

# Proceedings of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee

Peder H. Svingen, Chairman

The Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (MOURC) conducted all of its business electronically during the period covered by this report. The vast majority of documentation is now being submitted online. Members voting on records during this period were Bob Dunlap (alternate), Kim Eckert (alternate), Bruce Fall (alternate), Anthony Hertzell, Ann Kessen, Jim Lind, Bill Marengo, Jim Mattsson, Steve Stucker, and Peder Svingen (Chair). Results for January – July 2009 are shown below.

The following records were Accepted.

- Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*), 28–30 March 2009, Peterson Lake, Wabasha County (record #2009-006, vote 7–0).

- Eurasian Wigeon, 10 April 2009, Montevideo, Chippewa County (record #2009-014, vote 7–0).

Both were first county records of single adult males showing no signs of hybridization with American Wigeon (*A. americana*). Both birds were photographed.

- Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*), 22 November 2008, Pool 8, Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, Houston County (record #2008-064, vote 6–1).

This species was also documented here in November 2001, 2003, 2004, and 2005.

- Barrow's Goldeneye, 7–9 April 2009, Grand Rapids Wastewater Treatment Plant, Itasca County (record #2009-008, vote 7–0).

First county record. Adult male, photographed.

- Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippi-*

*piensis*), 8 September 2008, Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory, Duluth, St. Louis County (recirculated record #2008-043, vote 4–3 / 7–0).

This record was recirculated with documentation submitted by a second observer, and was unanimously Accepted. The bird was unaged, but was thought to be a different individual than an immature photographed at Hawk Ridge one day later (*The Loon* 81:8; 81:157–158).

- Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*), 30 May 2009, Lansing Parker Pool, Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge, Marshall County (record #2009-027, vote 7–0).

Second refuge record. Adult in alternate plumage, photographed.

- Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*), 14 May 2009, Lake Byllesby, Dakota and Goodhue counties (record #2009-023, vote 7–0).

The fifth for Dakota and the second for Goodhue.

- California Gull (*Larus californicus*), 23 May 2009, Headquarters Pool, Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge, Marshall County (record #2009-024, vote 7–0).

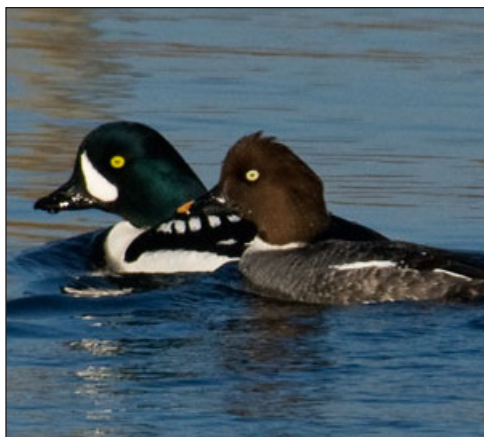
Second refuge record. Adult in alternate plumage, photographed.

- Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*), 28 March 2009, Black Rush Lake, Lyon County (record #2009-007, vote 6–1).

Fifth state record since 2006 and the first for western Minnesota. Adult, photographed.

- Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*), 1 May 2009, Superior Entry, St. Louis County (record #2009-010, vote 7–0).

Fourth state record. First-cycle bird, photographed.



**Record #2009-008. Barrow's Goldeneye, 9 April 2009, Grand Rapids, Itasca County. Photo by Earl Orf.**



**Record #2009-024. California Gull, 23 May 2009, Agassiz NWR, Marshall County. Photo by Kim Eckert.**

- Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*), 13–14 May 2009, Lake Byllesby, Dakota County (record #2009-019, vote 7–0).

First county record and only the fourth away from Duluth. Independently found and documented by two experienced observers.

- Arctic Tern, 21–23 May 2009, Park Point, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2009-020, vote 7–0).

- Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*), 2 May 2009, near Cotton-Jack Wildlife Management Area, along Cottonwood County Road 6 and Jackson County Road 7 (record #2009-011, vote 7–0).

First occurrence for each county as the bird was observed on both sides of the county line. Photographed.

- Say's Phoebe, 12–13 May 2009, Ramsey, Anoka County (record #2009-015, vote 7–0).

Another first county record. Photographed.

- Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*), 13–14 April 2009, Lake Harriet, Minneapolis, Hennepin County (record #2009-009, vote 7–0).

Four of the state's twelve records are from Hennepin County. Photographed by many observers.

- Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*), 9 May 2009, along St. Croix

River near Otisville, Washington County (record #2009-026, vote 7–0).

Singing male at same location where one was documented 12 July 2008.

- Yellow-throated Warbler, 18 May 2009, Gnesen Township, St. Louis County (record #2009-018, vote 7–0).

Second county record, photographed.

- Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*), 13 May 2009, Dundas, Rice County (record #2009-016, vote 6–1).

Second county record. Adult male, photographed at a banding station.

- Prairie Warbler, 23 May 2009, Mankato, Blue Earth County (record #2009-028, vote 7–0).

First county record. Singing adult male.

- Worm-eating Warbler (*Helminthos vermivorum*), 15 May 2009, Veteran's Memorial Park, Richfield, Hennepin County (record #2009-029, vote 7–0).

- Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*), 20 December 2008 – 2 April 2009, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2008-066, vote 7–0).

Second county and sixth state record. This immature bird was first identified and photographed by the homeowner during the Duluth CBC. It sporadically visited a feeder on 11 different dates over a period of 3½ months.

- Golden-crowned Sparrow, 25 & 30



**Record #2009-027. Snowy Plover, 30 May 2009, Agassiz NWR, Marshall County. Photo by Barbara Williams.**



**Record #2009-015. Say's Phoebe, 13 May 2009, Ramsey, Anoka County. Photo by Dan and Pam Gynn.**

March 2009, Eagan, Dakota County (record #2009-005, vote 7-0).

First county and seventh state record. Second-year bird, photographed (*The Loon* 81:157-158).

- Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*), adult male 23-24 May 2009 and adult female 23-27 May 2009, Star Lake, Otter Tail County (record #2009-025, vote 6-1 for male, vote 7-0 for female).

Third county record and the second time this species has occurred in this yard! The female was photographed. Males account for 43 of the state's 46 records.

- Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*), 19-21 May 2009, Moorhead, Clay County (record #2009-021, vote 7-0).

- Painted Bunting, 20 May 2009, Hardwick, Rock County (record #2009-022, vote 7-0).

Both records were of adult males photographed at feeders. Nineteen of the state's 23 records have occurred within the last 16 years.

The following records were Not Accepted. (Please note that a record which is Not Accepted only means that the documentation was not complete or convincing enough to include the sighting in *The Loon*, the journal of the MOU, or

in the MOU's archives of confirmed bird records. Such a vote does not necessarily mean the observer misidentified the bird or did not see it. Summaries of the reasons why a record was Not Accepted are included here. These are in no way intended to be critical of the observer. The only purpose is to highlight the difficulties an observer may encounter while identifying or documenting these and similar species.)

- White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*), 15-18 May 2008, Black Rush Lake, Lyon County (record #2008-065, vote 1-6 for each of three adults).

Though clearly belonging to this genus, the photographs and written details were insufficient to rule out hybrids with Glossy Ibis (*P. falcinellus*). In accordance with previous policy, all three were automatically Accepted as *Plegadis* sp., as were two additional birds that the observer submitted as such.

- Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*), 4 May 2009, Forest City Township, Meeker County (record #2009-012, vote 3-4).

This hawk may have been correctly identified, but the diagnostic features of Ferruginous Hawk were not clearly described. For example, the observer noted "white feathering in the primaries" but did not describe the location, shape, or



**Record #2009-009. Sage Thrasher, 14 April 2009, Minneapolis, Hennepin County. Photo by Derek Bakken.**



**Record #2009-025. Lazuli Bunting, 26 May 2009, Star Lake, Otter Tail County. Photo by Peder H. Svingen.**

extent of this feathering. The tail was described as “white with a rufous wash to it”, which fits either Ferruginous Hawk or western Red-tailed Hawk (*B. jamaicensis*). Field notes or a sketch showing the exact wing and tail pattern might have assuaged these concerns.

- Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), 6 January 2009, two unaged birds near Voyageurs National Park, Koochiching County (record #2009-001, vote 0–7 for each individual).

The brief description from an observer who had no experience with this species in flight included statements that ruled out Gyrfalcon. For example, the wings were said to be not as broad as a Peregrine Falcon's. The observer relied mostly on wing shape and flight style to eliminate Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), but these are subjective characteristics affected by wind direction and speed.

- Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*), 8 November 2008, White Bear Lake, Ramsey County (record #2009-003, vote 2–5).

- Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*), 9 September 2008, White Bear Lake, Ramsey County (record #2009-002, vote 2–5).

Both of these distinctive larids were

seen by an experienced observer and were probably correctly identified. Unfortunately, no field notes or sketches were taken and the documentation was submitted in late February 2009. Descriptions based solely on months-old memories are problematic. Similar-looking species were neither considered nor eliminated.

- California Gull (*Larus californicus*), 4 May 2009, near mouth of Talmadge River, Duluth Township, St. Louis County (record #2009-013, vote 2–5).

Though possibly correctly identified by an experienced observer who promptly submitted documentation, there was no direct comparison of size, structure, or mantle shade to nearby gull species. Bill size, bill shape, and orbital ring color were not noted.

- Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*), 13 May 2009, Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge, Lac qui Parle County (record #2009-017, vote 0–7).

The brief description omitted key features distinguishing this species from Baltimore Oriole (*I. galbula*), and hybrids between these two species were not eliminated. The bird's “chek-chek”, rather hoarse, musical” call was described as distinctive, but the observers had no





**Record #2008-066. Golden-crowned Sparrow, 20 December 2008, Duluth, St. Louis County. Photo by Brad Snelling.**



**Record #2009-005. Golden-crowned Sparrow, 30 March 2009, Eagan, Dakota County. Photo by Jim Mattsson.**

experience with Bullock's Oriole. Since there were no field notes, sketches, or photographs, it was felt that a complete and unambiguous description would be needed to substantiate a potential second state record.

- Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (*Leucosticte tephrocotis*), 17 March 2009, near Twig, St. Louis County (record #2009-004, vote 3–4).

Though possibly correctly identified, field notes were not taken. The bird was briefly observed without optics and identified after reviewing images online.

The efforts of all those observers who document reports of unusual species are greatly appreciated, whether or not the records are Accepted. Accordingly, the Committee acknowledges with thanks those who provided written or photographic documentation for one or more of the records listed in this article: Derek Bakken, Dave Bartkey, Pat Beauzay, Terry Brashear, Paul Budde, Dave Cahlander, Shawn Conrad, Matt Dufort, Bob Dunlap, Kim Eckert, John Fitzpatrick, Dan Floren, Janet Green, Dan and Pam Guynn, Chad Heins, Mike Hendrickson, Don Kienholz, Doug Kieser, Jim Lind, Bill Litkey, Jim

Mattsson, Phyllis Mohr, Earl Orf, Matthew Radzak, Jean Ranweiler, Alma Ronningen, Al Schirmacher, Nathan Schirmacher, Roger Schroeder, Drew Smith, Peder Svingen, Dan Tallman, Kyle TePoel, Tom Tustison, Barbara Williams, and Dan Williams.

There were many more observers who provided written documentation and/or photographs for records of Regular species which were not voted on by the Committee. Although such records are not cited here, the efforts of these individuals are greatly appreciated. All observers are encouraged to use the "Request for Documentation Form", which can be downloaded from the MOU website or filled out online at <http://moumn.org/cgi-bin/rqd.pl?op=new>.

The Committee welcomes questions or comments regarding any record or our procedures in general. Please contact Peder Svingen by e-mail at [mourc@moumn.org](mailto:mourc@moumn.org).

Summary: 33 records voted on — 25 Accepted (76%), 8 Not Accepted (24%).

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