



**2000 Annual Meeting
February 26, 2000**

Meeting Minutes and Annual Business Report

The 2000 Annual Meeting of the Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee (MD/DCRC) was called to order at 9:15 a.m. at the home of Phil Davis in Davidsonville, MD. Members present included Harvey Mudd (Chair), Phil Davis (Secretary), Patty Craig, Mark Hoffman, Gail Mackiernan, Michael O'Brien, Paul Pisano, Sue Ricciardi, and Sherman Suter. Absent were Sam Dyke and Mary Ann Todd. Also attending were MOS President, Norm Saunders; MOS Vice-President, Karen Morley; and MD/DCRC Outreach Subcommittee Chair, Paul O'Brien.

1. Secretary's Report. The Secretary presented the following report:

a. Database Status Report. Figure 1 summarizes the current contents of the MD/DCRC database and changes from last year:

Figure 1. MD/DCRC Database Summary as of 02/26/2000

State	Status	1998	1999	2000	Delta
MD	Accepted	258	333	365	+32
	Not Accepted	119	124	127	+3
	ID OK/?? Origin	5	6	5	-1
	ID OK/Exotic Origin	0	0	1	+1
	Accepted: Genus Only	2	2	9	+7
	Withdrawn	4	5	7	+2
	Unreviewable	221	224	238	+14
	Non-Review Species	109	112	119	+7
	Circulating	45	28	9	-19
	Recirculate	22	21	27	+6
	Reopened	-	-	5	+5
	Ready	102	49	64	+15
	Reviewable	35	45	36	+11
	Hold	11	11	16	+5
	Report	0	3	5	+2
	Stewart & Robbins	9	9	100	+91
US Museum of Natural History	-	-	6	+6	
	MD Totals	942	972	1139	+167
DC	Accepted	14	16	19	+3
	Not Accepted	0	0	0	0
	Unreviewable	8	13	17	+4
	Non-Review Species	3	3	3	0
	Circulating	1	4	1	-3
	Recirculate	1	2	4	+2
	Ready	6	2	3	+1
	Reviewable	1	7	9	+2
	Report	0	10	10	0
	Stewart & Robbins	-	-	25	+25
	US Museum of Natural History	-	-	4	+4
	DC Totals	34	57	96	+39
	Grand Totals	976	1029	1235	+236

b. Review Package Status. Figure 2 summarizes statistics associated with review package process, including the packages circulated during the past year.

Figure 2. MD/DCRC Package Summary: 1994 - 02/22/1999

Annual Meeting	Pkg	Start	End	Duration (weeks)	# Items	# New	# Decisions	Decision %
1994	42	04/20/1993	06/20/1993	8.7	4	0	4	100%
	43	06/10/1993	10/01/1993	16.1	13	7	9	69%
	44	11/03/1993	03/14/1994	18.7	10	5	8	80%
				14.5	27	12	21	78%
1995	45	04/18/1994	11/12/1994	29.7	4	0	4	100%
	46	04/18/1994	11/21/1994	31.0	12	7	8	67%
	47	04/18/1994	09/27/1994	23.1	13	8	8	62%
				28.0	29	15	20	69%
1996	48	11/14/1994	06/06/1995	29.1	16	12	10	63%
	49	11/14/1994	07/22/1995	35.7	17	13	10	59%
	50	03/01/1995	07/01/1995	17.4	15	15	4	27%
	51	07/24/1995	12/16/1995	20.7	15	10	9	60%
	52	09/25/1995	03/09/1996	23.7	15	10	7	47%
	53	11/13/1995	03/11/1996	17.0	11	6	10	91%
				24.0	89	66	50	56%
1997	54	02/14/1996	09/20/1996	31.3	14	13	11	79%
	55	04/05/1996	10/23/1996	28.7	11	8	5	45%
	56	08/26/1996	03/11/1997	28.1	14	8	11	79%
	57	10/15/1996	02/22/1997	18.6	12	10	9	75%
	58	12/01/1996	03/05/1997	13.4	14	13	10	71%
				24.0	65	52	46	71%
1998	59	04/11/1997	10/07/1997	25.6	12	6	9	75%
	60	06/13/1997	10/31/1997	20.0	16	10	11	69%
	61	08/06/1997	01/08/1998	22.1	16	13	10	63%
	62	09/30/1997	02/18/1998	20.1	12	9	11	92%
				22.0	56	38	41	73%
1999	63	12/02/1997	04/14/1998	19.0	19	19	16	84%
	64	01/20/1998	06/09/1998	20.0	15	11	11	73%
	65	03/23/1998	06/26/1998	13.6	15	11	12	80%
	66	05/05/1998	11/02/1998	25.9	15	10	12	80%
	67	07/06/1998	10/15/1998	14.4	15	11	11	73%
	68	09/09/1998	01/27/1999	20.0	16	12	11	69%
				18.8	95	74	73	77%
2000	69	11/30/1998	05/07/1999	22.6	16	13	5	31%
	70	02/04/1999	06/30/1999	20.9	16	13	7	44%
	71	05/14/1999	10/13/1999	21.7	17	10	15	88%
	72	08/13/1999	12/10/1999	17.0	17	13	8	47%
	73	10/20/1999	02/15/2000	16.9	16	5	10	63%
	74	02/01/2000	-		10			
				19.8	82	54	45	55%

c. **External Communications Summary.** During the prior year, the Secretary participated in non-routine committee requests for information, shown in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3. MD/DCRC Outside Correspondence Summary – 2000 Annual Meeting

Mon	Year	Contact	State	Topic
Mar	1999	Halliwell, Tom	NJ	Article on records accepted within 200 miles of NJ
Mar	1999	Friend, Charlotte	VA	Status of VA Black-tailed Gull report
Mar	1999	Rogers, Mike	CA	Status of VA Black-tailed Gull report
Apr	1999	Craves, Julie	MI	Article on Eurasian Collared-Doves/Ringed-necked Doves
Apr	1999	King, Jon	CA	Review of Mew and California Gulls
Apr	1999	Campbell, Colin	DE	Delaware Frigatebird record
May	1999	Wamer, Noel	FL	Maryland ABA list totals
May	1999	Sklebar, Tom	ND	MD/DCRC database format
Oct	1999	Halliwell, Tom	NJ	Article on records accepted within 200 miles of NJ
Nov	1999	Burton, Kathlyn		Mutes Swans as a native species
Nov	1999	Lasley, Greg	TX	Texas Kelp Gull decision
Nov	1999	Brinkley, Ned	VA	Maryland Pink-sided Junco reports
Nov	1999	Ludwig, Craig	DC	Reviewable MD/DC specimens
Nov	1999	Stackhouse, Mark	UT	Status of UT Black-tailed Gull report
Nov	1999	Larson, Laurie	NJ	Status of NJ Black-tailed Gull report
Nov	1999	Buckley, Pat	RI	Status of RI Black-tailed Gull report
Nov	1999	Mactavish, Bruce	NF	Status of NF Black-tailed Gull report
Nov	1999	Lowe, Jim	NY	Status of NY Black-tailed Gull report
Nov	1999	Lasley, Greg	TX	Status of TX Black-tailed Gull report
Dec	1999	Iron, Jean	ON	Hoary Redpoll identification article
Dec	1999	Ensor, Julie	FL	Status of Sea World Kelp Gulls
Dec	1999	Crispen, Wilson		Access to the ISIS database
Jan	2000	Fallow, Dave	MN	Update of a Thayer's Gull reference citation
Jan	2000	Leathaby, Nick	CA	Question on Slaty-backed Gull specimens
Jan	2000	Banks, Dick	DC	Question on Maryland Silver Gull report
Jan	2000	Dittman, Donna	LA	Kelp Gull hybridism question
Jan	2000	Brinkley, Ned	VA	Russian article on Slaty-backed Gull hybridism
Feb	2000	Skerrett, Adrian		Seychelles Bird Records Committee
Feb	2000	Boone, Dan	MD	Maryland historical Trumpeter Swan question

d. Projects Status.

i. **Projects Completed.** Database projects completed over the past year include:

1. AOU 7th Edition Changes. The 7th edition of the AOU *Check-list of North American Birds* included species name and taxonomy changes that were first presented in the 41st Supplement to the 6th Edition. The MD/DCRC database has now been reindexed to conform to the new taxonomy order and the name changes have been implemented. Our database is now fully compliant with the 7th edition.

2. Link ID Articles and Package Content Reports. This completed project provides reports that associate the titles of committee “on-file” identification articles with the species contained in a the review packages. This report will circulate with future circulation packages to advise the members of known identification articles or relevance. The Secretary now also includes other sources of identification articles in the review packages, including the Swedish book:

Bird Identification A Reference Guide
Kristian Adolfson and Stefan Cherrug
ANSER Supplement 37, Skanes Ornitologiska Forenning, 1995

and the web site:

Index To Bird Magazines
<http://www.borg.com/~svcselem/kirkland/magazine/>

ii. **Projects In Progress.** The following projects are in work:

1. Stewart and Robbins Records. Thanks to Marshall Iloff, the committee database now includes most of the historical Stewart and Robbins records (the MD/DCRC baseline document). Now all historical references are available in one place. Where Stewart and Robbins specimens exist, the committee plans to review them. This activity could be the focus of a single Skins Workshop. Some of the species included in Stewart and Robbins need some additional research to figure out which records should be included in the MD/DCRC database—typically these questions deal with breeding species that are or are nearly extirpated from Maryland, such as Bewick's Wren and Bachman's Sparrow.

2. Citation Database. The Secretary began a project to identify and obtain copies of citations for records and reports where the citation is not already physically included in the existing files. The objective of this project is to ensure that all information related to a report/record is physically included in the file jacket for that report/record and to ensure that the database includes a reference to all published citations. This effort has required several trips to the library at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and will require further visits and communications with other libraries to obtain all of the outstanding material. This project will also standardize the nomenclature used for the common citation publications and provide a database capability to sort and report on these data. This project has been started but is not yet complete.

3. Observer Database. Currently, the committee database contains fields for a maximum of only two observers per report/record and an "et al." field. The "et al." field is used to indicate that, according to the submitted observers' reports, other observers also saw the bird(s) in question, but did not submit documentation. Currently, if more than two observers submit documentation for a given report/record, the additional observer data must be manually compiled. This project will link the main report/record data tables to another table of observer entries. This implementation will eventually eliminate the manual processing required to prepare acknowledgements, decision notifications, decision reports, and also provide a more robust capability for reports and ad hoc queries. This project has been started but is not yet complete.

4. Decision Text from Old Records. In the past (prior to 1996), decision letters were individually written and mailed to observers. Several years ago, a text decision summary field was added to the database and now a brief decision summary statement is included directly into the database. This project involves electronically "cutting" the decision summaries from the older word processing files and "pasting" them into the new decision text field for each record. This will provide a more meaningful "quick look" status capability for all records in the database. This project has been started but is not yet complete.

5. Numbering of Reopened Reports. Previously, the committee did not have a good nomenclature process for dealing with reopened reports. Adding a suffix to reopened reports (for example, if 1994-015 was reopened, it would become 1994-015A) was considered however the Secretary is reluctant to expand the length of the "record number" field by another character since many report formats would be affected. It was decided instead to add a new field to the database structure that flags if a record has been reopened. Most committee database reports will use this

flag as a filter to exclude reopened records since the later instance of that report will contain the most current and relevant information. The original database record, however, will always remain in the database so no information will ever be discarded.

6. Museum Specimens. The Secretary has been working with the National Museum of Natural History to determine if any reviewable specimens in their collection have not come to the committee's attention. Several candidate specimens have been located thus far. A similar check is also being made with other regional museums. Candidate specimens will be located, validated, and photographed for the committee's review.

iii. Future Projects Plans. Plans for future database projects include:

1. Dissection of Early Package Ballots. Very early committee ballots were just written sequentially on sheets of paper by the members. These ballots will be decollated and filed so that all ballots for a given record/report will be contained in the physical file jacket for that record/report.

2. Database of Review Packages. Currently, data associated with the review packages are not part of the committee's database structure, but rather are handled via external spreadsheets. The Secretary plans to transform all package-related data into data tables that can be linked to and used to produce reports and ad hoc queries.

3. Data Standardization. The Secretary plans to develop a formal data dictionary and schema for all committee data fields and data tables. This project will include a data normalization exercise to clean up the data structures (eliminate duplicate fields, etc.).

4. Four-letter Codes. The Secretary intends to add a standardized set of four-letter species codes (such as those from the Bird Banding Laboratory or Breeding Bird Survey) to the committee's data structure. The fields are sometimes used in unofficial committee reports or work products. An automated standard set of codes will be more consistent and easier to use. Several sets of codes have been obtained, but none have yet been merged into the data structure.

5. Extinct Species Research. In the course of performing citation research, the Secretary began to collect files dealing with the status of extinct Maryland/DC species (e.g., Passenger Pigeon, Carolina Parakeet, Heath Hen). The objective will be to capture documented sightings and build documentation files. This scope of this project will also include species that may be extinct and have or may have been found in Maryland in earlier times (including Eskimo Curlew, Ivory-billed Woodpecker). This work has not really begun yet.

6. DC Records Files. Last year the committee accepted an official list of DC species based on a composite baseline compiled from several sources. At some point in the future, the MD/DCRC may decide to backtrack to a Stewart and Robbins DC baseline (the same baseline the MD/DCRC uses for Maryland species) and incorporate the predecessor DC Records Committee deliberations into the MD/DCRC database at the report/record level.

7. Quality Review. Once the committee data structure is fully stable, the Secretary plans a project to review each individual folder jacket to ensure that all fields in the database are populated and are correct, that all photographic documentation is present, etc. Once the review is completed, committee files will be ready for digital and physical archiving.

e. Loss Prevention Plan/Permanent Storage Status. This is an open project. The MOS has now secured climate-controlled secure storage space for various MOS requirements (such as the Atlas Project). The MOS President has made this space available to the MD/DCRC. The committee is not yet ready to send any of its records into storage, but will use these facilities when ready. **Action:** In the interim, the Secretary will investigate obtaining fireproof document boxes.

f. Maryland Birdlife Archives. The committee recently received a donation of old Maryland Birdlife issues from Charlie Vaughn of Salisbury, however the committee still does not have a complete archive set. Other sources have been identified and will be contacted.

g. Unsubmitted Reports (“Rumors”) and Outstanding Documentation Status. A list of unsubmitted reports was distributed to the committee members. A subcommittee of Harvey Mudd, Patty Craig, and Gail Mackiernan will try to obtain documentation from observers. For next year’s annual meeting, this subcommittee will suggest policies regarding how the MD/DCRC should deal with and process such unsubmitted reports

h. Official List of the Birds of Maryland. The total species count is now 415. The Secretary discussed an idea to reorganize the list into various sections:

- i. List of Accepted Species
- ii. List of Accepted Genera
- iii. List of Accepted Groups
- iv. List of Accepted Subspecies/Recognizable Forms
- v. List of Exotics/Questionable Origins Species

The Secretary will plan to develop a prototype for the next Annual Meeting.

i. Official List of the Birds of the District of Columbia. The DC species count is currently 312.

j. MOS By-Laws Status: The Secretary and Chair provided recommended updates to the MOS President and MOS By-Laws Chairman to make the MOS By-Laws and Manual of Operations documents consistent with how the MD/DCRC actually operates and also to align the MD/DCRC’s MOS-level operations more closely with those of other MOS standing committees.

k. The Internet. A number of Internet (web and e-mail) issues were discussed.

i. MOS-MD/DCRC Web Site. Phil Davis reported that since the last meeting, he and Fran Saunders, MOS webmaster, have rolled-out and updated more MD/DCRC data products onto the committee’s web pages. New products include the Second Decision Report and a list of North American and International Records Committee links. The MOS-MD/DCRC web site is found at:

<http://www.MDBirds.org/mddcrc/rcindex.html>

ii. Policy on Digital/Scanned/Video Capture Images. The committee needs to begin to develop policies that deal with receiving digital images and especially those published on the Internet. It is expected that this topic may be discussed in the future among Maryland/DC birders and on the new Bird Records Committee Forum-Listserver. The committee will consider this over the next year and perhaps propose a policy at next year’s meeting.

iii. Policy on Internet Documentation. The committee reaffirmed its position that it will not review sighting reports published on the Internet without the permission of the observer. Furthermore, the committee will follow-up such reports and encourage the observer to make a formal submission directly to the committee. Reference material published on the Internet will generally not be included with circulating reports; however, material from certain published experts may be selectively included.

iv. Bird Records Committee Forum. The MD/DCRC Secretary and the Secretary of the New Jersey Records Committee have collaborated to begin the Bird Records Committee Forum-Listserver, hosted by Indiana University. This is an electronic listserver venue to discuss and share records committee operational and policy issues among records committees and interested

parties. Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.princeton.edu/~llarson/brcf/brcfhome.html>

v. Future Web-based Records Committee Vision. The Secretary discussed that the MD/DCRC should consider that all information services are moving towards web-based delivery and that the committee should anticipate and plan for this. Considerations include establishment of:

1. On-line Database. Where interested parties can access the committee database on-line.

2. On-line Photo Gallery. Where interested parties can view records photographs, images, and other documentation, on-line.

3. Review Process via the Web. Where committee members will access an "intranet" (not accessible to the general public) to review records. Instead of physically mailing packages of documentation to one member at a time, the documentation will be posted by the Secretary on an intranet where the members will review the data and enter their votes electronically. Documentation can include written descriptions, digital images, sketches, video footage, and/or audio recordings. If a member had a need to review original documentation, a request to forward that material would be so honored. Minimum specifications of PC system configurations should be considered.

I. Maryland Birder Communications Activities.

i. Review List and Documentation Checklist Distribution. The secretary currently includes copies of the MD/DCRC Review List and Documentation Guides in mailings to first time observers. The Secretary has also been reminding compliers of Christmas Counts, May Counts, Mid-Winter Counts, etc. to consult the MD/DCRC Review List and Documentation Checklist on the web site in preparation for their counts. Also, a "heads up" of potentially reviewable species for these counts has been posted to the local Maryland e-mail birding listserver (MD_Osprey). Such notices should also go out via the *Maryland Yellowthroat*. Other future ideas include developing a database, in conjunction with the MOS Publicity Committee, to provide Review Lists and Documentation Guidelines to places where birders are present. Such places include parks and nature centers, National Wildlife Refuges, wild bird stores, DoD facility wildlife biologists, etc.

ii. Maryland Yellowthroat Plea for Additional Documentation. At some point, "unreviewable" records will be analyzed to determine which of them might be addressed in a *Maryland Yellowthroat* plea to Maryland birders. The plea will ask if any observers have any existing field notes or photographs for specific old sightings.

2. Action Item Review. The follow actions were taken at the 1999 Annual Meeting:

a. DC Review List. At last year's meeting the committee discussed whether to develop a separate DC Review List, or keep MD and DC combined. Paul Pisano agreed to work with Ottavio Janni and Rob Hilton to develop a draft for the committee to consider. Paul reported on the results of this work. A draft Review List is included as Appendix A to these minutes. Paul will review this list with Dave Czaplak and Byron Swift and locate a suitable map. Paul will then submit the final list to the Secretary who will publish it on the MOS-MD/DCRC web site. This action should be closed before the next meeting.

b. Reopened Common Gull Narrative. At last year's meeting, five members petitioned to reopen the previously accepted Conowingo Common Gull record [MD/1995-033] due to recent, more fully understood variations in Ring-billed Gull plumages. In keeping with the new procedure, a narrative providing rationale for the reopening is required and the requestors are expected to work up any analysis or provide reference material to be circulated with the reopened report. Marshall Iliff recently

provided this narrative, so the committee will move to reopen the record. This action is now closed. Members who petitioned to reopen the record will provide the research required. Sherman Suter agreed to help, if needed.

c. PWRC Card Files: Trumpeter Swan. Mark Hoffman agreed to forward to the committee a Trumpeter Swan sighting card for Worcester County. This action is still open.

d. Red Crossbills. Michael O'Brien analyzed recordings of Maryland Red Crossbill vocalizations provided to him from the 1998 invasion. Michael provided a summary report to the committee, including sonograms. Type IV was the most common form identified, along with some Type III's. Michael suspects that Allegany County Red Crossbills may include Type I or II forms. Recordings of these birds are still needed. The Secretary will send a message to the Maryland birding community via MD_Osprey to remind observers to forward any past or future recordings to Michael. Since Michael's report has been provided, this action is now closed, however, he will continue to accept any new recordings for analysis.

3. Subcommittee Reports:

a. Confidence Experiment. Harvey Mudd reported that the committee will tabulate summaries of the confidence votes and keep them as part of the permanent record files.

b. Outreach Committee. Paul O'Brien reported that he has given the full Outreach Committee presentation to three local MOS chapters (Carroll, Wicomico, and Baltimore) with good feedback. There are 52 slides in the presentation. The MOS has invited the committee to staff a booth at the MOS Annual Convention this May in Hagerstown. The subcommittee will look into this invitation.

c. Subspecies/Distinct Forms Committee. This subcommittee was formed to look into which subspecies and forms should be included on the Review Lists. It was decided that this task should focus on being proactive in dealing with potential splits, examples include:

Scoters	Black and Common; White-winged and Velvet
Mergansers	Common and Goosander
Brant	Black-bellied, Black and Atlantic

Some research is required to determine which field-identifiable forms have already been recorded in MD and DC so they can be added to the Review List. **Action:** Michael O'Brien will continue his work on such a list. Ipswich Sparrow will be removed from the Review List.

Currently, "English" names are used on the Review List for some species/forms (for example, Common Teal). Since AOU-based names, such as "Green-winged Teal (Eurasian Form)" become too long and awkward for many of the committee reports the suggestion was made to put English names in quotes (e.g., "Common" Teal). The Secretary will look into this.

d. Quantitative Status System. Phil Davis presented a draft of the latest version of a quantitative system to describe the number of accepted and reported records in the committee's database. The system presented is of the form:

(acc, not, tot) where,

acc	= the number of report accepted by the committee
not	= the number of not accepted reports
tot	= the number of reports in the committee's database

Withdrawn reports, non-review species and reopened reports will not be included in this numbering system, even though the reports and associated data still exist in the committee's database and files.

The committee decided to include Exotic and Questionable Origin votes in a separate column. The Secretary will implement this.

4. Committee Procedures. The topics below deal with how the committee conducts business:

a. Review List.

i. Review Category Changes. One change was made to Review List category definitions:

5. D. Franklin's Gull. This wording was changed to:

Anywhere except the Susquehanna River Valley, Anne Arundel County, Prince George's County, or the Coastal Plain sections of Baltimore and Harford Counties.

ii. Species Review Status Changes. Various species changes were adopted:

Northern Shrike. It was agreed to remove this species from the Review List. Any reports received, to date, will be reviewed.

Roseate Tern. It was agreed to move this species to category 5A.

Long-tailed Jaeger. Removing this species from the list was discussed, but it was agreed to leave it in place.

iii. Review List Criteria. The committee discussed whether specific criteria should be adopted for keeping species on the Review List, for example, some set number of records, first county records, etc. The committee decided to not adopt any new policies this at this time.

b. Genus/Group Votes. At last year's Annual Meeting, the committee agreed that the "genus only" vote concept should be changed to apply to groups of species that may be broader or narrower than just a genus. The committee also decided that conclusions reached on this type of vote should be reflected in its final decisions. Some unusual Maryland/DC hummingbirds, for example, may be identifiable to a "group" consisting of specific species within the genus *Selasphorus* (e.g., Rufous/Allen's), while other birds may be only identifiable to a "group" that could include species from more than one genus (e.g., Rufous/Allen's/Broad-tailed/Calliope Hummingbirds). Many hummingbird reports were circulated over the past year to gain experience with this process, to surface any problems associated with this process, and to find ways to deal with them.

A key decision reached at the annual meeting involves interpreting the "genus only" votes cast by committee members. For example, with "*Selasphorus, sp.*" votes, there are six species in this genus; three are found in the United States: Rufous (*S. rufus*), Allen's (*S. sasin*), and Broad-tailed (*S. platycercus*); however, there are also three additional *Selasphorus* species that are found in South America: Volcano (*S. flammula*), Glow-throated (*S. ardens*), and Scintillant (*S. scintilla*). When members voted for "*Selasphorus, sp.*" as the applicable group, the meaning of such votes was not clear because no standard definition applied. The committee decided that in the future, a vote for "genus only", as the definition of a group, would equate to all of the species in that genus. If members wish to vote for a narrower or broader group they should identify which specific species for which they are voting in their ballots comments.

Specific Package 73 *Selasphorus* hummingbird votes were reviewed and to conform to the newly agreed-upon definition of "genus", some members changed their votes. The final results of the voting process are reflected in the *Selasphorus* hummingbird results of Package 73.

Although this policy turned out to be somewhat difficult to manage, the committee agreed to continue to use it. The Chair and Secretary will figure out how to implement the process within the database.

Before, the next Annual Meeting, the Chair and Secretary will review how this new policy might affect prior “accepted genus only” votes, including those for *Fregata, sp.* and *Cephus, sp.*

c. Third MD/DCRC Decision Report. Michael O’Brien agreed to be the senior author of the next committee decision report. Marshall Iliff had previously expressed interest in being involved and will be asked to assist. Sherman Suter also volunteered to assist, if needed.

d. Goals Document. The current Goals and Procedures document is currently over nine pages in length. The Secretary reported that he and the Chair discussed the idea of dividing the document into a series of shorter and more focused documents. Examples include separating policies from procedures, or separating topics that the members need to know from items that apply primarily to just the Secretary and/or the Chair.

e. Historical Names Policy. The committee agreed that names of places and people should be updated in the committee database as needed (for example, changes of town names due to annexation; or people’s name changes due to marriages, divorces, etc.). If possible, a comment will be added to the database to mention the prior name.

f. Multiple vs. Single Records Policy. The committee discussed what constitutes a “record”. For example, does the case of a returning banded wintering bird (such as the Greenbelt Harris’s Sparrow) constitute one or more than one record. It was agreed that, in this case, the two records should be kept separate. On the other hand, the Sandgates Kelp Gull that has been more or less continuously present for at least two years—spanning three calendar years—should be treated as a single record.

g. Ballot Comments. The members discussed and reiterated the importance of including comments on each ballot, per the committee procedures, to indicate why each member voted to either “accept” or “not accept” a report. With recirculations, the comments from earlier rounds are very important to the voting process.

5. Decision Issues: Fourth Round/Other Open Issues.

a. Baikal Teal [MD/1997-398]. Since the members originally split their votes between “origin exotic” and “origin questionable” this record was opened for discussion. The committee agreed that it could not determine, **with certainty**, that the bird was an escape from an exotic waterfowl collection; however, this is the most likely reason for the bird’s presence. The final outcome was therefore determined as “ID OK/questionable origin”. If a pattern of vagrancy should subsequently be determined, the record can always be reopened.

b. *Selasphorus, sp.* [MD/1997-381]. Two birds were indicated in this report, and details were provided for both. The committee will therefore split this into a new report for the second bird.

c. Bridled Tern [MD/1997-451]. One member noted that this bird appeared to have been described in DC waters rather than MD. The Secretary will make this change.

d. Dovekie [MD/1998-013]. This report was a 1952 “photo only” documentation of a specimen taken in Cambridge. One member questioned where the specimen actually came from and voted “Questionable Origin”. The members discussed this and the consensus was that in Cambridge in the 1950s this bird was probably shot in the area vice being bought at a local market, as was common in Washington and Baltimore in the 1800s and early 1900s. The committee therefore accepted the record.

e. Wood Stork [MD/1998-035]. Members of the committee felt that two birds were actually contained in

this record, an adult and an immature. The committee decided to split this into two reports and review the second one.

6. Circulation Issues/Identification Issues/Skins Meeting.

a. Black-tailed Gull Issues. The original Sandy Point Black-tailed Gull [MD/1985-016] was reopened at the last annual meeting. Even though the record passed, the committee felt that the primary issue deals with the question of origin—the question of ID was never an issue. The committee has contacted other state/provincial records committee's where Black-tailed Gull have been reported (TX, RI, VA, NJ, UT, NB). Gail Mackiernan has forwarded some other relevant information dealing with ship-assisted cases. Marshall Iliff has provided an article that deals with various map projections that put the issue of migration patterns in better context. This file will now be recirculated as a first round report package when it is ready.

b. Kelp Gull. The file is ready except for an expected input from Donna Dittman of Louisiana regarding possible hybridization. Paul O'Brien volunteered to provide a photo of the Texas hybrid Kelp Gull to use as a comparison.

c. Slaty-backed Gull. The members agreed that the committee should get expert opinions on this bird before it is circulated and that at least one of the opinions should be an expert in Japanese Slaty-backed Gulls, vice North American records. Suggestions for outside expert opinions included Mark Brazil (for Japanese birds) and John Dunn. Gail will contact Mr. Brazil.

d. Skins Workshop. The committee did not have access to the NMNH this winter due to renovations. It was decided it would like to try to hold a workshop in mid-July (preferably on the second Saturday), if a sponsor and access can be obtained. Skins of interest include:

- i. White-winged Dove (DC specimen)
- ii. Bicknell's Thrushes (DC specimens)
- iii. Western Wood-Pewees (DC specimens – try to locate)
- iv. Slaty-backed Gulls
- v. Kelp Gulls
- vi. Herring Gulls
 1. Vega
 2. European
- vii. Common Gulls
- viii. Common and Thick-billed Murres
- ix. Pacific and Arctic Loons
- x. Red Crossbills
- xi. Other Stewart & Robbins specimens – Marshall Iliff will consolidate a list

7. New Business:

a. Quick Review Policy. The idea of a "quick review" process was discussed, similar to that used by Louisiana and perhaps other Committees. The idea is that "easy" reports (for example, uncomplicated species with photographs) could be totally handled at the Annual Meeting. Complications raised include members not attending the meeting and peer pressure. The committee decided to not adopt this process.

b. Maryland Bird Documentation Archives Proposal. Marshall Iliff's idea of a Maryland Bird Documentation Archive was briefly presented to the committee members. This is not a committee initiative. Under this idea, certain "non-reviewable" sightings, but ones still of ornithological interest could be deposited in this archive. For example, this archive could include reports of some of the subspecies/forms that were discussed earlier.

c. Defer Vote. A proposal to adopt a “defer” vote was discussed. This option would allow members to let a report pass on the first round so that the comments of all members could be reviewed on the second round. The committee decided to not adopt this policy since reopening of a report is always an option (with a request by at least five members).

d. Original Finders Name of Record. A proposal to identify the names of the observer(s) who “found” a bird was discussed. Pros and cons of this policy were raised. It was agreed to be diligent about capturing the name of original observer(s) and to make appropriate notes in the database comment fields. A reminder to identify original “finders” will also be added to the committee Documentation Guidelines checklist for observers. Whether or not to include the identity of a record’s “finder(s)” will ultimately be left to the discretion of the authors of the committee’s Decision Reports.

e. Administrative Voting by the Chair and Secretary. A proposal was discussed to clarify the committee’s procedures to ensure that the Chair and the Secretary had rights to vote in committee administrative matters and member elections (but not voting on records). It was agreed to not change this at this time, since proposals are pending to change the MOS By-Laws and Operations Manual regarding the committee.

8. Election of New Members and Chair. The voting members whose three-year terms expire this year are Paul Pisano, Sue Ricciardi, and Mary Ann Todd. The committee wished to thank them for all their support over the past three years. The new members of the committee are: Rick Blom, Marshall Iliff, and Fran Pope. Harvey Mudd was reelected to another term as Committee Chair.

9. Next Year’s Meetings. Next year’s meetings are scheduled as follows:

Annual Meeting	Saturday	February 24, 2001 (firm)
Skins Workshop Saturday		March 24, 2001 (tentative)

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Davis
MD/DCRC Secretary
March 23, 2000

cc:
MOS President
MOS Vice-President

Appendix A
Proposed District of Columbia
Species Review List
February 25, 2000

The MD/DC Records Committee of the Maryland Ornithological Society will review reports of birds observed in the District of Columbia that meet any of the following criteria:

1. Any species observed in the District of Columbia which is not on the official District of Columbia List.

2. Any of the following species:

Pacific Loon	California Gull
Leach's Storm-Petrel	Yellow-legged Gull
Band-rumped Storm-Petrel	Gull-billed Tern
Great Cormorant*	Royal Tern*
Anhinga	Least Tern*
frigatebird, species	Sooty Tern
Wood Stork	Black Skimmer*
Yellow Rail	Thick-billed Murre
Black Rail*	Common Ground-Dove
Clapper Rail	Selasphorus, species
Purple Gallinule	Common Raven
Piping Plover	Bewick's Wren
Black-necked Stilt	Bohemian Waxwing
Long-billed Curlew	Bachman's Sparrow
Ruff*	Henslow's Sparrow
Parasitic Jaeger*	Seaside Sparrow
Little Gull*	Black-headed Grosbeak

* Only if seen west of the Coastal Plain.

3. Any subspecies or forms of species not known to occur regularly in the District of Columbia, including:

Bewick's Swan	Gambel's Sparrow
Common Teal	Oregon Junco
Audubon's Warbler	Pink-sided Junco
Ipswich Sparrow	

(Not sure if any of these subspecies have been recorded in DC before.)
(add remaining information about taxonomy, address, etc.)

Possibly add to Section #2 if records are accepted/submitted:

American White Pelican	Roseate Tern
Tufted Duck	Bicknell's Thrush
Black-headed Gull	Le Conte's Sparrow

Other potential additions to Section #2:

Eared Grebe	Clay-colored Sparrow
Eurasian Wigeon	Lark Sparrow
Ruffed Grouse (considered extirpated)	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow
American Avocet	Dickcissel
Loggerhead Shrike	White-winged Crossbill