

Proceedings of the Minnesota Ornithological Records Committee

Kim R. Eckert

The following were voted on January-June 1991 and found Acceptable:

- Carolina Wren, 14 November 1990, Grey Cloud Island, Washington Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:64-65).
- Western Tanager, 19 May 1990, Cross Lake, Polk Co. (vote 5-2; *The Loon* 63:61-62).
- Ruff (two individuals), 3 August 1990, Tyson Lake, Yellow Medicine Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:73).
- Barrow's Goldeneye, 22 March 1990, Vermillion Twp., Dakota Co. (vote 6-1; *The Loon* 63:72-73).
- King Rail, 2 May 1990, Vermillion Twp., Dakota Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:73-74).
- American Pipit, 16 March 1990, near Rochester, Olmsted Co. (vote 5-2).
- Ash-throated Flycatcher, 3-6 November 1990, near Randall, Morrison Co. (vote 10-0; *The Loon* 63:1-11). All ten members vote on potential first state records.
- Ross' Goose (two individuals), 7 April 1991, Twin Lakes, Lincoln Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:138).
- Ross' Goose, 30 March 1991, Wang Twp., Renville Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:136).
- Black-legged Kittiwake, 30 March 1991, Lock and Dam #7, Winona Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:143).
- Ross' Goose, 6 April 1991, Hamlin Twp., Lac Qui Parle Co. (vote 7-0).
- Yellow-throated Warbler, 1 May 1991, near Vasa, Goodhue Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:205).
- Worm-eating Warbler, 18 May 1991, Minneapolis, Hennepin Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:201).
- Ross' Goose, 21 April 1991, near Luverne, Rock Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:202-203).
- Ross' Goose, 17-24 April 1991, Thief Lake Twp., Marshall Co. (vote 7-0).
- Ross' Goose (two individuals), 18 April 1991, Tara Twp., Traverse Co. (vote 7-0).
- Ross' Goose, 6 March 1991, Rochester, Olmsted Co. (vote 7-0).
- Lazuli Bunting, 21 May 1991, Minneapolis, Hennepin Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:194).
- Brant, 28 March 1991, Mountain Lake, Cottonwood Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:209).
- White-eyed Vireo, 28 April 1991, Nerstrand Woods State Park, Rice Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:205-206).
- Worm-eating Warbler, 11 May 1991, Eagle's Nest Co. Park, Watonwan Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:208).
- Yellow-throated Warbler, 7 April 1991, Eden Twp., Brown Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:197).
- Clark's Grebe, 8 June 1991, Thielke Lake, Big Stone Co. (vote 7-0; *The Loon* 63:194-196).

The following records were voted on January-June 1991 and found Unacceptable:

- Western Tanager, 16 September 1990, near Moorhead, Clay Co. (vote 1-6). This female/immature tanager was identified as a Western primarily because of its two "distinct wingbars." However, as noted in the Geographic and Master field guides (also see *American Birds* 26:713-714 and 42:3-5), some Scarlet Tanagers in fall can also show such wing bars.
- Great Black-backed Gull, 8 March 1991, St. Paul, Ramsey Co. (vote 0-7). While it was

agreed that this probably was a "black-backed" gull of some kind, there was no mention of leg color and no direct size comparison available with any other gulls; therefore, the possibility of Lesser Black-backed Gull is not precluded.

- Iceland Gull, 30 March 1991, Black Dog Lake, Dakota Co. (vote 3-4). This adult "white-winged" gull was identified as an Iceland rather than a Glaucous because its body and bill were "essentially identical in size to the Herring Gulls" which were present for direct comparison. However, some female Glaucous Gulls can appear to be no larger in overall size than male Herring Gulls, and at the distance involved (200 yards) it would be difficult to accurately determine bill size. Without a closer look and without mention of the head and neck size and shape, the majority felt Glaucous Gull was not precluded.
- Ross' Goose, 10 March 1991, German Lake, Le Sueur Co. (vote 3-4). This goose was only seen in flight in the company of Canada Geese, and was identified on the basis of its "short" neck, "tiny" bill, "small and round" head, and because "the call did not sound like a Snow." However, since there were no Snow Geese present for direct comparison, the majority felt that the observer's impressions of the bill, head, neck and call were too subjective to be useful, and that a more careful look (not possible with a goose flying by) is necessary before positively identifying a Ross'. **8255 Congdon Blvd., Duluth, MN 55804.**

Ground-Nesting Bald Eagles in Northwestern Minnesota

Peggy Hines and Howard Lipke

Ground nesting Bald Eagles are reportedly common in Alaska, but they certainly are a rarity in this part of the country. There was a report of a pair of ground-nesting Bald Eagles in Ohio in 1975, and this spring there was a pair in Minnesota. A Mahanomen County farmer, preparing for spring planting, discovered a Bald Eagle incubating one egg on a ground nest in a 30-acre field. Naturally, when the call came in we were rather skeptical. But after Department of Natural Resources (DNR) personnel flew over the nest site, skepticism turned to amazement.

The site was visited 10 May 1991 for documentation. Both adult eagles circled the area as we drove across the field to the eagle nest. Peering into the nest bowl, we discovered the single egg with the eaglet pipping from the egg. The beak was the only part visible.

We took numerous photographs and measured the nest which was six by eight feet. It consisted of a nest bowl and a feeding platform. The nest bowl was 20 x 21 inches

and four inches deep. The four by six foot feeding platform was complete with a half-eaten American Coot.

The nesting material differed from the usual stick nests of tree-nesting Bald Eagles. The material was 20% sticks and 10% corn stalks, both of which occurred around the perimeter of the nest. The remainder of the nest material was grass (65%) which dominated the nest bowl. About 5% bare ground occurred just outside the southern rim of the nest bowl.

After leaving the nest site, we drove to the corner of the field to watch the adults' response to our presence. As we reached the corner of the field, one adult was already on its way to the nest, and was back on the nest in about one minute after we left.

It seemed that an eaglet on the ground would have a poor chance of survival. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), who has jurisdiction over this federally protected bird, decided to let nature take its course. Unfortunately, the eaglet died approx-