the circulation order to get those people going off the committee to the front of the order (to get them “off” as soon as practical). Pyle was still on the committee in July! Since Dunn and Iliff are out of town for a bit, the routing sheet will not be adjusted to move them up; as a standard practice, however, the committee agreed to let retiring members retire!

6d. Budget (McCaskie)

6e. Secretary's/Chair's comments:

- 1) do not add documentation to a record during circulation without checking- getting better
- 2) 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;
- 3) the Secretary may attempt to discourage reports of “obviously misidentified” birds, but if reporters persist, the record will circulate.
- 4) 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.
- 5) 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.

6) if the Secretary sends you a revised cover sheet for a record in your possession, please replace the "old" cover as it no longer matches the database.

6f. Assignments/volunteers

- Public relations on the Internet (Garrett in 2007). Garrett has some internal server issues vis-à-vis Yahoo, which is creating some problems. We might need an alternative if this persists or worsens.
- Maintaining and updating the CBRC photo gallery (Morlan in 2007)

6g. Bylaws

For the upcoming book, Robb, with edits from others, has made several edits to the bylaws. These are usually grammatical changes, improvements in verbiage, tightening intent, etc. A document with track changes as well as the final document are available; without objection these changes are made to the bylaws.

Morlan led an extensive debate on the problems that arise when a member fails to attend the annual meeting. Although there are several things absentees miss, nowhere is this more obvious than in 4th and final voting. While members can read the comments, the meeting allows for a more in-depth exchange and provides an opportunity to persuade others that is impossible if not present. Morlan suggested we could vote on these records at the meeting or, alternatively, perhaps we would create the inability of an absent member to vote in the 4th round.

Members unanimously agreed with the frustration this situation creates but saw several issues. First, there was a general concern over creating a bylaw that might have helped in this meeting, but might have unwanted consequences. As an example, if a future member truly had an emergency but felt he/she needed to make some comments on a record going to a 4th round, a change could have unintended consequences. Voting at the meeting had some appeal, but in the end, members were concerned over the potential for a decision made in haste, perhaps on an emotional level, that would be regretted with the light of a new day. Heindel suggested allowing a member to call in for a specific discussion, but this would likely be improbable at time.

In the end, the committee is frustrated and strongly suggests a concerted effort by any absentee to seek out the various positions prior to their voting on these records. Further, any exploration of a new member should include an understanding the committee places on the annual meeting. But, the notion of a member forfeiting their vote was felt to be too important.

7. Introduced Bird Subcommittee.

7a. Report- Garrett summarized current issues on this front. The subcommittee was awaiting some refinement by the ABA subcommittee to ensure consistency, but that still appears to be a work in progress. He discussed potential additions to the list, and Nutmeg Mannikin appears to be the strongest candidate. The committee wants published

data prior to adding a species to the list, so we will solicit data through Calbird for this species.

A question as to whether we “purify” the list by separating the non-native birds engendered good conversation. In the end, the desire to have all bird species in taxonomic order is deemed a higher priority.

Morlan asked about the status of White-tailed Ptarmigan and Spotted Dove; members responded of recent sightings and reports. In general, the committee agreed that to remove a species would also require published data as we would not want to remove a species too quickly.

- 7b. Appointment of 2007 Subcommittee: Morlan and Iliff will continue to join Garrett.

8. Proposed Review List changes.

Additions: Dunn/Iliff motion to add Fulvous Whistling-Duck failed 5-3
Substantial conversation regarding potential species of interest occurred. In general, the committee was not interested in adding a species to the review list without solid data (specifically, the number of reports over recent years).

Dunn moved to add Elf Owl to the review list but there was no second.

Dunn suggested a member take specific responsibility to report back to the committee next year so that progress on some of these rarities can be made. We will send out a note to Calbird to solicit reports of the following species: Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers (Jon Dunn to report back) and Elf Owl (Dave Compton will report back to the committee next year).

We will also solicit information on Northern Cardinal that are thought to pertain to naturally occurring birds (so, e.g., the LCR, eastern oases, coastal vagrant trap, etc). While this is not within our bylaws for records to review, we are simply collecting information. No specific member volunteered for this assignment so the data, if any, will need to be monitored.

Dunn had some Rusty Blackbird information as he had discussed the addition of this species prior to its inclusion last year. Any data presented should be included in the minutes for future purposes.

Deletions: Manx Shearwater Heindel/Terrill motion failed 3-6. The sense of the committee was to await the 100 record barrier for elimination.
Brown Booby Heindel motion failed to gain a second.

We also discussed Yellow-cr Night-Heron, given their regular occurrence in San Diego and recent breeding. Further breeding and the need for 100 records were mentioned as potential barriers to removal.

9. *Rare Birds of California* The status of the book was shared, along with peeks at the latest draft thanks to McCaskie. Members should take an active role in promoting the CBRC and this book through presentations to local groups. The attractive color plates and wealth of information should prove to be an excellent vehicle to discuss the CBRC and its purposes. It is my hope the book is a reminder to its members and contributors of the importance of what we are doing.

As a committee, we shared the view that the names of the editors should appear on the front cover, as opposed to the inside cover. (This is consistent with the wishes of the editors.)

In reviewing the map of all accepted records, one stood out as being obviously outside our boundaries. This Red-tailed Tropicbird record may or may not have been in our waters. Iliff is determining if the report was accompanied by specific coordinates. If it was, those coordinates will determine if the record is from our waters, in which case the dot needs to be moved to within the boundaries. If there are no coordinates, the committee needs assurance that the report was from within our waters (and thus, perhaps the confusion was that the bird was closer to wsw of the island, as opposed to sw), so the dot is moved, or the dot will be removed entirely. The committee was unanimous in an unwillingness to have a record from clearly outside our boundaries.

10. Miscellaneous items.
 - 10a. Group photo WE FORGOT THIS!
 - 10b. State List: new for the State are Green Violet-ear and Parkinson's Petrel. The State List is 632, with Great Black-backed Gull, Ross's Gull, Taiga Flycatcher and Yellow Grosbeak as potential first records in circulation.
 - 10c. Hudsonian Godwit from 2006 meeting. Thanks to Kimball for pursuing this (and putting it to rest). Dunn/Terrill motion to add verbiage to the annual report that clarifies the report (since it was reported in G&M) passed 8-0. The placement in the report should be after the Records Not Accepted. Heindel will draft a paragraph for Iliff and McCaskie to approve.
 - 10d. Iliff explained the problems that exist when we are photographing specimens but do not have legible aspects of the tags, as there are frequent cases of conflicts in the literature. Members who photograph specimens are asked to be diligent about this. It is hard to insist that non-member volunteers follow this advice. But, at a minimum, we should ensure that a request also state that it would be particularly helpful if they were to ensure that both sides of the label are legible for archival purposes.

Iliff had specific records that he wanted photographed and Dunn mentioned Quady might be an effective, willing participant. Iliff will provide Morlan a list of records needing further work and Morlan will contact Quady.
 - 10e. Iliff noted an unsubmitted report of a Hudsonian Godwit skeleton from LSU; Dunn will get museum confirmation of this for future review.
 - 10f. Dunn/Heindel motion to review an old Black-bellied Whistling-Duck record from ORA in light of what has become a better understanding of the pattern this species has shown. Record 1986-358 to review again passed 8-0.
11. Other records for which the Chairman/Secretary need direction or assistance.
 - 11a. Harris's Hawk- the committee agreed to reverse the decision where we held records for 5-year periods: Dunn/Compton motion passed 8-0.
12. Records brought to the meeting at the request of a member.
 - 12a. Roseate Spoonbill batch- the records stand as accepted or unreviewed.
 - 12b. Caracara batch same bird issues: Heindel summarized the records from central and northern coastal areas to determine if there is any ability to sort out same bird issues. The committee agreed that, for the three groupings where 6 or

7 members agreed they were the same, those records stand as pertaining to the same bird. For other records, where some members feel they do pertain to the same bird but others do not, we will say they may or may not pertain to the same bird.

Members agree we have a real problem in sorting all of this out. To help, we asked the Secretary to place all Caracara records for a given year in one batch so that we can try to make better sense out of same bird issues. Further, there is a strong need for an analysis of all of these records to better understand the number of birds (Heindel's analysis was for two years only). See the attached summary for more information.

12c. Record 2003-117 (Long-billed Murrelet) brought to the meeting for discussion. It was rejected, but additional photos were obtained from Pablo Herrera by Kristie Nelson and apparently sent to Guy. On the 4th round it went 8-2 with both rejecting members saying they have heard of new photos and did not want to accept until we had them. The committee agreed that the new photos constituted new and substantial documentary information Morlan/Garrett motion passed 8-0.

12d. Slaty-backed Gull- discussed potential same bird issues on recently accepted records 2006-026 and 062. These records pertain to a 1st cycle bird. In the write-ups it appears that there was lots of confusion. In the end, it appears Jaramillo, Singer and Morlan all say that indeed, they pertain to the same bird. But, this was not clear to members during circulation. Singer will get input from Ron Thorn and once he has this will place a cover letter on the record prior to recirculation; 2006-044 and 045 pertain to adults. Morlan feels the description is not sufficiently distinct to ensure it does not pertain to bird from Dec. Heindel read Jaramillo's comments explaining the care he and Thorn applied to ensuring a conservative approach. Singer will contact Thorn to get his input specific to Morlan's request and place a cover letter on the record prior to resuming circulation.

12e. Other Slaty-backed Gull records were discussed for possible recirculation given our new understanding of their status and identification.

1995-053 from Ventura: Singer/Iliff motion to recirculate passed 8-0

1998-050 from Salton Sea Terrill/Iliff motion passed 6-2

1998-209 from Davis- no motion offered

The Folsom bird was recently published after another circulation and was not considered.

12f. Ruddy Ground-Dove 1981-31: Dunn requested to reconsider this record given status of this species in the state in the intervening years. Dunn/Iliff motion passed 8-0.

12g. Common Black-Hawk at Santa Rosa SON 14 Oct 2000 (2005-156A) Interesting discussion on this record, but no further action.

12h. Little Stint video 2005-177 mid-circulation discussion of record and ID. Brief identification discussion- continue circulation.

12i. American Oystercatcher 2006-005 discuss same bird issue. There are up to three records and some members followed Compton since he was closest to the action. Compton learned of more information and thus members who followed him found he had switched course, creating some confusion. Compton will summarize in a cover letter to be attached to the record prior to continuing the circulation.

12j. Stejneger's Petrel 2005-019: with receipt of a new picture from Roberson and information from Howell's pending tubenose guide, Heindel/Terrill motion to

recirculate passed 8-0.

13. Records without a decision after completion of third circulation. In reading record comments, I selected members to lead the conversation of the record.
2004-060 (American Golden-Plover nr El Centro IMP 18 Apr 2004) Iliff and Terrill
2004-061 (American Golden-Plover nr Calipatria IMP 27 Apr 2004) Morlan and Terrill
2002-065 (Blue-headed Vireo nr Imperial Beach SD 27 Sep 1972)
2002-067 (Blue-headed Vireo on Farallon Islands 25-27 Sep 1974)
2002-073 (Blue-headed Vireo in Santa Barbara SBA 07 Jan 1981)
2002-077 (Blue-headed Vireo in Carpinteria SBA 30 Sep-05 Oct 1985)
2002-101 (Blue-headed Vireo in Orange County 22 Sep 1990)
Since most of the vireo records are quite similar in comment, we discussed them as a whole first, as votes fell on different sides of philosophical lines.
2005-041 (Sprague's Pipit nr Blythe RIV 19 Dec 2004) Dunn and Compton
2005-062 (Golden-winged Warbler at Butterbredt Spring KER 12 May 2005) Garrett and Morlan
14. Supplemental List.
Barnacle Goose Morlan requested record 2005-025 San Joaquin River STA 16 Jan 2005 be added to the Supplemental List. Morlan/Iliff motion failed 2-6.
15. Closing.
 - 15a. Site and date of next meeting: – HT Harvey in San Jose 25-26 January 2008. Members expressed a desire to keep the current schedule of Friday afternoon start, which requires less than a full day Saturday.
 - 15b. Appreciations:
Linnea Hall, Peg Stevens, Chrystal Klabunde and WFVZ for ongoing support of archiving records;
Peter LaTourrette for his many years of work relative to our website.
Dunn will discuss this appreciation further with Cat Waters.
Dunn, Heindel, and Iliff for time served, and the committee expressed their thanks to Heindel for his role as Chair.
To Ann Heindel for the hospitality, food, etc.
 - 15c. Adjournment. Terrill/Heindel motion to adjourn at 410PM passed 8-0.

Matt T. Heindel, Chair

Proposal to remove Manx Shearwater from the Review List

Though 2005, there have been 79 accepted records, with an additional 8 records submitted in 2006. In the last 10 years, the average is 6.9 per year. In addition, there are several reported annually that are not submitted as clearly this species has some 'fatigue' attached to it; i.e., observers are not as impressed with its rarity for obvious reasons. In other words, we are averaging roughly 7 per year and are not getting all of the reports. A recent report (Oct 06) attributes a comment from Steve Howell that the bird was in juvenal plumage, providing further support to the notion of a Pacific breeding colony.

In 05, I proposed this and Peter Pyle led the argument against it, based on two premises: 1) the recent spate of records is still over a small period (11 years at that time), and 2) if these records are from an isolated breeding population and the site is lost, we will be back to a scarce species.

As in 05, I feel the risk of a population crash exists with all species. And, given the vast oceans, feel we are likely to underreport this species. And, the identification is not a real issue when seen this species is seen well.

Record totals:

94	5
95	5
96	12
97	11
98	6
99	12
00	2
01	7
02	8
03	2
04	4
05	5 (plus 1 in circulation)
06	8 in circulation

I sent a note to Peter since he led the opposition. I clip his response to my proposal here:

<< So on the Manx I think my main concern was that the overall pattern in California seemed a bit murky, still. It seems like we get records year-round with a bulk of them in fall, but how much is due to an observer-effort bias? It also seemed like it still may be an evolving situation that I would feel more comfortable seeing settled out before we take it off. On the other hand, I'm no longer worried so much about ID (no contenders in California, really) and with the advances in digital imagery, especially at sea, the documentation and accuracy has improved immensely. We can probably trust the NAB record for future distributional patterns. So consider me on the fence. With 14 more records this year, if most acceptable, I'd probably be in favor of removal, my concerns still withstanding.>>

[His reference to the 14 records is a misunderstanding. I had relayed that in one of the records circulating, a total of 14 are said to have occurred in Monterey this year, but we do not have details supporting that.]

Proposal to remove Brown Booby from the Review List

Though 2005, there have been 85 accepted records, with an additional 13 records submitted in 2006. In the last 10 years, the average is 5.5 per year, just under 5 if shifting back one year. In addition, recent reports from Los Coronados demonstrate that there are at least 12 birds using the islands (just a few miles from us). Sorting through same bird issues is going to prove impossible; the presence of birds at scattered locales along the coast show that there plenty of boobies around.

A potential problem is the irruptive nature of this species. While we have had 8 and 13 reports in 2 of the last 4 years, there are other years with 1, 2, and 3 records, respectively. Since ID criteria is well established, I think we can entertain removing this species from the list.

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02	8
03	2
04	4
05	5 (plus 1 in circulation)
06	8 in circulation

Caracara same bird issue

Introductory comments

- Some members found the task of determining same bird too difficult, particularly those not familiar with the discussion of these records from the central and northern coast.
- Some members feel that ALL central and northern coast records pertain to the same bird, and further, that this is a bird seen in previous years.
- Most members feel there is evidence that at least some records pertain to the same bird.
- Pyle makes a case for the same bird based on molt and appearance.
- Iliff splits the records into 3 birds based on appearance (but agrees some of the are hard to assess; and, he rejects all based on natural occurrence).

Synopsis of records

2004 –here for historical context

- 16 Jul-1 Aug 2004-118 SON
- 20-24 Aug 2004-124 MEN s/b as above
- 4-6 Sep 2004-133 HUM s/b as above

2005- these are the records under consideration

- 2 May 2005-057 MEN
- 3-6 May 2005-070 MRN
- 1-2 June 2005-071 SLO
- 13 Jun-12 Jul 2005-086 DN
- 19 Jul 2005-089 HUM
- 2-3 Aug 2005-097 MRN
- 15 Aug 05- 20 Feb 06 -100 SCZ

2006- records in circulation, which might pertain to the above

- 28 Mar 2006-047 MTY (Pt. Sur)
- 10 Apr+ 2006-051 MTY (Carmel)
- 23-25 Apr 2006-129 SON
- 17-20 Jun 2006-078 MRN
- 13-14 Jul 2006-084 HUM

Possibilities

- All of these birds pertain to a wandering individual, with occasional long pauses, returning to sites, etc.
Problems: some of the sightings are rather distant for the short date interval; the SLO record (071) seems particularly out of step;
- The SLO record is distinct (or perhaps a bird seen further south, e.g., Vandenburg)

- There are a few birds that are occupying separate areas, e.g., DN and HUM; SON, MEN, and MRN; SCZ and MTY, etc.

The voting was all across the board, but there were some majorities that are significant enough that we might make some progress. For example,

- 6 members (JM, KNN, DSG, PP, SBT, JCS) agreed that at least some of the records pertain to the returning bird from SCZ; other members might agree but did not specifically say, as they were answering whether these records involved the same bird (and did not answer the returning bird question)
- PP, JCS, and SBT feel all records pertain to a wandering bird. In addition, 3 other members (MTH, MJI, and DSG) agree 057 MEN is the same as 070 MRN.
- 6 members (PP, SBT, JCS, KNN, KLG, MTH) said 070 MRN was the same as 097 MRN.
- Other than the 3 above-mentioned who feel all these pertain to one bird, the other 7 said 071 SLO was distinct.
- 7 members (PP, JCS, SBT, MTH, MJI, KLG, DSG) said 086 DN is the same as 089 HUM.
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Without some unique characteristics (e.g., molt limits, etc), there might be no way to be confident which of the events is most likely. So, do we:

- Decide it is most conservative to call it one bird (following Pyle)?
- Decide the sightings are too spread out and call them all new birds?
- Decide that at least one of these is a returning bird from SCZ?
- Decide that there are 3 birds (following Iliff)?