



Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee
 2007 Annual Meeting
 Saturday, March 3, 2007

Meeting Minutes and Annual Business Report

The 2007 Annual Meeting of the Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee (MD/DCRC) was called to order at 10:15 am at the home of Phil Davis in Davidsonville, MD. Members present included Paul O'Brien (Chair), Phil Davis (Secretary), Tyler Bell, Ed Boyd, John Hubbell, George Jett, Ray Kiddy, Ellen Lawler, Paul Pisano, Sherman Suter, and Marcia Watson. An MOS Board Meeting was held on this same date and prevented the MOS President and Vice President from attending.

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

1.1 State Lists Changes and Status. Figure 1.1-1 shows the current number of species on the Official Lists of the Birds of Maryland and DC and additions since the last annual meeting.

State	Year	2005	2006
MD	List Total	424	429
	Species/Groups Added	(none)	Neotropic Cormorant Northern Lapwing Calliope Hummingbird Cave Swallow Townsend's Warbler
	Subspecies or Forms Added	(none)	(none)
	? Origins Added	(none)	(none)
	Exotics Added	(none)	(none)
DC	List Total	325	326
	Species/Groups Added	Black-chinned Hummingbird	Dusky Flycatcher (Rufous Hummingbird upgraded from <i>Selasphorus</i> , sp.)
	Subspecies/Forms Added	(none)	(none)
	? Origins Added	(none)	(none)
	Exotics Added	(none)	(none)

Figure 1.1-1. Current Status and Additions to the Official State Lists for Maryland and DC.

1.2 Review Package Status Report.

1.2.1 Package Statistics. Figure 1.2.1-1 presents a statistical summary by calendar year of completed review packages. The table shows the yearly total and average number of reports circulated, the total and average number of new reports, and the total and average number of decisions reached. Decisions include the categories: "Accepted," "Accepted-Group," "Accepted-Form," "Not Accepted," "ID OK/Questionable Origin," and "ID OK/Exotic Origin."

Year	Pkgs	Weeks	#Items	#New	#Decisions	Dec%	Avg#Items	Avg#New	Avg#Decs
1985	3	72.0	40	40	13	33%	13	13	4
1986	7	21.0	61	35	35	57%	9	5	5
1987	6	17.6	59	27	43	73%	10	5	7
1988	4	15.0	33	25	20	61%	8	6	5
1989	4	26.6	35	20	17	49%	9	5	4
1990	3	35.1	30	15	12	40%	10	5	4
1991	7	18.9	65	35	36	55%	9	5	5
1992	9	18.3	75	43	39	52%	8	5	4
1993	4	13.3	41	22	27	66%	10	6	7
1994	4	25.6	39	20	28	72%	10	5	7

1995	4	25.8	63	50	33	52%	16	13	8
1996	4	25.2	51	37	33	65%	13	9	8
1997	5	21.1	68	47	49	72%	14	9	10
1998	7	19.3	107	84	81	76%	15	12	12
1999	6	17.8	84	61	50	60%	14	10	8
2000	3	15.2	27	15	20	74%	9	5	7
2001	3	25.8	44	30	27	61%	15	10	9
2002	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2003	8	37.6	79	69	45	57%	10	9	6
2004	7	45.9	90	63	52	58%	17	10	14
2005	5	26.3	95	63	70	74%	19	13	14
2006	7	22.6	110	66	85	77%	16	9	12
2007	1	22.7	17	14	15	88%	17	14	15
Total	111	25.9	1313	881	830	63%	12	8	7

Figure 1.2.1-1. Package Statistics Summary

1.2.2 Packages in Circulation. Figure 1.2.2-1 summarizes the contents of the packages that are currently in circulation at the time of this Annual Meeting.

Year Started	Pkg	Start Date	# Items	# New
2006	105	07/06/2006	18	10
	107	10/07/2006	13	6
	Totals (2)		31	16
	Averages		16	8
2007	108	01/23/2007	10	9
	Totals (1)		10	9
	Averages		10	9
Grand Totals		41	25	
Grand Averages		14	8	

Figure 1.2.2-1. Status of Packages Currently in Circulation

1.2.3 Acceptance Rate. From last year to this year, the committee’s cumulative acceptance rate rose from 79 to 80 percent. This rate, shown in **Figure 1.2.3-1**, is determined by dividing the total number of accepted decisions (which includes “Accepted”, “Accepted-Group”, “Accepted-Form”, “ID OK/?? Origin”, and “ID OK/Exotic Origin”) by the total number of decisions--which includes the “Not Accepted” decisions).

Decision/Status	AM 2005 #Records	AM 2006 #Records	AM 2007 #Records
Accepted	499	521	610
Accepted-Group	13	19	25
Accepted-Form	10	11	13
ID OK/?? Origin	8	8	8
ID OK/Exotic Origin	2	2	2
Not Accepted	150	152	165
Grand Total	682	723	823
Acceptance Rate:	78%	79%	80%

Figure 1.2.3-1. MD/DCRC Acceptance Rate Report

1.2.4 Member Package Review Performance. The Secretary compiles and analyzes the length of time each member retains each review package. A handout was provided that summarizes the average turnaround time of all MD/DCRC members. Individual members were also provided with specifics of their package-by-package performance.

1.3 Database Contents Status Report.

1.3.1 Database Contents. Figure 1.3.1-1 presents a glossary of the status/decision categories currently used in the MD/DCRC database. Figure 1.3.1-2 summarizes the current contents of the MD/DCRC database by status/decision category and indicates the changes (“deltas”) since last year. Between last year’s and this year’s Annual Meeting more than 196 “historical” reports were added to the database, largely from the data uncovered by the Secretary from historical journal research, with inputs from Bob Ringler, primarily on species of questionable and exotic origin. During this coming year, the “Reviewable” reports (indicating that the sightings were published in *Maryland Birdlife* or the *North American Birds* series) and the reports remaining in the “Research” category will continue to be pursued and resolved. Reports without supporting documentation will become “Unreviewable,” meaning that they were published but no or insufficient documentation exists for a committee review. The completion of this phase of canvassing old records should bring the committee’s historical database mostly up to date by next year’s Annual Meeting.

Decision	Decision / Status Description
S&R	Records from the committee's baseline document: Stewart & Robbins, <i>The Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia</i> , 1958.
Accepted	Reports accepted by the committee.
Accepted-Group	Reports accepted only as to a species complex or genus --where all other species of this group are reviewable at the observed location.
Accepted-Form	Reports accepted as an unusual subspecies or form.
ID OK/?? Origin	Reports accepted for the species/group reported, however, a majority of the committee questioned whether the bird was a "natural" vagrant or a "wild" bird.
ID OK/Exotic Origin	Reports accepted for the species/group reported, however, a majority of the committee felt the bird was of exotic (i.e., captive) origin.
Not Accepted	Reports not accepted by the committee.
Circulating	Reports currently in circulation and under review by the committee.
Recirculate	Reports where no committee decision was reached during the latest circulation. The report will be circulated again.
Ready	Reports ready for circulation. All relevant reports, or a sufficient number of reports, have been submitted.
Reviewable	Reports of a species/location that meets the committee's Review List criteria. Additional observer data is believed to be outstanding.
USNM	Reports of specimens in the US Museum of Natural History that have not otherwise been published. Specimens are to be verified and reviewed by the committee.
Unreviewable	Reports with insufficient descriptive identification details to permit a review by the committee. Typical for many older published sight records.
Report	Reports submitted indirectly to the committee (e.g., via NA Birds, Voice of the Naturalist, etc.). Observer concurrence is required prior to committee review.
Non-Review Species	Reports submitted for a species/location that does not fall within the committee's Review List criteria.
Reopened	Reports reopened for consideration by the committee. Reopened reports are "removed" from the committee's database statistics and replaced by the reopened report.
DCRC	Reports from the defunct DC Records Committee files - being investigated.
Withdrawn	Reports withdrawn by the original observer(s).

Figure 1.3.1-1. MD/DCRC Database Status/Decision Definitions

State	Category / Status	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Delta
MD	Accepted	258	332	362	377	381	380	424	464	486	560	74
	Stewart & Robbins	9	9	100	85	83	81	82	81	87	87	0
	Accepted-Group	2	2	9	9	10	10	10	11	15	21	6
	Accepted-Form	-	1	3	3	3	6	7	10	11	13	2
	ID OK/?? Origin	5	5	5	5	6	7	8	8	8	8	0
	ID OK/Exotic Origin	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	0
	Not Accepted	119	124	127	132	133	132	140	147	149	161	12
	Circulating	45	28	9	15	49	78	29	13	84	57	-27
	Recirculate	22	21	27	25	23	18	49	54	34	25	-9
	Ready	102	49	64	61	69	78	77	112	82	126	44
	Reviewable	35	45	36	35	42	44	66	249	520	679	159
	USNM	-	-	6	26	21	14	14	11	10	9	-1
	Hold	11	11	16	15	15	15	15	-	-	-	-
	Report	0	3	5	0	0	0	1	-	-	-	-
	Unreviewable	221	224	238	246	248	255	257	287	291	307	16
	Non-Review Species	109	112	119	136	139	140	139	357	164	174	10
	Reopened	-	-	5	5	6	7	4	8	8	8	0
	Withdrawn	4	5	7	7	8	9	9	11	11	13	2
	Research	-	-	-	-	-	-	361	46	41	-	-41
		MD Totals	942	970	1135	1179	1233	1275	1693	1871	2003	2289
DC	Accepted	14	16	19	20	20	20	25	35	45	50	5
	Stewart & Robbins	-	-	25	8	8	8	7	9	9	10	1
	Accepted-Group	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	0
	Not Accepted	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	3	4	1
	Circulating	1	4	1	2	7	13	4	5	6	2	-4
	Recirculate	1	2	4	4	5	2	9	3	4	4	0
	Ready	6	2	3	7	14	21	15	19	8	11	3
	Reviewable	1	7	9	5	6	4	10	45	62	71	9
	USNM	-	-	4	26	27	15	14	31	32	32	0
	Report	0	10	10	2	2	2	4	-	-	-	-
	DCRC	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	10	10	10	0
	Unreviewable	8	13	17	16	28	30	27	37	33	33	0
	Non-Review Species	3	3	3	6	7	7	11	26	20	20	0
	Withdrawn	-	-	-	-	0	1	2	3	4	4	0
	DC Totals	34	57	95	98	126	125	206	228	240	261	
DE	Withdrawn							1	1	1	1	0
VA	USNM						1	1	2	3	3	0
	Report							1	-	-	-	-
	Unreviewable								1	2	1	
	DCRC							1	-	-	-	-
	Withdrawn							1	4	2	2	0
NY	Withdrawn							1	1	1	1	0
	Reviewable								4			-4
??	USNM				2	3	5	7	3	3	3	0
	Unreviewable							1	2	2	4	2
	Research							2	2	2	4	2
	DCRC							7	-	-	-	-
	Withdrawn						2		-	-	-	-
	Grand Totals	976	1029	1234	1283	1369	1409	1922	2126	2270	2570	

Figure 1.3.1-2. MD/DCRC Database Summary as of 03/03/2007 and Changes from Previous Annual Meetings

1.3.2 Reports Received Per Year. Figure 1.3.2-1 indicates the number of reports the MD/DCRC receives each year. The table separates “current” reports (defined as initial documentation received within six months after the first sighting date) and “historical” reports (documentation received more than six months after the first sighting date). The committee’s emphasis in locating and obtaining old published historical reports during the period from 1995 through 2006 can be easily seen from the numbers of historical reports received during this period. From 1991 through 2006, the number of “current” (i.e., contemporary) reports received per year has averaged approximately 42. Note: in 2006, the committee experienced an unusually large number of vagrants and also the large number of seabirds displaced by Hurricane Ernesto that increased the 2006 total above the norm. A canvass of Monk Parakeet records captured a number of current sightings and also multiple Trumpeter Swans reports were unusual.

Year	Reports Received	"Current" Reports	Historical Reports
1966	1	0	1
1979	2	2	0
1980	1	1	0
1982	1	1	0
1983	2	1	1
1984	3	3	0
1985	4	4	0
1986	3	3	0
1988	2	0	2
1989	2	2	0
1990	3	3	0
1991	25	25	0
1992	13	12	1
1993	26	24	2
1994	58	47	11
1995	187	45	142
1996	104	47	57
1997	267	43	224
1998	44	30	14
1999	202	45	157
2000	54	49	5
2001	82	42	40
2002	41	29	12
2003	473	48	425
2004	196	72	124
2005	144	61	83
2006	277	81	196
2007	34	16	18
Totals	2251	736	1515
Average (since 1990)		42	n/a

Figure 1.3.2-1. MD/DCRC Reports Received per Year

1.3.3 ID Articles and Index. The committee now has 574 identification and reference articles in its files. This information is summarized in **Figure 1.3.3-1**. This past year, the Secretary created an index number scheme and has assigned an index number to each article. During the next year, the Secretary plans to inventory, sort, and better organize these files.

Annual Meeting	# ID and Reference Articles Indexed	# Species Included
2007	574	81
2006	445	n/a

Figure 1.3.3-1. Identification and Reference Article Index Status

1.4 Communications Report

1.4.1 Acknowledgements. Since last year's Annual Meeting, 127 acknowledgements were mailed to observers (124 were sent last year). This information is shown in **Figure 1.4.1-1**.

Annual Meeting	# Acknowledgements	# Decisions	# Decision Observers Notices
2007	127	100	239
2006	124	84	211

Table 1.4.1-1. Number of Acknowledgements and Decision Notices Mailed

1.4.2 Decision Reports. Since last year's Annual Meeting, 100 decision notices were sent to observers for Packages 098 – 104 and 106. This information is also shown in **Figure 1.4.1-1**.

1.4.3 External Communications Status Report. **Figure 1.4.3-1** presents a summary of significant communications with people or organizations outside of the committee's routine MD and DC sighting report communications.

Mon	Year	Contact	St	Topic
Jan	2006	Frias, Marie	MD	Status of Townsend's Warbler in MD
Jan	2006	Hess, Paul	PA	Status of Western Meadowlark in PA
Mar	2006	Nosoad, Al	GA	Exotic Waterfowl banding
Mar	2006	Yee, David	CA	Greater White-fronted Goose reference articles
May	2006	Alt, Mark	??	Records Committee procedures
Jun	2006	Jaramillo, Al	CA	Southern Lapwings status
Jun	2006	Peterson, Stacy	AK	Records Committee procedures
Jun	2006	Sharp, Matt	PA	Records Committee procedures
Jun	2006	Graves, Gary	DC	Swainson's Warbler in MD
Jul	2006	Mlodinow, Steve	WA	Cackling Goose identification/taxonomy
Aug	2006	Dean, Alan	UK	Records Committee article comments
Aug	2006	Brinkley, Ned	VA	Digitizing records committee documentation
Dec	2006	Jaramillo, Al	CA	Western Wood-Pewee status
Jan	2007	Hill, Armas	DE	1993 MD Tropical Kingbird report
Jan	2007	Flynn, Jim	GA	Records Committee procedures
Feb	2007	Cheshire, Neil	AUS	Barnacle Goose "at sea" records
Feb	2007	Dean, James	DC	Western Wood-Pewee status
Feb	2007	Hengeveld, Jim	IN	<i>Parus major</i> status
Feb	2007	Lloyd, John	OR	Brown-headed Nuthatch Populations
Feb	2007	Garrett, Kimball	CA	Subspecies review policies
Feb	2007	Lockwood, Mark	TX	Status of Common Eider in MD
Feb	2007	McGrath, Todd	CA	Records Committee digitizing policies

Figure 1.4.3-1. Summary of the Past Year's External Communications

1.4.4 Email Traffic. **Figure 1.4.4-1** summarizes the secretary's MD/DCRC-related email message communications over the past years, reflecting an increase in relevant email, listserver messages, digital documentation communications, and efforts to track down historical documentation.

Calendar Year	# MD/DCRC Email Messages Sent
2006	1472
2005	1212
2004	610
2003	731
2002	570
2001	287
2000	128
1999	307
1998	66
1997	64

Figure 1.4.4-1. Number of MD/DCRC Secretary Email Messages Sent by Calendar Year

1.5 Storage Status Report. A summary of the amount of MD/DCRC storage (both hardcopy/paper and electronic) is shown in **Figure 1.5-1**. The committee's files currently fill the equivalent of approximately 39 document boxes. Additional committee reference material is not boxed, but is on bookshelves. These items include a library of *Maryland Birdlife* and *American Birds/Field Notes/North American Birds*. Other non-boxed reference material includes baseline publications such as Stewart and Robbins (1958), the *Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas*, and historical publications such as Kirkwood (1895), and Coues and Prentiss (1863 and 1883). The committee's electronic data files currently consume over 6.37GBs of data storage. Currently, all electronic data is periodically duplicated and stored both on-site (in the Secretary's home in a fire-retardant safe) and off-site, typically with the Chair. The Secretary plans to look into web-based external storage for next year.

Media	Contents	Amount of Storage
Paper/Hardcopy	Reports/records/packages files	28 document boxes
	Video/audio tapes	1 document box
	Identification/reference files	4 document boxes
	Correspondence/miscellaneous files	10 document boxes
	Supplies	3 document boxes
	Maryland Birdlife journals	2 feet of shelf space
	American Birds journals	2 feet of shelf space
	Historical references (S&R, AOU, etc.)	1.5 feet of shelf space
Electronic	Documents and databases, etc.	3.04 GB
	Electronic sighting documentation	3.33 GB

Figure 1.5-1. MD/DCRC Storage Status

1.6 MD/DCRC Resource Summary. The Secretary has summarized, in **Figure 1.6-1**, the resource that is required to operate and support the committee.

Type	Resources
Communications	Postage, internet, email
Reproduction	Copier, film duplication
Office Supplies	File folders, file jackets, storage boxes, envelopes (letter size and flat), inkjet mailing labels, inkjet CD labels, inkjet file labels, photo marking pens, highlighters, ink pens, staplers
Consumables	Printer/copier paper, staples, copier/printer toner cartridge, copier/printer drum, ink jet ink cartridges, ink jet print heads, blank CDs, blank DVDs
Hardware	Computer, b&w laser printer, color inkjet printer, flatbed scanner, film scanner, CD/DVD burner, external backup disks, video capture interface
Software	Operating system (MS Windows XP), office suite (MS Office 2003, WordPerfect Suite), browsers (Netscape and IE), database (Paradox), report writer (R&R), file manager (Power Desk), email client (Eudora), PDF application (Adobe Acrobat), Image library program (Adobe Album), Photo processing (Adobe Photoshop, Microsoft Photodraw), Screen capture (ScreenPrint), CD/DVD burner (Roxio CD Creator), CD/DVD Labeling (Click & Design), Media players (Windows Media Player, WinDVD), Conversion utility (Conversions Plus), Video editor (Pinnacle Studio), Scanning software (HP Director), OCR programs (Readiris Pro, OmniPage Professional)

Figure 1.6-1. MD/DCRC Resources

1.7 MOS MD/DCRC Web Site Updates. The Secretary has continued to update and publish MD/DCRC data products to the committee's web pages on the MOS web site. The latest major update to the MD/DCRC data products was on 21 Feb 2007. Thanks to Fran Saunders, the former MOS Webmaster for maintaining these pages over the years. Taylor McLean is the new MOS Webmaster. The Secretary occasionally reminds the local birding community via e-mail messages on the local birding listserver (MD Osprey) that the web site information is available for reference. After this year's meeting, the web site will be updated with new Review Lists, Official Lists, Database Contents and other related documents. The link to the committee's web pages is:

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

1.8 Projects Status Report.

1.8.1 Completed Projects

AOU Check-List 47th Supplement Update. The MD/DCRC database was modified to conform to the latest AOU Checklist supplements, through Supplement 47. This project is complete; however, AOU Checklist supplements are now issued annually, in July.

Species Review Status Change History. The Secretary has compiled a chronology of the historical changes to the review lists— to capture, for example, when Clay-colored Sparrow (*Spizella pallida*) was dropped from the review list; or when the review range of Franklin's Gull (*Larus pipixcan*) was redefined, etc. This information was becoming lost and needed to be captured for posterity. This project is now complete except that a minor update is required to capture last year's changes and any changes implemented this year. Next, the information will be converted from an esoteric spreadsheet into a format more conducive to publication and ongoing updates.

Chronology of Species Added to the Official Lists. An earlier suggestion was to add the year of sighting to the chronology report in addition to the year the species was added to the list. The Secretary will look at implementing this and plan to complete this project before next year's annual meeting.

Historical Records Research. A number of related initiatives are still underway to capture all historical "reviewable" reports. Overall, this project is approximately 90 percent complete and should be completely finished by next year's Annual Meeting. Continuing initiatives include:

Museum Collection Specimens. There are still some leads to be tracked down at the USNM. Also, other museum datasets have been obtained and will be analyzed regarding possible reviewable species for MD and DC. The Secretary will continue this pursuit.

Unsubmitted and Outstanding Documentation Status. After the historical analysis and research is complete, the committee will be ready to publish in *The Maryland Yellowthroat* a list of sightings for which no documentation exists. Some sighting documentation is currently being pursued directly with observers including Sam Dyke, Jan Reese, and Jim Gruber.

Non-Reviewable Species Status. With the completion of the Review List Status Change History project (above), journal research captured published reports of species that were at some point in time "reviewable," including the following: Sandhill Crane, Ruff, Franklin's Gull, Thayer's Gull, Clay-colored Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Bachman's Sparrow, Northern Shrike, Mississippi Kite, Eared Grebe, American White Pelican, and Brewer's Blackbird. Sightings when each species was in a reviewable status can now be pursued for documentation, or closed-out.

Special Cases. The Secretary is still trying to straighten out some dates and specimens for DC Storm-Petrels (Leach's, Wilson's and Band-rumped). Also, the E.A. Vaughn WMA Le Conte's Sparrow reports and records need to still be sorted out.

Questionable, Exotic, and Introduced Species Status. Since last year, additional research was completed on AOU Checklist species that typically include the question of questionable origin. Published reports have now been captured in the database for the following species: Lesser White-fronted Goose, Barnacle Goose, Falcated Duck, Garganey, Chukar, Harris's Hawk, Ringed Turtle-Dove [now African Collared-Dove], Budgerigar, Monk Parakeet, Black-billed Magpie, Hill Myna, Blue-Gray Tanager, Red-crested Cardinal, Golden-crowned Sparrow, European Goldfinch, Orange Bishop, and Nutmeg Mannikin. Also reports were captured for the following AOU Supplement Species: Bar-headed Goose, Ruddy Shelduck, Common Shelduck, Mandarin Duck, and Red-crested Pochard. See related discussion on an MD/DCRC Questionable/Exotic Species Review Policy.

Outstanding Published References and Citations. The Secretary still has list of historical miscellaneous and residual citations, including a number of CBC citations that need to be located and copied at the PWRC or Smithsonian Libraries.

Unsubmitted Reports and Outstanding Documentation Status. Bob Ringler has 17-years of the *Maryland Birdlife* "The Season" sightings in his database. The Secretary and Bob already work closely on locating documentation for "Reviewable" reports. Bob also reminded the committee that he has many years of CBC rare bird reports in his files in case we are looking for any missing write-ups. At some point in time, the Secretary will coordinate with Bob on all of the outstanding "unreviewable" and "reviewable" reports.

Bird Banding Laboratory Data. Another historical canvass project involves mining the Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL) database for band numbers and banding reports for reviewable species. A request has been sent to Kathy Klimkiewicz of the BBL to access the BBL database. At some point a visit to the BBL will be needed to query the database.

Extinct/Extirpated Species Research. This project involves further researching historical species that are extinct or extirpated from Maryland. Examples include Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*), Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*), and "Heath Hen" [Greater Prairie Chicken] (*Tympanuchus cupido cupido*). The objective is to capture all historical documentation for the committee's files. Some information has been gathered but a detailed canvass of the literature and analysis of the results is still pending. The objective is to capture any documented sightings and build documentation files.

1.8.2 Projects In-Progress. The following database projects are still in work:

Quality Review. Now that the committee database structure is stable, the Secretary plans to review each individual folder jacket to ensure that all fields in the database are fully populated, are correct, and that all photographic documentation is present, etc. Once this review is completed, record hardcopy files will be ready for digital and physical archiving (see below).

Loss Prevention/Archival Plan. The MD/DCRC Loss Prevention/Archival Plan is moving forward. All reports and records for which decisions have been reached have been physically segregated and for a large percentage of them, a quality audit has been conducted. All hardcopy information with each file has been photoduplicated. The Secretary plans to scan and electronically capture all photo documentation, then the original files can be moved into the MOS controlled storage. This is a project in-process. The Secretary is also looking into web-based archives for the MD/DCRC databases.

Documentation Digitization. The current long-range vision is to digitize the MD/DCRC archives. The plan would be to perform the digitization in Decision Report order with the first priority being photos, slides, and sketches. Then observer reports would be digitized and then committee member ballots.

Observer Reports. With the improved database capabilities now operational, the MD/DCRC can, "with the push of a button," generate a complete detailed report of records and reports for any given observer. The Secretary plans to offer such reports to observers with large numbers of database entries as a means to detect and correct any errors and to stimulate the submission of outstanding documentation. This will not happen, however, until the remaining historical data is captured.

County Reports. The Secretary has previously provided database reports to support the efforts of counties with active county listing committees, specifically Howard and Harford. With the new database capabilities, a goal will be to deal with one point of contact from each county who can review and comment on the local records. This will not happen, however, until the remaining historical data is captured.

Quantitative Status System. Over the past few years, the committee approved a "quick look" species status system that presents an "at a glance" view of a species status using total numbers of

reports/records and numbers in certain decision/status categories, similar to a California system. The report format is ready but this project is on hold until the historical database research is completed, since the quantitative summary data will be incorrect for many species until all historical reports/records are captured and the database is fully updated.

Revised database categories. The Secretary is entertaining modifying the current database categories to include “Unpublished” for public reports (e.g., from listservers and web pages) that were not published nor submitted to the committee. Also, the Secretary is entertaining splitting out from the current “Non-Review Species” category several new categories that are more accurate for some historical reports. These include: “Non-reviewable Location” for species that are reviewable in some locations but not from where the report occurred; and “Non-reviewable Timeframe” for reports that were reviewable at one time but were not when this report occurred.

1.8.3 Future Projects. The following database projects have not yet been started.

Web-based Records Committee Vision. The following vision has been an element of the MD/DCRC Long Range Plan for several years:

MD/DCRC Web Site Subcommittee. The Secretary will coordinate web-based plans and projects with the MOS Web Site Director and possibly recruiting some other people. Web-based projects are currently secondary to the historical canvass. We may want to consider a MD/DCRC web site subcommittee to work this vision. One task would be to survey other records committee web sites (domestically and internationally) to locate good best-of-breed models for these functions.

On-line Photo Gallery. This project will publish, on-line, accepted record photographs, images, and other documentation. The plan is to begin with first state records.

On-line Database. This project will provide MD/DCRC interactive, query-based database access to interested parties on-line, via the web.

Review Process via the Web. This project will allow committee members to use an “intranet” (not accessible to the general public) to review records on-line. Related to this is an issue of minimum system capabilities for members (an inventory was conducted a few years ago). The issue of screen and printer calibration may be a factor with this project. Other implications include standardizing video format(s) for member’s reviews.

Pelagic Map. This idea is to add a good pelagic area map to MD/DCRC web pages. The secretary has several candidates (including the proposed ABA pelagic map, the Colin Campbell map, and other commercial and scientific maps). A subcommittee of interested pelagic members would make sense to move this project forward.

Sample MD/DCRC Artifacts. The Secretary would like to post some MD/DCRC sample artifacts (e.g., Acknowledgements, Decision Notices, Ballot forms, etc.) out to the MD/DCRC web pages for both field birder outreach and education and for best practice sharing with other records committee. The Secretary will need to work this issue with the MOS Webmaster.

Future Communications Projects

Direct email Acknowledgements and Decision Notices. Disseminating notices via email rather than postal service mail has been suggested and will be considered.

1.9 Database Sustaining Support

Data Dictionary, Standardization, and Documentation. The Secretary plans to define and document a formal data dictionary and schema for all committee data fields and data tables. This project will then next implement a data normalization exercise to clean up the data structures (including standardizing, renaming, and eliminating duplicate or obsolete fields, etc.). Steps have been started on this process however, more work remains to be completed. The basic data tables that form the MD/DCRC collective database are defined in **Appendix 1**. The graphical view of the sources of MD/DCRC sighting reports and records is shown in **Appendix 2**.

Database Applications Migration. Part of the long-range plan is to migrate from Paradox to the more mainstream Microsoft Access and from the R&R report writer to either Access report capabilities or Crystal Reports.

Data Entry Form Improvements. The Secretary plans to improve database input via implementing improved database linked forms.

Identification and Reference Articles. An indexing improvement was made to this data table last year. Next the Secretary needs to sort, organize, and label the ID and reference articles. The Secretary also will look adding a species table of contents with hyperlinks to the ID Articles reports so users can jump directly to any species of interest.

Business Processes Definition and Documentation. For posterity, and to share with other state/provincial records committees, the Secretary has begun to document the MD/DCRC Level 2 and Level 3 business processes using process flow diagrams. Efforts were briefly begun on this project, but more remains to be done. Preliminary second and third level MindMap process charts are provided in **Appendix 3**.

2. Subcommittee/Project Reports

Outreach Activities. A few years ago, the MD/DCRC Outreach Subcommittee was decommissioned after compiling and presenting a slide presentation on Maryland records to many of the MOS local chapters. However, the following outreach-related topics were discussed at our meeting:

Identification Workshops. At last year's meeting, the committee discussed the idea of one or a series "outreach" identification workshops focused on regional ID challenges and targeting advanced-intermediate birders. The MOS Education Committee is independently also pursuing this concept. However, this led to the following project, below:

Maryland's Next Species. The Secretary developed a presentation along these same lines that focuses on "Maryland's Next Species," based on *The Maryland Yellowthroat* survey of 2001 and the attending article published by Marshall Iloff in 2002. The current version was available at the meeting for the members to review. This presentation has been presented to three MOS local chapters and has received good feedback.

"Dastardly Duos." The Tucson Audubon Society ran a series of articles under this banner for a number of years. The concept was to take sets of similar regional species and discuss separation criteria. If anyone is interested in pursuing this, it would make an excellent project for the records committee where at least one of the species was reviewable. Some examples might include: Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teal; Tufted Duck and scaup; Barrow's and Common Goldeneye; Pacific and Red-throated Loon; Western and Clark's Grebes; Glossy and White-faced Ibis; Bewick's and Carolina Wren; Cave and Cliff Swallow; Bohemian and Cedar Waxwing; Western and Scarlet Tanager; Eastern and Spotted Towhee; Bullock's and Northern Oriole; Common and Hoary Redpoll; etc. During the discussion, it was suggested that this approach could also be used for subspecies separation.

New Member Briefing. The Secretary started to develop a PowerPoint briefing for new members to summarize the existing MD/DCRC Goals and Procedures document. The problem is that this became more voluminous than the document. This project will be revisited. During the discussion the suggestion was made that this approach could also be used as the basis for a “LiveMeeting,” real-time, web-based briefing with the new members.

Subspecies/Distinct Forms Subcommittee. This first Maryland Subspecies Review list was coordinated with the members after last year’s annual meeting and has been published on the MD/DCRC web pages. There is no word on the publication status of Marshall Iliff’s detailed manuscript on the Annotated Checklist of the Subspecies of Maryland. It is recommended that at this time we disband this subcommittee.

MD/DCRC Decision Reports. Specifics on the next MD/DCRC decision reports follows:

Format and Framework. An extensive report framework capability has been developed to generate Decision Reports directly from the MD/DCRC database.

Third MD/DCRC Decision Report. Marshall Iliff is working on this report (158 decisions). The MOS decision was to publish this, and future reports, on CD-ROM media, as an issue in the Maryland Avifauna series. Iliff has indicated that he will pick this report back up this summer.

Fourth MD/DCRC Decision Report. Sherman Suter had volunteered to author the next general decision report (123 decisions). He is waiting for some format issues to be resolved in the Third Decision Report before initiating this task.

Fifth MD/DCRC Decision Report. The Kelp Gull (*Larus dominicanus*) decision that was published on the MD/DCRC web pages will be expanded and published in *Maryland Birdlife*, or on a *Maryland Avifauna* Series CD, as a decision report. Paul O'Brien and Phil Davis have volunteered to author this report. The ending date referenced in this report will need to be coordinated to be synchronized with the appropriate issue of *Maryland Birdlife* in which it appears.

Sixth Decision Report. Decisions are accumulating for this report. We are already up to 141 decisions for this report. A senior author is needed for this decision report. An alternate approach was discussed that would combine all outstanding decisions into one large report. We decided to wait until the status of Decision Report #3 was fully determined.

Rare Birds of Maryland Publication. Another idea discussed was to publish all MD/DCRC decisions to-date as a single monograph to catch up with the decision publication process; perhaps undertaking a project similar to the one California is preparing on *The Rare Birds of California*.

3. Committee Procedures and Processes:

Policy Issues:

Photo documentation policy. As virtually every field photographer migrates toward digital images, records committees are now dealing with digital imagery policies and guidance. Prior to the meeting the Secretary circulated to the members a copy of the Arizona Field Ornithologists policy on photographic documentation. George Jett and Tyler Bell have volunteered to serve as a subcommittee to review, comment, and adapt this policy for the MD/DCRC.

Update ballot policy. The Secretary has gladly accepted electronic copies of ballots from members but has not required it. As we move further into a total electronic environment, the Secretary would now like to encourage submission of eBallots. The Secretary will prepare a draft policy on this for the members to review. The policy, for inclusion into our Goals and Procedures document will include such topics as

software compatibility, page spacing, file names, signatures, etc. For the interim, eBallots are now preferred from members, however, paper ballots will still be accepted.

Review List Changes:

MD List Changes. The following discussion and changes related to the MD Review List. Changes are effective with the date of this meeting.

Definition 4B. The committee clarified this definition. The adopted wording is: "Species seen in locations other than over the ocean, coastal Worcester County, in major Chesapeake Bay tidal tributaries, or along the Potomac River south of Prince George's County."

Common Raven. The range of this species has been expanding throughout the state. The committee decided to **remove** it from the Maryland Review List.

Brown-headed Nuthatch. The breeding range of this species has been expanding to the north on both the Eastern and Western shores. The committee decided to **change its review status** to Category 4C: reviewable if seen west of the coastal plain.

Laughing Gull. The committee discussed the status (4D) of this species but decided to **not change** its review status (reviewable in the westernmost portion of Maryland).

Franklin's Gull. This species was removed from the Maryland review list last year; however, after discussing the status of Laughing Gull in Western Maryland, it was decided that the observation of a Franklin's Gull in the western part of the state would actually be more noteworthy than a Laughing Gull. Therefore, the committee decided to **place this species back on the Maryland Review List** in Category 4D (the ridges and valleys), reviewable west of the Washington/Frederick county line.

DC List Changes. The following changes and discussion related to the DC Review List.

Rufous Hummingbird. This species has been accepted and placed on the Official List of the Birds of the District of Columbia and will now be **removed** from DC Review List, consistent with its status in Maryland.

Discussion of the separate DC Review List. Even though a separate DC Review List was published by the committee only a few years ago, the committee discussed its viability and a suggestion to abolish it and just have a single list, as was the status years ago. The committee recognized the pros and cons of having the two lists and took no action to change the current status. However, this topic can be reviewed again next year. As with the Rufous Hummingbird status, above, the current informal policy has been that once a species is accepted onto the Official DC list that already exists on the MD list, the species is generally not added to the DC Review list. However, exceptions are made to continue to review species that remain exceptionally rare for DC (e.g., Hudsonian Godwit).

Committee Continuous Improvement Inputs:

General Committee Member Input. During the past year, a suggestion to reform the cover sheet was immediately implemented after it was suggested.

New Member Input. The new members were polled for suggestions for improvements. No major issues were raised.

Birding Public Input. Feedback on the committee decision notification process was provided to the Secretary from one observer. The Secretary will factor this input into an improvement to the committee decision notification process.

MOS Input. In the future, we will schedule our Annual Meetings to avoid conflict with the MOS Board Meetings. The Secretary was not aware of the standing scheduling process for the board meetings.

4. Decision Issues.

New fourth round discussions. There are four reports that qualified for fourth round discussion:

MD/2001-041 Black-bellied Whistling Duck (Pkg 101). This report was discussed by the members. Due to the timing of our membership changeover, only five of the members previously voted on this report. As a part of the 2007 Annual Meeting special follow-up package, the Secretary will provide copies of the third-round ballots to the five carry over members; the entire report file will be circulated to the four newer members.

MD/1997-584 Frigatebird, sp. (Pkg 104). This report was discussed. After a split vote on the second round, after the third round, the vote was 0-0-9 to accept as a Frigatebird, species. Although not technically required, the Secretary decided to hold this decision until after any fourth round discussion of the related report, MD/1997-652 (see below). In the discussion, no new significant identification or sighting issues were raised and no member changed his/her voting position; therefore, this report decision will follow the majority and be recorded as "Accept-Group" with the group defined as a "Frigatebird, species." Logistically, this report will be processed as an item in the Annual Meeting special follow-up Package 110.

MD/1997-652 Magnificent Frigatebird (Pkg 104). This report was discussed. After a split vote on the second round, after the third round, the vote was 2-0-7, where two members voted to accept as a Magnificent Frigatebird and the other seven voted to accept as a Frigatebird, species. Therefore, a fourth round circulation is required prior to finalizing a decision between "species" and "genus" and therefore, with discussion at the Annual Meeting required before any fourth round circulation. In the discussion, no new significant identification or sighting issues were raised and no member changed his/her voting position; therefore, this report decision will follow the majority and be recorded as "Accept-Group" with the group defined as a "Frigatebird, species." Logistically, this report will be processed as an item in the Annual Meeting special follow-up Package 110.

MD/1999-102 Thick-billed Murre (Pkg 106). This report was discussed. As improbably as an inland non-Hurricane Thick-billed Murre is today, Ed Boyd presented a historical analysis of a wave of inland sightings of this species from the late 1800s, compiled from ornithological journals. Ed's analysis indicated that published records show there was an unusual inland dispersal of individuals for nearly a decade in the late 1800s and many birds were picked up in unlikely places and habitats. None of the members changed their votes from Accept to Not Accept, therefore the report is accepted 7-0-2 as a record. This vote will be formalized in the follow-up Package 110. Ed's very interesting and informative analysis is provided as **Appendix 4** to these minutes.

The formal final fourth round voting will be handled as a special package (110) after the meeting.

Record reopenings. The members did not petition to reopen any previous records.

Records Splits. No administrative report splits were made during the year following members' recommendations from the ballot/comment forms. No new split recommendations were suggested at the meeting.

5. Circulation/Species Issues and Concerns.

a. Species not currently on the MD/DC Checklists but on the AOU Main Checklist:

Lesser White-fronted Goose [MD/2006-154]. There is a published report of a sighting in Queen Anne's County of a bird found with migratory Canada Geese. Descriptions are brief, but very clear.

Barnacle Goose. There are about ten reports that are reviewable. Paul O'Brien and Phil Davis have prepared and collected information that might support a case for natural vagrancy. Previously, the committee decided to review the reports of this species that are in the "ready" category. However, upon reflection, it was decided that the current literature and recent thinking be encapsulated into a position paper for the members and that this paper should be circulated with the reports. Paul O'Brien has summarized his opinions and findings on the problem. Phil Davis has some other research notes on this subject, too, and will write them up. Marshall Iliff had previously volunteered to work on a paper. A check with other records committees has found that a number of other states have accepted records of this species as natural vagrants.

Cape Verde Shearwater [MD/2006-254]. This pelagic sighting from 2006 is a potential new state record for Maryland.

Southern Lapwing [MD/2006-051]. This sighting from 2006 is also a potential new state record for Maryland.

Anna's Hummingbird [MD/2006-263]. This "identified from a photograph" sighting from 2004 is also a potential new state record for Maryland.

Western Wood-Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*). **Appendix 6** contains the email dialog and researcher's report on the DNA testing of the MD and DC specimens that had been thought to be Western Wood-Pewees. Since all attempts to-date to identify these birds have been inconclusive, they will remain held in abeyance, possibly until additional DNA analyses can be performed.

Tropical Kingbird [MD/2006-284]. This Somerset County sighting is a potential new state record for MD.

"Snowy-bellied" Martin, sp. [MD/2006-265]. This Worcester County sighting is a potential North American record.

b. Species Currently on the MD/DC Checklists but no longer reviewable

Cackling Goose. We have a few Maryland reports that are in-process that we need to complete. The committee circulated a batch of detailed and photographic reports for this species after it was split by the AOU. Acceptance decisions were reached for some of these reports on the first round, which allowed the committee to add this species to the Official List of the Birds of Maryland. The reports that did not reach decisions on the first round will need to be completed at some time on a low priority basis. This species has not yet been accepted for DC; however, one DC report has now been received and will be reviewed.

American White Pelican. This is a case of a previously reviewable species that is no longer reviewable. Reports that were submitted prior its deletion from the Review List will be reviewed on a lower priority basis.

Swallow-tailed Kite. A few reports were in-process when the species was removed from the MD Review List. These need to also be completed on a low-priority basis.

Mississippi Kite. Likewise, we have a few reports that are in-process that we also need to complete. Additionally, we received two photo records. The committee will review these photo records since if they are accepted that would change the evidence status for this species since there currently are no photo records for Maryland.

c. Species currently on the MD/DC Checklists. The following are some of the species reports ready to be reviewed: Barrow's Goldeneye, Pacific Loon, White-faced Storm-Petrel, Anhinga, Yellow Rail, California Gull, Sooty Tern, Bridled Tern, Arctic Tern, Long-tailed Jaeger, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Loggerhead Shrike, and Cave Swallow. The committee also will be reviewing the following few species of special note:

Le Conte's Sparrow. There are multiple reports from the same years from E.A. Vaughn WMA for this species. The Secretary has been holding all reports of this species until the Vaughn reports are sorted out and then all the reports will be circulated together.

Calliope Hummingbird. A second Maryland Calliope Hummingbird was collected in Queen Anne's County and the specimen is being presented to the Smithsonian.

Hoary Redpoll. Last year the question was discussed of how to handle the review of the Dave Czaplak *Birding* article with up to 15 individual birds mentioned in it. The Secretary has decomposed the article and split each reviewable photograph into separate database records and identified the reviewable photograph numbers. Paul O'Brien's written reports were also merged into this process. This package of reviewable redpolls (*exilipes*, *hornemanni*, and *rostrata*) is now ready for review.

d. Unusual Subspecies/Forms

"Western" Greater White-fronted Goose [MD/2001-039]. This has not been recirculated yet for a second round pending a discussion and definition of how to review it. The committee decided to continue to call this pink-billed taxa a "Western" Greater White-fronted Goose which technically would be a "non-*flavirostris*" or "non-Greenland" Greater White-fronted Goose. More precisely, this would be a species of the "*frontalis/elgasi/gambelli*" complex.

"Scopoli's" Cory Shearwater. There are two reports of this subspecies ready to review. One is based on photographic documentation, the other is a specimen. These are being circulated in Package 109 with the Cape Verde Shearwater.

"Great White" Heron. There are three reports ready for review.

"Western" Red-tailed Hawks. The committee now has a collection of five "western" Red-tailed Hawks ready for review. Some are differentiated as to subspecies/form and a few are not.

"European/Vega" Herring Gull. There is one photographic record of this non-Smithsonian Herring Gull complex ready for review.

"Sennett's" Common Nighthawk. This is a specimen. The committee had previously decided to hold it as a low priority since the ability to differentiate it in the field is problematic.

"Calaveras" Nashville Warbler. There is one report that is ready for review; another was withdrawn by the observers.

"Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow. There is one well-documented report seen away from the coastal area.

Dark-eyed Juncos. (*Junco hyemalis*). The committee previously reaffirmed its position on the circulation of its backlog of junco reports despite the fact that there are some open junco taxonomic issues. The committee decided to go ahead and review MD/DCRC reports of the junco complex based on the current literature. Current subspecies/groups ready for review include Oregon (including one *shufeldti/simillimus*), Pink-sided, and a single White-winged – a published report, but it appears to have been a misidentified specimen that needs to be reviewed to correct the published record.

“Greenland” Common Redpoll (*C. f. rostrata*). This photographic report is in the Czaplak *Birding* Redpoll article.

e. Species with Specific Reviewable Ranges. See the related discussion under potential Review List changes.

Common Raven. Reports of expansion to the species’ breeding and dispersal range will be reviewed on a lower priority basis, especially since the species has now been removed from the MD Review List.

Brown-headed Nuthatch. Reports of northern expansion of this species’ breeding range will be reviewed on a lower priority basis.

f. Extirpated Species

Trumpeter Swan. The committee now has a number of Trumpeter Swan reports. Issues that are associated with these reports include reintroduction and hybridism (i.e., “Trumpling Swans”).

6. Skins Meeting. The 2007 Skins Workshop will be held at the US National Museum of History (Smithsonian Institution) on March 10, 2007. Candidate species to be reviewed include the following:

Black-bellied Whistling Ducks (especially the halux).

Cape Verde Shearwaters.

Scopoli’s Shearwaters, especially additional photos of USNM specimen #82823.

Southern Lapwings, especially of subspecies.

Tropical/Couch’s Kingbirds.

Bridled and Sooty Terns.

“Snowy Bellied” Martins.

Hoary and Common Redpolls.

7. Old Business:

Questionable and Exotic Origin/Introduced Species Review Policy. The committee does not currently have a policy to govern the submission and review of documentation of species that are presumed to be of questionable origin (e.g., Monk Parakeet) or exotic origin (e.g., Black Swans) and introduced species (e.g., African Collared-Doves). The Secretary drafted a very preliminary draft policy for comment and discussion based on the AOU Checklist and possibly the ABA Checklist (see **Appendix 5**). The intention is to establish a baseline for field birders and the committee operations regarding what to document and what to review. How other records committees handle this will also be investigated. Another possible approach could be based on the January, 2005, USFWS proposed list of avian species to be excluded from Migratory Bird Treaty Act protection. Perhaps this list, which includes eight (8) status categories, can be used for the basis of reviews of non-native species. For example, Black Swan is a category 4, which is not known to breed in the wild. This policy will be refined over the next year and presented at the next Annual Meeting.

8. New Business / Open Discussion:

MOS Field Checklist. The MOS has prepared a new field checklist (white, trifold, pocket card) and intends to have it ready for the next MOS convention in the summer of 2007. The Secretary has reviewed it and provided comments. The current draft was provided to the members and comments mentioned will be forwarded to the author.

Documentation Trends. The committee discussed the trend of fewer detailed written reports from observers vs. email messages and digital web photos. Without written reports we often lack details on behavior, detailed field marks, and plumage/bare part colors (given the color bias that often accompanies photographs and their reproduction on viewing and printed media.) One member noted that in the UK, one still sees observers actively taking field notes while observing rare birds. Field observers are encouraged to continue to submit detailed written reports to supplement photographic evidence.

“Sketch or Photo” Policy. Sherman Suter reported on a policy used by the Arizona committee where certain species were placed in a “sketch or photo” category indicating that only very basic documentation was required to substantiate the presence of these species. This policy evoked mixed reactions. Negative points were that such categories could further complicate the committee processes. Also, if certain species had such attributes, then they probably would not need to fall under the committee’s review lists so the acceptance of their presence would be left to the *Maryland Birdlife* and *North American Birds* editors to determine. Sherman did not know how the implementation of this policy was actually working and volunteered to follow-up and advise the committee.

Last Day Documentation. This continues to be an issue since when a bird stays for an extended period the emphasis on documentation of any type decreases over time and there are often questions about when it was last sighted. Field observers are encouraged to continue to document rarities even though a rarity may have been present for an extended period.

Email Replies. A general topic, committee members and report submitters are asked and reminded to “quote back” an entire message when responding to a query on behalf of the records committee. With the large volume of committee-related messages, it takes additional time and effort to associate replies with the original query when the reply does not include the original query. This is a particular problem with AOL email which apparently does not provide an easy “quote back” function. The trimming of message to include only the applicable portion of an original comment or query in a reply is always encouraged.

9. Elections:

New members. Members completing their voting terms are Ed Boyd, Paul Pisano, and Sherman Suter. The committee thanks them for all their efforts over the past years. The new members elected were: Stan Arnold, Paul DeAnna, and Leo Weigant.

Secretary. Phil Davis was reelected as the Secretary.

Chair. Paul O’Brien was reelected as the Chair.

10. Next Year's Meetings Dates:

Annual Meeting: Saturday, March 8, 2008. This date should not conflict the MOS Board Meeting schedule.

Skins Workshop: A tentative date is Saturday, February 9, 2008. The actual date will be subject to the availability of our USNM sponsor, Roger Clapp.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendices

Appendix 1: MD/DCRC Data Table Definitions

Note that “data records” include more than “accepted” sighting records; data records also include Not Accepted sighting reports, sighting reports that are currently in circulation and those that are ready to be circulated or recirculated. Data records also include unreviewable reports (typically reports that have been published but were not submitted to the committee or not enough documentation is available to review) and other sighting or specimen reports of undetermined status.

The current primary MD/DCRC data tables include the following:

RCMaster. This is the Records Committee Master data table. Each data entry represents a species sighting report for a range of dates and observers at a given location. The index field is the MD/DCRC accession number in the form YYYY-NNN where YYYY is the year the first documentation was received for the report and NNN is a consecutively assigned number, for example, 2006-035. Fields in this data table include: the species number key (based on the old AOU numbers), start and end dates, locations (with multi-levels of details: state, county(ies), jurisdiction, place, specifics, street addresses, zip code (future capability), GPS coordinates (future capability), active package number, previous package numbers and voting results, status/decision, documentation notes, committee comments, year accepted, decision summary (a text/memo field), and publication information (such as the decision report number).

Observer. This data table includes one entry for each observer for each report/record. The table captures for each RCMaster data record information on the documentation submitted by each observer, including the date the documentation was submitted to the committee, and the type of documentation, including sketches, images (the number and type of images), video (the length of the video clip), or audio recording. Fields also include an observer link and a "finder" field.

Citations. This data table captures for each RCMaster data record all published reference citations. These citations include the Maryland Birdlife and North American Birds seasonal reports, journal articles, and books. MD and DC have a long history of a number of journals where sightings were published (*Audubon Naturalist*, the AFN/AB/FN/NAB series, and *Maryland Birdlife* (our MOS journal)). The data table captures citations of each published seasonal sighting and also sightings published in other journals (e.g., *The Auk*, etc.) and publications. This table links to the master record table so reports can be produced that show all citations for any given report/record.

MPeople. This data table includes contact information for each observer that submitted documentation or published an article for a sighting. This data table is used to send out observer Acknowledgements and Decision Notices. Fields include the observer key, names, addresses, email addresses, comments (e.g., "deceased"), and date of the latest contact information update

Doc_codes. This data table is used to expand the Observer data table documentation code symbols into text for reports (images, video, and audio).

Decision_categories. This data table is used to expand the MD/DCRC decision and status codes definitions into fuller explanations for reports (S&R [Stewart & Robbins] Accepted, Not Accepted, Accept-Form, Accept-Group, ID OK/?? Origin, ID OK/Exotic, Ready, Circulating, Recirculate, Reviewable, Unreviewable, etc.)

MD-AOU. This data table provides species AOU taxonomy and MD and DC Official List and Review List status. This table includes an index associated with each AOU Checklist and Supplement, scientific name, trinomial for subspecies, the year the species was added to the MD or DC Official List and the first record number, the MD and DC review list codes, the type of taxon (species, subspecies, form), and the types of documentation evidence that exists for each species in MD and DC.

Review-categories. This data table provides the complete English definition of each species review list code. For example, MD category 3 means the species is reviewable anywhere in the state.

Ranges5E. This data table provides the specialized range criteria for species that are reviewable only in specific locations. For example, Carolina Chickadees are only reviewable in MD if seen west of Washington County.

Liststats. This data table indicated how a species was accepted onto the MD and DC Official Lists, including S&R (a baselined species from Stewart and Robbins, 1958), a DC baselined species, a DC Records Committee accepted species, or a MD/DCRC accepted species, or a species accepted by proclamation of the committee (to deal with certain species between the time of publication of Stewart & Robbins and the formation of the committee [such as House Finch and Great Skua.]

SGE_Defs. This data table expands the code that defines the type of taxon; Species, genus/group, form/subspecies, Questionable origin, or Exotic.

Counties. This data table expands the RCMaster four-letter county abbreviation into the name of the county for various reports.

States. This data table expands the RCMaster two-letter state abbreviation into the name of the state for various reports.

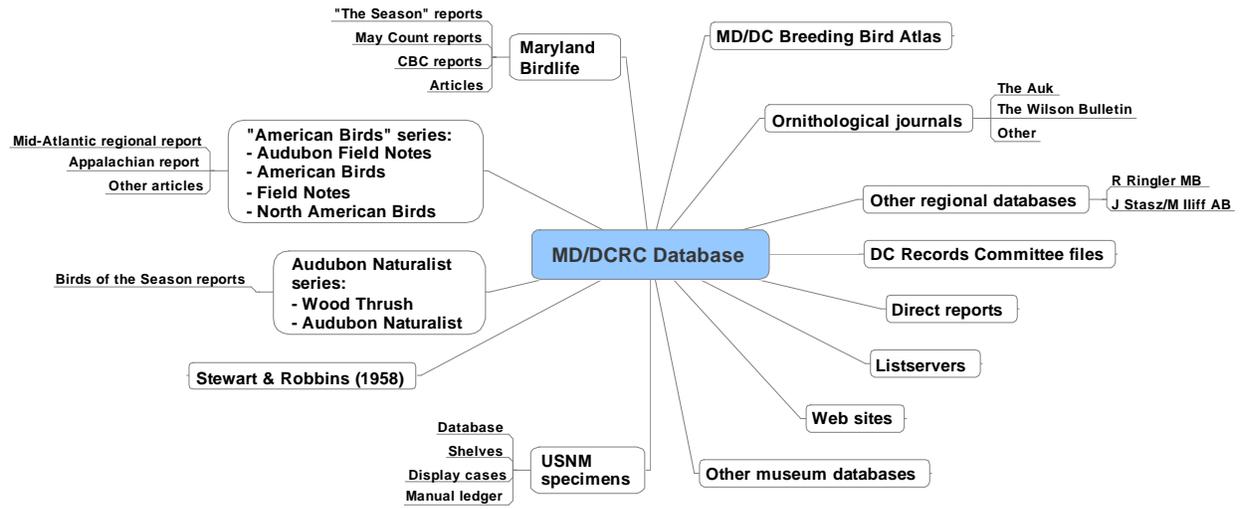
ID_arts. This data table is used to compile citations of identification and reference articles for MD/DCRC species and prospective species. The MD/DCRC species code is used to establish a range of species to which articles apply (e.g., Yellow-billed and Common Loon). The table includes typical citation information, paper or book title, authors, journal, volume, issue, pages, and committee comments.

Packages. This data table is used to compile statistics on MD/DCRC review packages, including date started, date completed, number of items, number of new (first round) items, number of decisions reached, decision report assignment, Annual Meeting completed prior to, and general comments on the package.

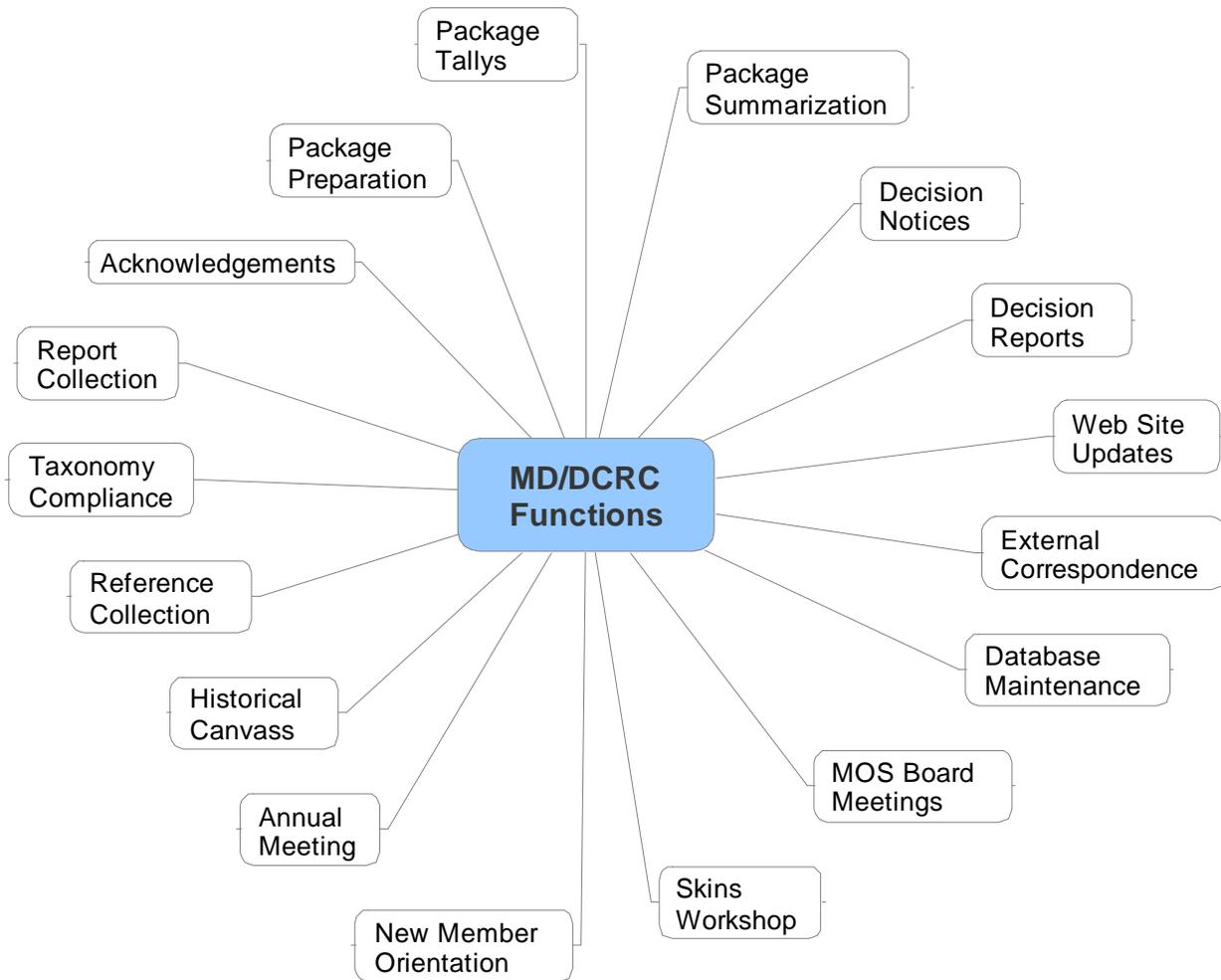
Packages-Members. This data table is used to compile the members voting performance. For each package reviewed, voting member data captured include start date, end date, and date ballots submitted. This data is used to produce the member "report cards" for each meeting.

Committee Members. Names address and contact information for the current (and past members). Also includes the baseline circulation order.

Appendix 2. MD/DCRC Data Sources



Appendix 3. MD/DCRC Functions



Appendix 4: Thick-billed Murre Analysis

Unusual Movements of Brünnich's Murres/Thick-billed Murres (*Uria lomvia*) in Northeastern North America during the late 1890's

Edward I. Boyd

In package 106 we reviewed several Thick-billed Murres, including one from Montgomery County, Maryland from the mid-1890s. This was to be circulation 3 for this record and with no more information or more specific details surrounding the collection of this individual, a report of a specimen from this region seems more than incredible, it seemed preposterous. In this same package another Thick-billed Murre reportedly collected from the Potomac River near Washington, D.C. from the same time period was submitted for the committee's review. Although the Potomac River connection seemed slightly more plausible, this record seemed equally unlikely.

One of the pieces of information in the package associated with the Montgomery County submission was from a short article in the July 1897 issue of *The Auk* which mentioned "The recent erratic movement of the species..." This and the fact that there were 2 inland records being reviewed from the same time period raised the question: Were there possibly more records of this species away from the coastal areas of North America during this time period that could substantiate these records? To find out, I Googled Thick-billed Murre and received very little in the way of useful hits. Remembering that the name had been changed from Brünnich's Murre during the middle of the last century, I then tried a search using the Latin name *Uria lomvia* and came across an article on the SORA website of the University of New Mexico. SORA is the acronym for Searchable Online Research Archive and it compiles all of the published articles from 9 major ornithological publications, including *The Auk*, *The Wilson Bulletin*, *The Condor*, and *Journal of Field Ornithology*. Using SORA's search tool, I located 11 articles relating to unusual movements of this species during the mid-1890s. The articles provided some fascinating reading and some corroborating evidence about the validity of these submissions.

It seems that the erratic movement of this species started in November 1893 when a single bird showed up in central Connecticut in a southern suburb of Hartford. In December, 1894, several birds were shot and collected in Oneida County, New York, in and around the city of Utica. One individual was found on the road and captured by a young girl, another was captured alive by a farmer, and yet a third was also captured alive in Utica. A year later, in December, 1895, a specimen was collected at Seneca Lake, New York, and by the summer of 1896, several others were collected. Prior to this time the species was unknown from that area. Then in 1896, the flood gates opened and this species invaded inland eastern North America in unprecedented numbers and numbers that have not been experienced since.

The first report that I have found for 1896 was on December 10th from Pickard, Indiana. The bird was captured alive but later died. A young boy captured one alive on Fall Creek near Indianapolis, Indiana on December 13th. On December 14th, a bird was found at a market on Virginia Ave. in Washington, D.C., where, over the next several weeks, more birds were found and purchased for preservation. These birds were reportedly shot on the Potomac River between Washington and Alexandria, Virginia. After the bird from the 14th was collected, numbers of birds were reported from New Jersey, west to Michigan, Indiana and Ohio, and south to North and South Carolina. The phenomenon continued until just after the first of the year when reports of birds being collected ceased.

Some of the locations in which birds were collected were far from large bodies of water where vagrants of this type might be expected. The South Carolina record was found in the far northwestern part of the state near the town of Anderson. This town is nearly 200 miles from the nearest point of the Atlantic Ocean and very near the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains. In addition, although many of the birds were found in creeks and rivers, a remarkable number were also collected in fields and both on and off of roadways. Below is a chart that lists the reports showing the dates, location, number of individuals and any unusual information during the invasion of December, 1896.

10	Pickard, IN	1	Captured alive from creek
13	Indianapolis, IN	1	
14	Washington, DC	1	
15	Edgewater Park, NJ	1	
15	Hazelrigg, IN	1	Picked up from field
16	Beverly, NJ	scores	
mid-Dec	Burlington, NJ	several	
mid-Dec	Palmyra, NJ	1	
17	Cape Charles, VA	8	
18	Painesville, OH	2	
18	Zainesville, IN	1	Collected in field
19	Sandusky, OH	3	
19	Sandusky, OH	4	
19	Cape Charles, VA	1	
19	Anderson, SC	1	
20	Occoquan Creek, VA	1	
20	Fowler, IN	1	Captured on road
22	Newbern, NC	1	
22	Alexandria, VA	1	creek
25	Lorain Co, OH	6	1 captured from beach far from water
26	Gibraltar, MI	several	Picked up off of road
27	Alexandria, Va	1	
28	Alexandria, VA	1	
31	Foresman, IN	1	
31	Detroit, MI	2	
1-Jan	Alexandria, VA	1	

Finally, a year later, on December 12, 1897, a mass movement was noted passing the city of Ottawa, Canada and many of the birds were shot as they were seeing flying south. Despite the large number of birds observed, no other reports of this species were reported that winter. There are no other remarkable reports for this species in the next century with the exception of about 100 birds in various sized flocks over the Saint Lawrence River near Quebec, Canada on December 15, 1932.

Reasons for the progressively larger invasions during the 5 year period of the mid-1890s are unknown. The birds that were collected were mostly found to have empty stomachs and a lack of body fat. There are no reports of large fish kills to create a lack of food and drive them from their normal range.

Elliott Coues reported that during a 4 day period from December 15-18, 1896 there was a very strong coastal storm along the East Coast. The storm was reported to be along the South Carolina coast on the 15th and apparently moved northward very slowly because it didn't pull out of Maine until the 18th. The flaw in this theory, that was mentioned in some other articles as well, was the fact that many of the birds were already in the northeast U.S. on the date that the storm began causing difficulty in the southeast. Since the aberrant distribution was a 5 year event, a single, unusually large weather phenomenon cannot be attributed as being the causal factor. It is very likely that we will not ever ascertain the cause unless a similar invasion takes place again, and then it will be only blind speculation as to whether the causal factors were the same during both periods.

I believe that this information adds more than credible evidence to support the reports currently under review by the Maryland/DC Records Committee. The circumstances surrounding the collection of some of the documented individuals should also help alleviate the need to find a viable body of water from which the review birds could have been found. Although precise details of where some of these birds were actually collected is missing,, especially in regards to the Montgomery County bird, the range of habitats of others taken during this time period shows that the bird could have realistically been found nearly anywhere.

Literature Cited:

-  LYNDS JONES [Brünnich's Murre, *Uria lomvia* in Lorain County, Ohio](#)
(Wilson Bulletin: Vol. 11, No. 2, March-April, 1899)
-  G. R. WHITE [Brünnich's Murre \(*Uria lomvia*\) at Ottawa, Canada](#)
(Auk: Vol. 15, No. 2, April-June, 1898)
-  LYNDS JONES [Brünnich's Murre, *Uria lomvia*, on Lake Erie](#)
(Wilson Bulletin: Vol. 9, No. 2, March-April, 1897)
-  PAUL BARTSCH [Uria lomvia, an Addition to the Avifauna Columbiana](#)
(Auk: Vol. 14, No. 3, July-September, 1897)
-  FRANK M. CHAPMAN [Murre in Western New York.](#)
(Auk: Vol. 14, No. 2, April-June, 1897)
-  T. GILBERT PEARSON [Brünnich's Murre \(*Uria lomvia*\) at Newberne, N. C.](#)
(Auk: Vol. 14, No. 2, April-June, 1897)
-  J. HARRIS REED [Unusual Occurrence of Brünnich's Murres at Beverly, New Jersey](#)
(Auk: Vol. 14, No. 2, April-June, 1897)
-  WILLIAM L. WHITTAKER [Brünnich's Murre and King Eider at Cape Charles, Virginia](#)
(Auk: Vol. 14, No. 2, April-June, 1897)
-  ELLIOTT COUES [Uria lomvia in South Carolina](#)
(Auk: Vol. 14, No. 2, April-June, 1897)
-  A. W. BUTLER [The Unusual Occurrence of Brünnich's Murre \(*Uria lomvia*\) far inland, with notes on other rare birds](#)
(Auk: Vol. 14, No. 2, April-June, 1897)
-  WILLARD E. TREAT [Brünnich's Murre \(*Uria lomvia*\) in Connecticut](#)
(Auk: Vol. 12, No. 2, April-June, 1895)

All of the above links were obtained through SORA – Searchable Ornithological Research Archive provided by The University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131, (505) 277-0111 <<http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/>>

Appendix 5: Preliminary Draft Exotic Review Policy

MD/DCRC Policy on the Review of Questionable, Exotic, and Introduced Species

Draft

Phil Davis, MD/DCRC Secretary

23 Feb 2007

Background. I wrestled with this issue quite a bit over the years and finally took some time to think about the topic in a bit more depth.

The specific questions are: for which species do we want to request documentation and what species should the committee review?

Related to this are the questions of how these sightings are handled by the *Maryland Birdlife* and *North American Birds* editors. We should probably be coordinated in our approach to these “iffy” species.

Often species sightings are dismissed out of hand as an escape or exotic bird; sometimes never reported, often reported but not documented

Often long-term trends are necessary to understand pattern of vagrancy and sometimes widespread or regional influxes are not understood until after the species has disappeared.

I really don't like just being arbitrary, since these are long-term issues. I'd rather have a defined policy. Here is my current thinking on the issue of "exotics."

Facts.

1. The MD/DCRC's source of taxonomy issues is the AOU checklist.
2. The AOU checklist includes all of North America, from Central America and the Caribbean to the north. Greenland and Iceland are not included.
3. The AOU checklist categorized species as Accidental (A), Introduced (I), and Hawaiian (H).
4. The AOU also has an Appendix, which includes birds that are hypothetical in nature for North America.
5. The ABA, which I normally discount for MD/DCRC taxonomy issues, does look more closely at the situation with questionable, exotic, and introduced species in the ABA area (i.e., north of Mexico).

2. **Draft Policy (rough).** I think the MD/DCRC should probably request and capture documentation on any species listed in the AOU Checklist, including the Appendix, with the possible exception of species that are indicated in the AOU Checklist to be recorded only from Hawaii (e.g., Red-breasted Cardinal).

3. **Impact.** What this means is ...

a. Species, at least in some families, that have been accepted by the AOU should be tracked. For example, with Waterfowl, species such as Garganey, Falcated Duck, etc. should be tracked. Our region has lost the opportunity to capture documentation for some sightings in the past since the birds were dismissed out-of-hand as escapes.

b. Species that are capable of breeding and establishment [perhaps limited to those recorded only north of Mexico] would be tracked (e.g., Monk Parakeet, Yellow-chevroned Parakeets, etc.). Budgies would fall into this category, too, which may not make the most sense (but they are/were established in Florida), but I can live with that.

c. Clear exotics that are not included in the AOU Checklist would not be given any attention (e.g., Black Swan, Egyptian Goose, etc.) This also applies to escaped parrots such as African Grays and Cockatoos, but not to southern Mexico species such as a Red-lored (Amazon) Parrots and some Macaws. If we were to invoke a “north of Mexico” proviso, then most of these would go away. I would be willing to make a pass over the AOU checklist and make a sublist of species that have been recorded in the lower 48.

d. Species such as Chukar are a bit problematic, since they are well established in some locations, north of Mexico. This policy would include them on our tracking list. My personal feeling is to track them. I'd rather include something that may not make a lot of sense vs. exclude something that we could regret (much) later ... say 100 years or so.

e. Even though the ABA Checklist is oriented to listers, I think we could integrate its findings with the AOU Checklist to develop a list of species that should be tracked and for which documentation should be requested. I've started to think about this and can continue my thought process after the meeting.

f. If anyone is really interested in the topic and would like to work with me as a Subcommittee on Questionable, Exotic, and Introduced Species, let us know at the meeting.

Summary. These are some preliminary thoughts. I have some additional ideas but I wanted to get this information out before our Annual Meeting to give you something for you to think about and for us to discuss at the meeting.

Appendix 6: Western Wood-Pewee Chronology Update

The following is the latest update in the saga of potential Maryland's Western Wood-Pewees:

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Background. There are several MD and DC specimens in the USNM that have been identified over years as Western Wood-Pewees. The two MD specimens were banded by Chan at Ocean City back in the 1960s. We have been unable to use various measurement-based approaches to separate the two possible species: Western and Eastern. There are currently no accepted records of WWPE for Maryland or DC.

The story began in 1991. Check out page 2 of the MD/DCRC 1991 Skins Workshop minutes here ...

<http://www.mdbirds.org/mddcrc/pdf/rskins1991.pdf>

Chapter two of the story can be found on page 3 of the 2003 Skins Workshop minutes here ...

www.mdbirds.org/mddcrc/pdf/rskins2003.pdf

Chapter three was never published. We never could get the measurements from Jonathan so we remeasured, but suspected that we did not measure properly. We were planning to remeasure again when the idea came up to try for a DNA analysis.

To make a long story short, the USNM (the Smithsonian) did attempt a DNA analysis for us to determine the species of these specimens and the results are attached. The relevant email thread is below.

Regardless of what we decide, we probably still want to take a correct set of measurements before any review so we can correctly apply the Hubbard key and report the results for any final decision publication.

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<PObrien776@aol.com> 03/09/06 12:15 PM >

Rob,

Here is a rough draft. Hack away.

Paul

The Maryland Ornithological Society's MD/DC Records Committee (MD/DCRC) is charged with maintaining a thorough and accurate database on the avifauna of Maryland and the District of Columbia. In pursuing this goal, the committee came across three specimens in the USNM database labeled as Western Wood Pewees, *Contopus sordidulus*, two from MD, one from DC. Van Remsen examined the specimens and felt that the DC bird was probably an Eastern Wood-Pewee, *Contopus virens*, based on back color and mensural characters. Subsequently the label was changed to *virens*. In order to resolve this question, the MD/DCRC attempted to key the three specimens using Hubbard's criteria (Hubbard, J. P., Eastern Wood-Pewee Specimens from New Mexico, Plus a Reevaluation of Mensural Criteria for Identifying This Taxon, Occasional Papers Southwestern Biology, 9, 1-13, 2002).

The DC specimen keyed cleanly to *virens*, but the two MD specimens did not key to *sordidulus* cleanly, one tending toward, the other close to *sordidulus*. Thus there are uncertainties with all three specimens that we would like to resolve.

Rob Fleischer and the MD/DCRC propose to investigate the systematic status of these three enigmatic specimens in the USNM collection using ancient DNA techniques. Laboratory work will be performed by Rob Fleischer employing established methods that he has developed for isolating and sequencing DNA from old museum specimens. According to sequences available on Genbank, the two species differ in mtDNA Cytb sequences by about 2%, including the region of the gene normally studied in Fleischer's Genetics Program ancient laboratory. Thus it should be fairly easy to determine to species the maternal background of each specimen. Various nuclear introns should identify the male parent, should hybridization be suspected. We will use standard methods to extract DNA from the toepads of these specimens, amplify and sequence several small pieces of the mtDNA Cytb gene, and compare the sequences to the references on Genebank.

The specimens to be sampled are:

USNM # 523922, collected in DC by P. Bartsch 9/18/1899

USNM # 478783, collected in Ocean City, MD, by C.S. Robbins 9/13/1961

USNM # 530823, collected in Ocean City, MD, by C.S. Robbins 9/01/1967

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In a message dated 3/9/06 12:50:30 PM, FleischerR@si.edu writes:

Hi Paul,

Thanks, that looks good. I just added in a sentence about the quantity of material and I'll send it on to Jim Dean (with a copy to you and Jon Beadell).

My best,

Rob

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In a message dated 8/9/06 7:12:19 PM, FleischerR@si.edu writes:

Hi Paul,

Jon Beadell finished up the pewees recently and prepared a short report. I had him make a couple of revisions and the product is attached. Basically, one specimen did not work (523922), another worked for cytochrome b and was a clear *C. virens* (478783), and the third (530823) worked and clustered with the *C. sordidulus* sequences from Genbank, but was fairly divergent from them (about 3%). This is species level divergence and is very puzzling. The *C. sordidulus* sequences are from California (San Luis Obispo and Sierra Nevada). It is possible this is a cryptic species from elsewhere in the range (e.g., Rocky Mountains). A number of other taxa in California are known to differ from Rocky Mountain forms (e.g. titmice, flycatchers, towhees). A few samples from that region might solve this. At any rate, I hope these results are useful in your deliberations on these specimens. Jon did a great job coaxing DNA from the specimens.

My best wishes,

Rob

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Report on Maryland/DC Pewee DNA
Jon Beadell and Rob Fleischer

06-30-06

We extracted DNA from the toepads of specimens 523922, 478783 and 530823, which were obtained from the National Museum of Natural History. We attempted to amplify a small portion of the cytochrome *b* gene using 4 sets of primers with expected product lengths varying between 121 and 347 base pairs. Two of these primer sets yielded products. The results are summarized below:

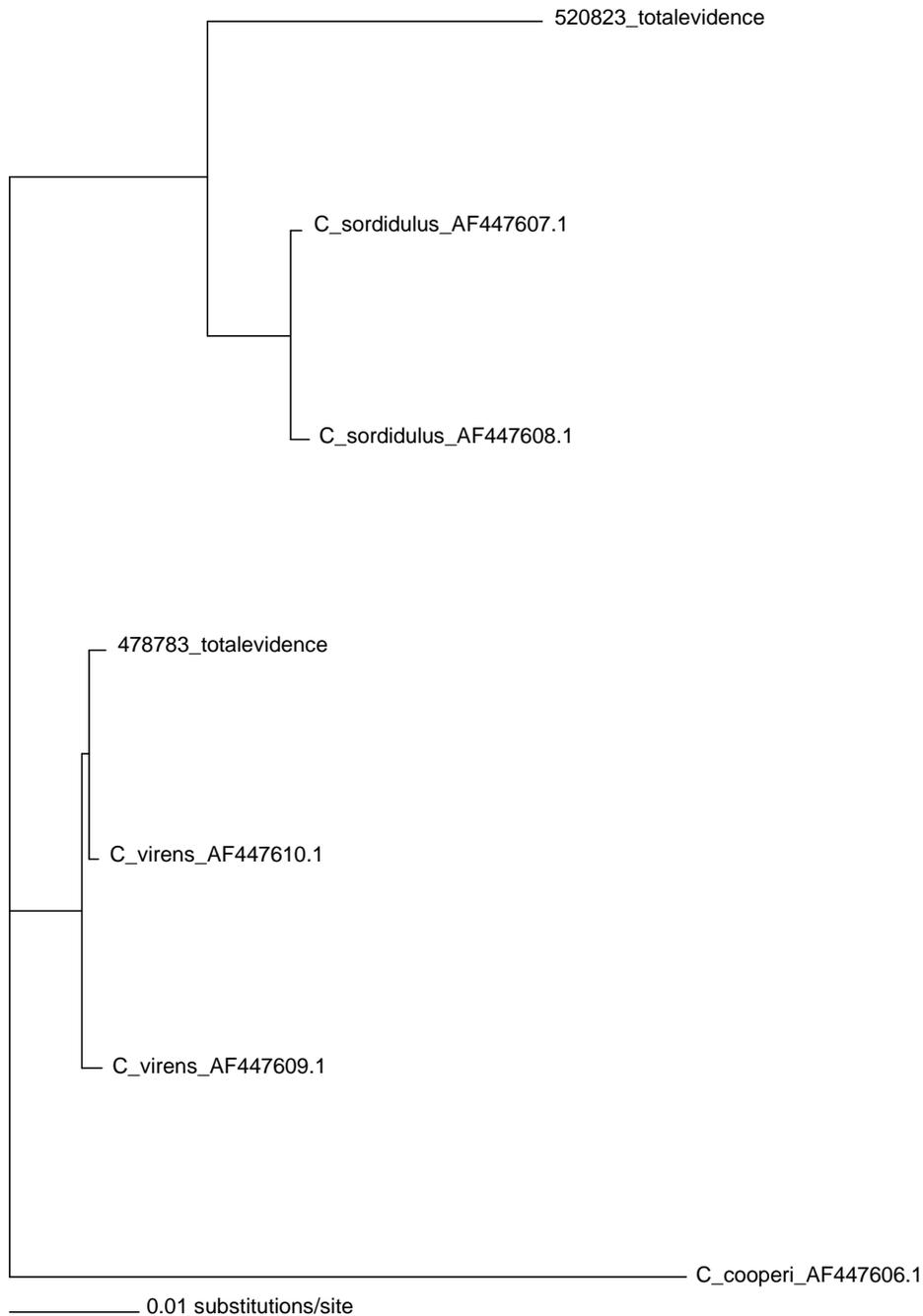
Specimen #	Collection Date	Length of cyt b Sequence	Best Taxon Match in GenBank	% Identity to GenBank Seq	Genbank E-Value
523922	1899	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
478783	1961	274 bp (C1/2)	<i>C. virens</i> (MN)	99	1e-147
478783	1961	179 bp (wow/2RC)	<i>C. virens</i> (MN)	99	5e-94
530823	1967	273 bp (C1/2)	<i>C. sordidulus</i> (CA)	94	6e-116
530823	1967	179 bp (wow/2RC)	<i>C. sordidulus</i> (CA)	97	7e-87

Two attempts at extracting DNA from specimen 523922 proved unsuccessful and therefore, we can provide no indication of its taxonomic affiliation. As indicated in the table above, a BLAST search of Genbank indicated that the DNA sequence of 478783 matched most closely DNA sequence retrieved from *Contopus virens*. Combined sequence from 478783 exhibited only about 0.2% difference from other *C. virens* sequences.

A similar search indicated that DNA sequence obtained from 530823 was most closely related to sequence previously retrieved from *C. sordidulus*. However, specimen 530823 exhibited about 3% difference from other sequences of *C. sordidulus*, suggesting that the *Contopus* subspecies most closely related to it is not represented in GenBank.

A distance tree (following page) exhibits the relationship of the museum specimens to the most closely-related taxa represented in GenBank. Over the combined sequence, 478783 and 530823 differed from each other by about 4.9% (uncorrected p-distance).

These results are indicative of the maternal lineage of the individuals in question and do not preclude hybridization with a male from the other subspecies. To date, only a single *Contopus virens* nuclear gene sequence has been deposited in Genbank. Further resolution of the paternal lineage would require sequencing of a nuclear gene from vouchered specimens of morphologically-identified *C. virens* and *C. sordidulus*, and from specimens 478783 and 530823.



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 From: PObrien776@aol.com
 Date: Thu, 10 Aug 2006 13:22:25 EDT
 Subject: Re: Rough Draft of Application
 To: FleischerR@si.edu

Rob,
 Wow! Many thanks to you and Jon for resolving the uncertain ID of 478783 (*virens*, only the tailclear measurement said otherwise and that could have been our mistake) and for unearthing a cryptic species (?) in 530823. Now we understand why the Hubbard measurements confused us. They were close to *sordidulus* but were indeterminate. As

for 523922 not working, there is no harm done as all indicators point to *virens* anyway; only the label had been wrong, and that has been corrected.

I can't say enough to express our gratitude for your efforts. Now if some energetic graduate student wants to spend a summer collecting Pewees in the Rockies, she or he could become a hero.

Paul