

CBRC Annual Meeting Minutes Los Gatos, CA 13-14 January 2012

13 JAN 2012

Meeting called to order at 1:45pm, 13 January 2012 (Chair presiding). Members Paul Lehman (Chair), Dan Singer (Vice-Chair), Guy McCaskie (non-voting Secretary), Dave Compton, Kimball Garrett, Oscar Johnson, Joseph Morlan, Kristie Nelson, Jim Pike, and Scott Terrill present.

Welcome and introductory remarks by Lehman.

2011 Minutes. No approval needed; approved in March 2011.

1. Election of Members: Prior to discussion of nominees and potential new members, discussion was held on the requirements members must meet in order to make nominations. Per the Bylaws, nominations must be made in writing to the Chair at least thirty days prior to the Annual Meeting.

a. Election. The terms of Lehman, Morlan and Singer expire.

Nominations:

Matt Brady

Jon Dunn

Peter Pyle

Steve Rottenborn

Adam Searcy

David Vander Pluym

Jon Dunn, Peter Pyle, Steve Rottenborn elected.

b. Discussion of Future Members: A review of potential future members was held.

c. Morlan proposed a formal letter or note be sent to each nominee informing them of the election results. Precise wording of this will be at the Secretary's discretion, but at a minimum would include an introductory comment, and a list of all nominees and those elected. Voting details not to be included. The Committee agreed to implement this proposal.

2. Election of the Secretary (one year term) – nomination: Guy McCaskie (Lehman). Elected 9-0.

3. Election of Chair (one year term) – nomination: Kimball Garrett (Morlan). Elected 8-0.

4. Election of Vice-Chair (one year term) – nomination: Dave Compton (Lehman). Elected 8-0.

GENERAL TOPICS

5. Cover Sheet Instructions, Batch Processing, Vote File Names – Instructions on cover sheets are still sometimes being overlooked. Please pay close attention to all prompts and respond as necessary in vote comments. All *questions* posed on the cover sheets regarding “same bird” issues must be addressed by members in their voting comments. Member agreement with cover sheet *statements* regarding “same bird” issues are presumed unless specifically disagreed with or questioned in vote comments. Members encouraged to review and comment on draft cover sheets sent out before batch circulation in case records pertaining to returning birds need additional information included. See 2011 Minutes for additional clarification. Vote files should always include either your initials or last name in the file name. For example “**10G votes KLG**” or “**10G votes Singer**”. Multiple page vote files must have page breaks.

6. Electronic Batches: McCaskie will implement electronic batches using a service available through his office (“yousendit.com”). Cost is \$50 per year and will be billed to WFO (per Morlan and Garrett).

7. Operating expenses: Secretary listed annual expenses of \$140.00 for a Post Office box and a shipping charge for a box of checklists. Other expenses such as batch postage are absorbed by members. See No. 6 above.

8. North American Birds Regional Editors publishing records without Committee submittal and date discrepancies: Discussion of records being published in North American Birds (NAB) without documentation getting submitted to the Committee. Members agreed to continue publishing list of records published in NAB in annual reports for which the CBRC has not received documentation. Rottenborn agreed to discuss this issue with other Regional Editors in hopes of reaching a consensus over when review species records without documentation should be published. Date range discrepancies will continue to follow NAB unless there is reason to believe these dates are incorrect. Dates preceding any first date for any CBRC published record needs to be reviewed by the Committee, as do date extensions of any record already published in an annual report.

9. Digital versus hard-copy only photos at Western Foudation of Vertebrate Zoology (WFVZ) and archiving digital data: Committee agreed all CDs containing batch data should be archived at WFVZ where currently only hard-copies are available. Back-up copies will remain with the secretary. Eventually offsite back-up via a cloud service with be explored. Johnson agreed to contact Adam Searcy at WFVZ to work out necessary details of archiving CDs.

10. Processing information obtained after decisions reached on records: Garrett expressed concern that information obtained after a record decision was reached may be overlooked, but discussion of how this information is processed and the procedures the Secretary and annual report authors incorporate in their activities mitigated these concerns and a most members agreed the likelihood of significant new information that may affect a record is low.

11. Rare Birds of California Online: Morlan discussed the Western Field Ornithologists' decision to publish the CBRC book online in 2012. Minimal interaction between the WFO Publication Committee and the CBRC has led to concern by some committee members over what will or won't be published (e.g. the corrigenda) and where it will be hosted. Discussion for informational purposes only to keep members abreast of events. Garrett agreed to talk to Cat Waters (on publication committee) and express CBRC concerns.

12. Bylaws: 30-day rule for nominations. Lehman led discussion on the merits of the 30-day rule that dictates nominations for election to the committee must be received 30 days before the meeting. Consensus was quickly reached that the problem of "last minute" nominations would not be alleviated by shortening the required time frame in which to make nominations and members were encouraged to make a more concerted effort to get nominations to the Chair well in advance of the annual meeting.

13. Age/sex information in annual reports and book update site page: Members agreed the Committee should strive to include age/sex information in annual reports for as many records as possible. Discussion to include this information on the book update site resulted in no immediate action and members agreed to consider options and review again at the 2013 meeting.

14. Proposal to publish contributor names for all records: Morlan questioned the long-standing CBRC policy to not publish initials next to rejected records and advocated that at least records accepted on ID but rejected on natural occurrence issues should have observer initials published. The Committee agreed and going forward all records accepted on ID but rejected on questionable natural occurrence will be published with observer initials (as per the Bylaws).

15. CBRC lectures and out-reach: Morlan discussed the talk he is giving at the Point Reyes Birding Festival in April ("An Insider's Look at the CBRC") and requested feedback from members. Members expressed enthusiasm for out-reach programs that were not simply reporting on the latest committee news. Lehman expressed his concern about the marginalizing of record committees and North American Birds by eBird, though this was countered by arguments that at least the CBRC is receiving more participation from birders than ever before.

16. Annual Report update: Johnson advised members of the status of the 36th annual report being authored by Sullivan and Johnson. Drafts to members will be forthcoming. Advice sought and provided on issues involving Elf Owl and Eastern Whip-poor-will.

17. SPECIES DISCUSSIONS:

a. Bean-Goose – Committee agreed the Taiga/Tundra Bean-Goose record 2010-141 should be recirculated with only documentation and member first-round votes and comments attached. All hard copy supplemental information that circulated with the record during the first round is available on the CD or online. The Committee voted 7-2

to allow “slash” species (e.g. Taiga/Tundra Bean-Goose) on the state bird list without amending the bylaws.

b. Great-winged & White-chinned Petrels – Lehman posed the question of whether records in Northern Hemisphere involve the same bird “stuck” north of the equator. There was no consensus among members with some thinking it was possible several records involved the same bird, and others thinking it was impossible to know with any degree of certainty if this was the case and that most or all records are as likely to involve different individuals and therefore should continue to be regarded as separate records representing different individuals.

c. Cook's Petrel – Record 1989-098 published in Rare Birds of California involved 14 birds (nos. 66-90) observed some 150-180+ nm SSW of Nicolas Island and was incorrectly attributed to Santa Barbara County. The Committee acknowledged that some of the birds were in California waters and that some may have been in Mexican waters, but without further details there is no way to resolve this. Per Lehman and Johnson recommendation the Committee agreed the record should be attributed to Ventura County.

d. Great Shearwater – Record 2010-035 seen over Cordell Bank and attributed to Marin County. An observer on the boat stated the bird was seen on two separate occasions and provided coordinates for the sighting in Sonoma County. Committee agreed Johnson should update the record to be published in the 36th annual report as being present at Cordell Bank (Marin County) and vicinity (Sonoma County).

e. Brown Booby on SEFI in 2006-2007 – Four accepted from 2006 and two from 2007 plus one (or two) unsubmitted records from 2007 were discussed. Pyle agreed to track down documentation for remaining 2007 records.

f. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron – Correction of number of individual present in 2009. Originally thought to be two present, an adult and a sub-adult. Photo review revealed two adults with different leg color and a subadult were present. This was confirmed in 2010 when both adults were seen together.

g. Glossy Ibis – General discussion on what identification criteria are usable for immature and winter Glossy Ibis. Some winter White-faced (ASY) in SD showed normal red eyes but some had a tinge of bluish on the pale facial lines. Most members agreed that interpretation of eye color from photos may be misleading and numerous examples of GLIB in the field showing no indication of red eyes, but still some photos still showed some red. This appears to be camera artifact, and is not a true representation of actual eye color. Lehman sighted situations where the blue facial stripe color is sometimes lost in photos, making the stripes look gray or whitish. To what extent hybrids may complicate these problems in California remains unknown.

h. Black Vulture – Johnson (and Pyle) presented a review of recent records dating back to 2009, involving birds primarily from San Diego, Ventura, and Santa Barbara counties, to try and determine same-bird issues. Based on their analysis and recommendations, and extensive Committee discussion, members voted 7-2 to accept the following records as pertaining to the same bird: No.1 includes 2009-156, 2009-221, 2010-016; No. 2 includes 2011-004, 2011-033; No. 3 includes 2010-073, 2011-020, 2011-089; No. 4 includes 2011-112 only; No. 5 includes 2011-158 only. More information will be published in an upcoming Annual Report.

i. Crested Caracara – Nelson and Pyle reviewed the approximately 31 accepted records to date and developed a same-bird scenario based on age, date, location, molt pattern and physical traits and clues and recommended reducing the number of individuals to 11-12. Committee agreed one record from LA in fall 2001 needed further research before a final vote by members to accept the proposal would be made. Action taken on 28 March 2012 when the committee voted to accept the 11 bird scenario for the 31 CBRC records. This analysis will be published as a paper in Western Birds.

j. Bar-tailed Godwit – Records 2009-146 and 2009-167 received different decisions. During three circulations a varying number of members considered both records pertained to the same bird, leading to a discussion over whether or not the second record, 2009-167, should be considered a resubmission and whether its rejection should affect the acceptance of 2009-146. Members agreed the rejection of 2009-167 on ID made the same-bird issue moot. No action was taken.

k. Little Gull – Concern expressed by a friend of the Committee (i.e. a non-member) that records of Little Gull in Riverside County from Lake Matthews, Lake Perris, the Prado Basin, and Mystic Lake likely involved same-bird issues that weren't full considered by the Committee. Members disagreed and no action was taken.

l. Broad-billed Hummingbird – Based on information supplied by Lehman the Committee agreed 9-0 to extend the last date of record 1999-062 by one day to 1 March 1999.

m. Dusky-capped Flycatcher – Record 1999-118 from Santa Barbara County was published in Rare Birds of California with a date range of 12-13 April 1999 and Lehman suggested a date range extension should be considered based on reports the bird was present as early as February and stayed into May. Members agreed no action was necessary as no new information was available and the early and later dates were discussed in the annual report.

n. Winter Wren – General discussion on diagnostic ID criteria that is safe to use. Most members agreed that many individuals are not identifiable on plumage, and the only reliable character at this point is call note. There may be an as yet undetermined amount of variation within each species' call (two members noted hearing Winter Wren calls that reminded them of Red Crossbill), but no evidence is known that suggests there is any overlap.

o. Winter Wren – McCaskie reviewed records of Winter Wren published in North American Birds and found two: a December 1990 record from the Tijuana River Valley SD and a December 1998 record from Niland IMP. None of the observers involved are able to produce any documentation written at the time. Members agreed with the recommendation that the records remain listed as unreviewed and no further action will be taken.

p. Connecticut Warbler – New and substantial information has been produced for SEFI record 2007-040 and it will be recirculated to the Committee with the original record and prior round votes.

18. Introduced Birds Subcommittee Report:

Garrett provided a status report on the subcommittee's work. A Nutmeg Mannikin listing package is being prepared for Committee review in conjunction with a note by Garrett for publication in Western Birds. The listing package will be available in the next few months once the note has gone to press this Spring. Further discussion occurred on how

to best treat extirpated introduced species on the state list. A straw poll suggested most members favored leaving extirpated species on the main list with appropriate designations, but no binding decision was made.

19. Proposed Review List changes:

Additions –

No proposals made.

Removals –

a. Trumpeter Swan – Increasing numbers of this species in northeastern California have been well documented by Rottenborn since 2009. Numerous reports from farther south, the continuing increase of transplanted birds and their offspring in nearby states, and many unsubmitted records from observers over the years, led to a motion by Terrill, seconded by Singer, to remove Trumpeter Swan from the review list. The primary argument for keeping it on the review list was the high number of rejected records due to the identification difficulty. Motion passed 8-1.

b. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron – Discussion centered on local breeding in San Diego County where the problematic nature of determining which individuals are returning, which never leave, which were born locally or might be new arrivals appears unresolvable, as well as the potentially ephemeral status of breeding birds at the northern limit of their range. The species remains extremely rare throughout most of the state. A motion by Terrill, seconded by Johnson, to remove this species from the review list failed 3-6.

c. Yellow-throated Warbler – Singer and Morlan reviewed records for the past ten years (not including 2011) and found a continuing upward trend now reaching 4.5 birds per year therefore exceeding the Committee threshold of 4 per year. Total number of accepted records is currently 132 with an additional 5 records occurring in 2011. A motion by Singer, seconded by Nelson, to remove this species from the review list was approved 8-1.

20. Records brought to the meeting at the request of a member:

a. Trumpeter Swan records 2011-029, 2011-030, 2011-031 at Modoc NWR near Alturas, MOD during November-December 2009 and 2010, and 2011-035 at Eagleville, MOD in December 2010. Each record involves multiple birds but determining which ones are returning individuals is speculative. Eagleville record of seven birds assumed to be different based on distance (~30 miles and over the Warner Mtns. from Modoc NWR). Consensus reached that the Modoc records very likely involved some of the same birds from year to year and/or month to month, but which ones can't be ascertained. Committee agreed to await Rottenborn's final record for birds in December 2011 and requested he give his opinion about same bird considerations for any particular birds. Ultimately a published report will state that the Committee has no way of knowing anything more than the maximum number of birds reported during the season, but it is assumed many records included individuals that were returning, continuing and new.

b. Lesser Black-backed Gull records 2011-012 & 2011-013. Morlan sought clarification on same bird issue at the NESS in February and March 2011. After reviewing photographs the Committee agreed that 2011-012 was a returning bird due to extensive

head streaking similar to records in 2009 and 2010. Record 2011-013 is regarded as a new individual.

c. Blue-headed Vireo 2009-199 at San Francisco on 3 October 2009. Accepted 8-1 during the third round. Morlan sought and received an opinion from Matt Heindel that he felt the Committee should consider. The Committee voted 9-0 to consider this record as a fourth and final.

d. Common Grackle 2011-099 from Capitola, SCZ on 2 May 2011. Currently circulating in its second round. No action taken.

21. Records without a decision after third circulation (fourth and final):

The following records have considerable support. Various members presented a summary of each record to the Committee:

2009-080 Yellow-billed Loon, Point Pinos MTY, 21 June 2008

2009-125 Glossy Ibis, Owens Lake INY, 11-12 July 2009

2010-024 Glossy Ibis, SESS IMP, 8 March 2010

2010-046 Great-crested Flycatcher, Olivenhain SD, 26-27 May 2010

2008-193 Blue-headed Vireo, Arroyo Grande SLO, 30 September 1997

2009-199 Blue-headed Vireo, San Francisco SF, 3 October 2009

2009-200 Blue-headed Vireo, SEFI SF, 9 October 2009

22. Annual report:

a. 36th report by Sullivan and Johnson. Final draft will be available for member review in April.

b. The 37th report authors will be Nelson, Rottenborn and Terrill.

22. Closing:

a. The 2013 meeting will be held on 18-19 January 2013 at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History in Santa Barbara pending approval from new members.

b. Appreciations:

Scott Terrill, Steve Rottenborn, and H.T. Harvey and Associates for hosting the meeting, providing logistical support, and sandwiches, pizza, and drinks for all.

Linnea Hall and staff, and WFVZ for ongoing support and archiving records.

Joe Morlan for website work.

Lehman, Morlan and Singer for time served.

Peter Pyle and Jim Tietz for their work on the 35th report.

Joe Morlan and Jim Tietz for maintaining online updates to the CBRC book.

Guy McCaskie for his energy and dedication to the job of Secretary.

Bill Gabrielson for his continued support of the Secretary's work.

c. Adjournment

6:00 pm, 14 January 2012

– Dan Singer, Vice-Chair

Approved 24 April 2012