



**Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee
2015 Annual Meeting
Saturday, February 28, 2015**

Meeting Minutes and Annual Business Report

The 2015 Annual Meeting of the Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee (MD/DCRC) was called to order on 28 February 2015 at 10:15 am at the home of the Secretary, Phil Davis, in Davidsonville, MD. Members present included Chair, Bill Hubick (Anne Arundel County); Secretary, Phil Davis (Anne Arundel), and members Marcia Balestri (Worcester), Patty Craig (St. Mary's), Jared Fisher (Montgomery), Clive Harris (Montgomery), Nancy Magnusson (Howard), Hugh McGuinness (DC), Russ Ruffing (Howard), and Dan Small (Queen Anne's). Not present was Rob Ostrowski (Maine) who recently moved from the area; however, Rob participated in several of the committee votes via text messages. MOS President, Tom Strikwerda (Howard), also attended.



The 2014-2015 Term Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee Members.

Left to right: Tom Strikwerda (MOS President – Howard County), Hugh McGuinness (DC), Dan Small (Queen Anne's), Phil Davis (Secretary – Anne Arundel County), Nancy Magnusson (Howard), Marcia Balestri (Worcester), Jared Fisher (Montgomery), Patty Craig (St. Mary's), Russ Ruffing (Howard), Clive Harris (Montgomery), and Bill Hubick (Chair – Anne Arundel County). Not present was Rob Ostrowski (Maine). Photo by Barbara Davis.

1. Secretary's Report. The Secretary reported the following.

1.1 Official Lists Changes and Status. Exhibit 1.1-1 summarizes recent annual additions of taxa to the Official List of the Birds of Maryland and the Official List of the Birds of the District of Columbia. No new taxa were added to the Maryland Official List, yet, in 2014. Two new taxa were added to the Official List of the Birds of the District of Columbia in 2014. A previously accepted record to the DC list in 2013 had been missing from this list, but is now included, below. The total numbers of species on the MD and DC lists now stand at 446 and 334, respectively.

State	Calendar Year:	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
MD	MD List Total	433	436	436	438	438	446	446	446	
	Species / Groups Added	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Cape Verde Shearwater ●Say's Phoebe ●Western Meadowlark 	(none)	●Allen's Hummingbird	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Golden-crowned Sparrow ●Brown Booby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Pink-footed Goose ●Barnacle Goose ●White-tailed Kite ●Green Violetear ●Bell's Vireo ●Virginia's Warbler ●Cassin's Sparrow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Herald Petrel ●White-tailed Tropicbird 	(none)	(none)	
	Subspecies or Forms Added	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●"Western" Greater White-fronted Goose ●"Scopoli's" Cory's Shearwater 	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)
	Questionable Origins Added	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Southern Lapwing 	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	●European Greenfinch	●Calipepla species	(none)	(none)
	Exotic Origins Added	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Great Tit 	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)
DC	DC List Total	328	330	330	331	331	332	334	334	
	Species / Groups Added	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Long-tailed Jaeger ●Le Conte's Sparrow 	(none)	(none)	●Painted Bunting	(none)	●Arctic Tern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Cave Swallow ●Ross's Goose 	(none)	
	Subspecies or Forms Added	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	
	Questionable Origins Added	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	●Barnacle Goose	(none)	(none)	
	Exotics Added	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	(none)	

Exhibit 1.1-1. Annual Additions to the Official List of the Birds of Maryland and the Official List of the Birds of the District of Columbia.

1.2 Review Package Status.

1.2.1 Package Statistics. Exhibit 1.2.1-1 presents a 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. Decision categories include: "Accepted," "Accepted-Group," "Accepted-Form," "ID OK/Questionable Origin," "ID OK/Exotic Origin," and "Not Accepted."

Year	#Pkgs	Avg Weeks	#Items	#New	#Decisions	Dec%	Avg#Items	Avg#New	Avg#Decs
1985	3	72.0	40	40	13	33%	13	13	4
1988	7	21.0	81	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
1888	4	26.6	35	20	17	49%	8	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	26.8	63	50	33	62%	16	13	8
1996	4	25.2	51	37	33	65%	13	9	8
1997	6	21.1	88	47	49	72%	14	9	10
1998	7	19.3	107	84	81	76%	15	12	12
1999	6	17.8	84	61	60	80%	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
2003	8	37.6	79	69	45	57%	10	9	6
2004	8	-24.4	108	72	64	59%	14	9	8
2005	5	26.3	85	63	70	74%	19	13	14
2006	7	22.8	110	68	85	77%	16	9	12
2007	9	21.9	124	80	78	83%	14	9	9
2008	9	13.3	146	79	82	56%	16	9	9
2009	6	16.0	83	37	49	59%	14	6	8
2010	5	21.9	67	45	41	61%	13	9	8
2011	7	29.1	101	74	55	54%	14	11	8
2012	6	18.1	105	46	79	75%	18	8	13
2013	8	11.5	129	60	87	67%	16	10	11
2014	3	7.6	54	34	34	63%	18	11	11
Total	164	21.2	2123	1351	1332	63%	13	8	8

Exhibit 1.2.1-1. Annual Package Statistics Summary

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

Year	Pkg#	Start	#Items	#New
2015	159	02/05/2015	17	12
		Totals	1	17
		Averages	17	12
	Grand Totals		17	12
	Grand Averages		17	12

Exhibit 1.2.2-1. Summary of Packages Currently in Circulation

1.2.3 Acceptance Rate. As of this year's Annual Meeting, the committee's cumulative acceptance rate was 76.2 percent, down slightly from last year's 76.5 percent. This rate, shown in Exhibit 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 "Not Accepted" decisions).

Decision/Status	Cumulative Data									
	AM 2006 # Decisions	AM 2007 # Decisions	AM 2008 # Decisions	AM 2009 # Decisions	AM 2010 # Decisions	AM 2011 # Decisions	AM 2012 # Decisions	AM 2013 # Decisions	AM 2014 # Decisions	AM 2015 # Decisions
Accepted	521	610	665	723	760	779	812	858	910	940
Accepted-Group	19	25	28	31	33	33	33	33	34	35
Accepted-Form	11	13	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
ID OK/?? Origin	8	8	9	10	10	10	9	18	19	19
ID OK/Exotic Origin	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Not Accepted	152	165	180	203	211	223	245	268	301	316
Cumulative Decisions Grand Totals:	723	823	899	985	1032	1063	1117	1195	1282	1328
Cumulative Acceptance Rate:	79%	80%	80%	79.4%	79.6%	79.0%	78.1%	77.6%	76.5%	76.2%

Exhibit 1.2.3-1. MD/DCRC Acceptance Rate

1.3 Database Contents Status Report.

1.3.1 Database Categories. Exhibit 1.3.1-1 describes the status/decision categories currently used in the MD/DCRC database.

Decision	Decision / Status Description
S&R	Sight records from the committee's baseline document: Stewart & Robbins, 1958, <i>The Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia</i> .
DCRC	Records from the (defunct) DC Records Committee baseline (1984).
Accepted	Reports accepted by the committee.
Accepted-Group	Reports accepted only as to a species group 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, 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 or may be outstanding.
Unreviewable	Reports with insufficient descriptive identification details to permit a review by the committee. Typical for many older published sight records.
Non-Review Species	Reports submitted for a species that does not meet 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.
Withdrawn	Reports withdrawn by the original observer(s).
Retracted	Published reports - subsequently retracted by the observer(s).

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

1.3.2 Database Contents. Exhibit 1.3.2-1 summarizes the current contents of the MD/DCRC database by status/decision category and indicates the changes in totals from the previous year.

State	Category / Status	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Delta
MD	Stewart & Robbins	9	9	100	85	83	81	82	81	87	87	90	116	116	115	111	109	109	109	0
	Accepted	258	332	362	377	381	380	424	464	486	560	609	661	667	716	745	787	834	858	24
	Accepted-Group	2	2	9	9	10	10	10	11	15	21	24	26	28	28	28	28	29	30	1
	Accepted-Form	-	1	3	3	3	6	7	10	11	13	15	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	0
	ID OK?? Origin	5	5	5	5	6	7	8	8	8	8	9	10	10	10	9	17	18	18	0
	ID OK/Exotic Origin	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0
	Not Accepted	119	124	127	132	133	132	140	147	149	161	174	193	200	212	232	251	283	298	15
	Circulating	45	28	9	15	49	78	29	13	84	57	33	35	32	57	62	49	-	17	17
	Recirculate	22	21	27	25	23	18	49	54	34	25	38	19	26	15	24	15	23	17	-6
	Ready	102	49	64	61	69	78	77	112	82	126	163	162	172	209	255	296	300	338	38
	Reviewable	35	45	36	35	42	44	66	249	520	679	694	757	764	855	981	1087	1118	1125	7
	Unreviewable	221	224	238	246	248	255	257	287	291	307	306	309	324	344	391	397	402	418	16
	USNM	-	-	6	26	21	14	14	11	10	9	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
	Hold	11	11	16	15	15	15	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Report	0	3	5	0	0	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Reopened	-	-	5	5	6	7	4	8	8	8	8	8	9	10	11	12	12	12	0
	Research	-	-	-	-	-	-	361	46	41	-	13	9	11	9	9	-	-	-	-
	Non-Review Species	109	112	119	136	139	140	139	357	164	174	176	185	185	191	194	194	194	195	1
	Withdrawn	4	5	7	7	8	9	9	11	11	13	10	9	11	18	21	26	26	28	2
	Retracted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	5	8	13	16	17	0
MD Totals		942	970	1135	1179	1233	1275	1693	1871	2003	2289	2365	2523	2607	2816	3104	3302	3384	3499	115
DC	Stewart & Robbins	-	-	25	8	8	8	7	9	9	10	12	24	23	22	18	17	17	17	0
	DCRC	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	0
	Accepted	14	16	19	20	20	20	25	35	45	50	56	62	63	63	67	71	76	82	6
	Accepted-Group	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0
	ID OK/Exotic Origin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	0
	Not Accepted	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	3	4	6	10	11	11	13	17	18	18	0
	Circulating	1	4	1	2	7	13	4	5	6	2	5	2	-	11	8	5	-	-	-
	Recirculate	1	2	4	4	5	2	9	3	4	4	3	-	1	-	2	-	1	1	0
	Ready	6	2	3	7	14	21	15	19	8	11	10	11	12	15	22	21	27	29	2
	Reviewable	1	7	9	5	6	4	10	45	62	71	80	75	75	79	122	127	126	124	-2
	Unreviewable	8	13	17	16	28	30	27	37	33	33	34	32	33	39	43	43	43	44	1
	USNM	-	-	4	26	27	15	14	31	32	32	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Report	0	10	10	2	2	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Research	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	6	5	5	5	5	-
	Non-Review Species	3	3	3	6	7	7	11	26	20	20	30	39	42	49	51	55	53	53	0
	Retracted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	4	0
Withdrawn	-	-	-	-	0	1	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	7	7	8	0	
DC Totals		34	57	95	98	126	125	206	228	240	261	260	283	283	315	375	383	389	396	7
??	Stewart & Robbins	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	0
	Ready	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	0
	USNM	-	-	-	2	3	5	7	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Reviewable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	5	4	3	14	14	14	14	0
	Unreviewable	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	4	8	7	7	7	4	4	4	4	0
	Research	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	DCRC	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Non-Review Species	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	0
Withdrawn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	0	
?? Totals					2	3	5	17	7	7	11	21	15	13	13	21	23	23	23	0
DE	Withdrawn	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	1	1	0
VA	(Various)	0	0	0	4	6	12	34	14	14	22	21	15	13	13	13	16	15	15	0
NY/ NJ	Withdrawn	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
	Outside State Totals				4	6	14	35	15	15	23	22	16	14	14	19	18	18	18	0
	Grand Totals	976	1029	1234	1283	1369	1409	1922	2126	2270	2574	2655	2834	2924	3160	3523	3726	3815	3936	121

Exhibit 1.3.2-1. MD/DCRC Database Summary as of 03/07/2014 and Changes from Previous Annual Meetings. The questionable jurisdiction data records ("??") typically deal with historical records, mostly from the Potomac River, which cannot be determined to be MD, DC, or VA. [DE, VA, and NY data entries may be deleted in future tabulations.]

1.3.3 Reports Received Per Year. Exhibit 1.3.3-1 indicates the number of reports the MD/DCRC has received each year, beginning with 1995 when the committee began recording dates-of-receipt. The table separates “current” reports (defined as initial documentation received within twenty-four months after the first sighting date) and “historical” reports (documentation received more than twenty-four months after the first sighting date). The committee’s emphasis in locating and obtaining old published historical reports during the period from 1995 through 2014 can be seen from the numbers of historical reports received during this period. From 1995 through 2014 (since 2015 is still incomplete), the number of “current” (i.e., contemporary) reports received per year has averaged approximately 67. During 2014, 23 historical reports were added to the database from the ongoing historical canvass.

Year	Total Reports	Historical Reports	"Current" Reports
1995	186	135	51
1996	103	50	53
1997	264	211	53
1998	44	14	30
1999	200	151	49
2000	56	5	51
2001	80	34	46
2002	42	10	32
2003	448	393	55
2004	194	111	83
2005	151	84	67
2006	272	183	89
2007	139	55	84
2008	171	107	64
2009	105	16	89
2010	192	116	76
2011	414	309	105
2012	197	117	80
2013	98	9	89
2014	114	23	91
Totals	3470	2133	1337
Average			67

Exhibit 1.3.3-1. MD/DCRC Total, Current, and Historical Reports Received per Year (from 1995)

1.3.4 ID Articles and Index. The committee now has 1420 identification and distribution references in its files for 140 taxa. The trend of these references is summarized in Exhibit 1.3.4-1.

Annual Meeting	Number of ID and Reference Articles Indexed	# Taxa
2006	445	n/a
2007	574	81
2008	639	93
2009	681	100
2010	741	104
2011	847	109
2012	916	116
2013	1100	126
2014	1240	133
2015	1420	140

Exhibit 1.3.4-1. MD/DCRC Identification and References Captured

1.4 Communications

1.4.1 Acknowledgements. Since last year’s Annual Meeting, the committee has discontinued direct USPS mail of acknowledgements to observers, consistent with its revised communications policies (see Section 3.1.2). The previous annual totals are shown in Exhibit 1.4.2-1.

1.4.2 Decision Notices. Since last year’s Annual Meeting, 72 notices for 33 decisions were mailed (via USPS) to observers, as tallied in Exhibit 1.4.2-1. In the future, however, decision notices will not be mailed, consistent with the committee’s revised communications policies.

Annual Meeting	# Acknowledgements	Decision Notices	
		# Decisions	# Notices
2006	124	84	211
2007	127	100	239
2008	144	72	181
2009	112	83	154
2010	133	47	104
2011	90	33	93
2012	231	43	95
2013	173	72	220
2014	152	79	184
2015	N/A	33	72

Exhibit 1.4.2-1. Acknowledgements and Decision Notices Mailed.

1.4.3 Email Traffic. Exhibit 1.4.3-1 summarizes the Secretary’s outgoing MD/DCRC-related email messages over the past years. The increasing totals reflect increases in documentation and communications via email and the Internet, and also due to ongoing projects such as the historical canvass tasks.

Calendar Year	# MD/DCRC Email Messages Sent
1997	64
1998	66
1999	307
2000	128
2001	287
2002	570
2003	731
2004	610
2005	1212
2006	1472
2007	1647
2008	1981
2009	1562
2010	1492
2011	2251
2012	1790
2013	1248
2014	1173

Exhibit 1.4.3-1. Secretary Email Messages Sent by Calendar Year

1.4.4 External Communications Status Report. Each year, the Secretary received queries that are outside the scope of the committee's routine operations. Many of these contacts are notable since they typically support the scientific community and/or other records committees. During the past year, some of the notable queries received are shown in Exhibit 1.4.4-1.

Date	Subject	Correspondent
01/2014	Information on Thayer's Gull records	Taj Schottland (NJ)
03/2014	Remembrances of Harvey Mudd	Marion and Susan Mudd (MD & IL)
04/2014	Blackwater NWR checklist revision	Tom Miller (MD)

Exhibit 1.4.4-1. External Communications (non-routine) Highlights.

1.4.5 Maryland Yellowthroat Articles. Articles published in the Maryland Yellowthroat during 2014 are shown in Exhibit 1.4.5-1.

Article	Issue Date
MD/DCRC Decisions (Pkgs 155-156)	Aug-Sep 2014
MD/DCRC Decisions (Pkg 157)	Oct-Nov 2014

Exhibit 1.4.5-1. Maryland Yellowthroat Articles Published during 2013.

1.5 MD/DCRC Storage Summary

A summary of the amount of MD/DCRC storage, both hardcopy/paper and electronic, is shown in Exhibit 1.5-1.

Media	Contents	Amount of Storage
Physical (Paper/Hardcopy)	Archived Decisions	25 document boxes
	Active Queue reports	13 document boxes
	Previous package records	4 document boxes
	Current packages (in circulation)	1 document boxes
	Current/active projects	1 document box
	Video/audio tapes (older analog media)	1 document box
	Identification/reference files	7 document boxes
	Correspondence/miscellaneous files	14 document boxes
	Supplies	2 document boxes
	<i>Maryland Birdlife</i> journals / <i>Maryland Yellowthroat</i> newsletters	3 feet of shelf space
	<i>American Birds</i> journals	3 feet of shelf space
	Historical references (S&R, AOU, etc.)	4 feet of shelf space
Electronic	Documentation, references, databases, etc.	39.9 GB

Exhibit 1.5-1. MD/DCRC Storage Summary

1.6 MD/DCRC Office and Information Technology Resources Summary

The Secretary has summarized, in Exhibit 1.6-1, the various office and information technology resources that are required to operate and support the committee.

Type	Resources
Communications Services	Postage, Internet, email
Reproduction Services	Occasional bulk copying, film duplication
Office Supplies	File folders, file jackets, storage boxes, envelopes (letter size and flat), mailing labels, CD labels, file labels, photo marking pens, highlighters, ink pens, staplers
Consumables	Printer/copier paper, staples, copier/printer toner cartridges, copier/printer drum, laser toner cartridges, print heads, blank CDs, blank DVDs
Hardware	Desktop computer, black & white laser printer, color laser printer, duplex copier, flatbed scanner, film scanner, CD/DVD burner, external backup disks, video capture interface
Software	Operating system (MS Windows 7), office suites (MS Office 2010, Office Perfect X5), browsers (IE and others), geobrowser (Google Earth), database (Paradox 11), report writer (R&R 12.5), file manager (Power Desk Pro 9), email client (Eudora 7.1), PDF application (Adobe Acrobat Standard XI), Photo processing (Adobe Photoshop Essentials 11), Screen capture (SnagIt 11), CD/DVD burner (HP SmartMedia), CD/DVD Labeling (exPressit SE 2.1), Media players (Windows Media Player, WinDVD), Video editor (Pinnacle Studio 14), Scanning software (HP Director), OCR programs (Readiris Pro 14, OmniPage Professional 18), online backup: MozyPro

Exhibit 1.6-1. MD/DCRC Office and Information Technology Resources

1.7 Member Package Review Performance

The Secretary compiled and distributed to each member an overall averaged summary report and a package detail report that provides the length of time each member retained each review package.

1.8 MOS Liaison

1.8.1 Budget

Since the committee no longer circulates review packages via postal mail, the need for a budget item for postage expenses is no longer required. This year (2015), the committee budget was approved at \$125 by the MOS. Future budgets will be carefully developed as we move into the data digitization phase in our planning for *The Rare Birds of Maryland and District of Columbia*.

2. MD/DCRC Processes and Activities [Inputs]

2.1 Taxonomy

2.1.1 AOU Taxonomy Updates

The secretary has not yet upgraded the MD/DCRC database to reflect changes from the AOU's 55th Supplement. The AOU web page was just updated this month (February 2015) so this update can now be performed. **OPEN**.

3. MD/DCRC Report and Records [Inputs]

3.1 Current Reports

Current reports are contemporaneous reports, vs. older historical reports:

3.1.1 eBird

3.1.1 Referrals

The committee and the eBird coordinators continue to collaborate on historical and current rarity reports regarding information that does not come directly to the committee. Items of particular relevance include start and end dates, and detailed comments. During 2014, 21 reports were referred by eBird (i.e. not first posted to MDBirding) or were submitted directly to the committee).

3.1.2 Documentation and Communications Policy Changes

During 2014, the Secretary drafted and implemented a set of revised policies dealing with observer documentation and communications. The members previously ratified these proposed changes in 2014. A summary of the changes was posted to MDBirding for the benefit of the regional birding community in October 2014. A copy of this text follows:

MD/DC Records Committee Documentation Policy Changes

Over the past few years, the quality and availability of local rare bird documentation has significantly expanded due to factors such as the growth of eBird and the unlimited subscription base of MDBirding. We now have more observers seeking out rare birds and documenting them via digital images, audio/video recordings, and written statements.

These changes are positive and very beneficial; however, now the MD/DC Records Committee (MD/DCRC) needs to adapt some of its policies and procedures to accommodate this increase in the numbers of observers and resulting documentation volume.

The committee will implement several external and internal policy changes:

1. External Policy Changes:

The following key changes address how the committee will process documentation and communicate with observers in the future:

a. Observer Permission

Previously, the MD/DCRC would seek permission from new observers to use “third party-obtained” documentation for its committee reviews and archiving. Now, the committee will no longer actively seek permission from new observers to use descriptive documentation (written details, images, A/V recordings); the committee will now presume that permission to use documentation is implied when documentation is posted to a public email group (e.g., MDBirding) or to a public web site (e.g., eBird, photo sharing, or blog sites).

b. Observer Acknowledgements

The committee periodically mailed printed acknowledgements to each observer who submitted or allowed access to descriptive documentation. Printed acknowledgements will no longer be mailed; a new future process will be established using emails, MDBirding posts, or some combination thereof. [Details TBD.]

c. Observer Decision Notices

The committee previously mailed printed decision notices to each acknowledged observer after an MD/DCRC review was completed. Printed decision notices will no longer be mailed; a new future process will be established using email, MDBirding posts, or some combination thereof. [Details TBD.]

2. Internal Changes:

The following two operational changes undergird how the committee processes documentation and communicates with observers. These operational changes will be generally transparent to observers.

a. Rarity Categories

Regional rarities will now typically be placed into one of two basic categories, with respect to the total amount of documentation generated. The committee will now internally define two categories of rarity observations: Short-Stayer (SS)/Few Observers, and Long-Stayer (LS)/Many Observers. These category definitions establish the framework upon which the committee has adapted our new policies and procedures changes.

b. Observer Categories

Previously, within its internal processes and procedures, the committee used no formal observer categories; observers were either “acknowledged observers” or unnamed (“et al.”) observers, which indicated that other unnamed observers were also reported to have seen the bird(s). Observers will now fall into one of three categories (for MD/DCRC internal processes and procedures):

- Observers of Record
- Additional Observers
- Casual Observers

White Paper

The White Paper that was distributed to the regional birding community can be found at:

<https://mddcrcresources.wordpress.com/2014/10/28/mddc-records-committee-documentation-policy-changes/>

3.1.3 MDDC/RC-eBird Comparative Documentation Analysis: 2014 PFGO

The Secretary also conducted an analyses of documentation received via various channels for a sample case; the two 2014 Pink-footed Geese [MD/ 2014-007]. A summary of this analysis was posted to the web for the regional birding community in October 2014. A copy of that text follows:

MDDC/RC-eBird Comparative Documentation Analysis: 2014 PFGO

The MD/DC Records Committee (MD/DCRC) Secretary conducted an analysis of rarity sighting reports of the 2014 Baltimore County, Maryland Pink-footed Geese (2) as a test case to compare the quantity and quality of documentation sets that were collected contemporaneously by the MD/DCRC to the sets of documentation that were ultimately posted in eBird checklists. The contemporaneous MD/DCRC documentation sources included (1) direct MD/DCRC submissions, (2) postings to the MDBirding email group, and (3) “real-time” (i.e., daily alert) postings from eBird checklists.

The intent was to identify if any major disconnects existed between the contemporaneous documentation sources that were available to the MD/DCRC in “real-time” and the final sets of documentation that were ultimately posted to eBird, including deferred or “non-real-time” eBird postings.

The objective of the analysis was to validate if the current MD/DCRC “real-time” documentation collection processes is adequate for the committee’s purposes or if an altered process is needed.

This analysis was a bit “rough” due to some counting and overlap factors described, below; however, on balance, the current MD/DCRC approach to collecting documentation seems to be reasonable, especially given that Long-Staying (LS)/Many Observer sightings, such as this, are generally not difficult identification cases.

This documentation analysis can be found at:

<https://mddcrcresources.wordpress.com/2014/11/03/mddcrc-ebird-comparative-documentation-analysis-2014-pfgo/>

3.1.4 MD/DCRC Web Reporting Form

It was suggested that the current MD/DCRC web reporting form may be an artifact of the pre-digital camera era and could be revamped. This is a good opportunity for a best practice survey to see how other records committee are handling reporting forms in this highly digital era. **OPEN.**

3.2 Historical Canvass

The Secretary presented a status report to the committee on the Historical Canvass. Projects addressed included:

- M Iliff/H Mudd Historical Reports Canvass – Done; not documented
- BBL Reconciliation – Done; documented
- BBS Reconciliation – Done; documented
- N.A. BPP Reconciliation – Done; not documented
- PWRC Nest Cards – Done; not documented
- Royal Navy Bird Watching Society Canvass – Done; documented
- Christmas Bird Count Canvass – Done; not documented
- May Count Canvass – Done; not documented
- PWRC/CS Robbins Archives – Data pulled; not integrated yet, not documented
- Lighthouse Survey Records – Done; not documented
- USNM Specimens – In progress; not documented
- DC Records Committee files – Revisit; not documented
- MD/DC Baseline Survey (S&R 1958) – Done; not documented
- Ornithological Collections Database Survey – In progress; not documented
- Cylburn Journals Canvass – Done; documentation in progress
- Biological Survey Bird Stomach Contents Survey – In progress; not documented
- eBird Reconciliation – In progress (as observers report); not documented
- Historical Ornithology Canvass – Done; not documented
- Maryland Birdlife “The Season” Report Database Reconciliation – In progress; not documented
- Exotics/Introduced Canvass (MB/eBird) – Done; not documented
- Smithsonian (Birds Division and Archives Unit) References Canvass – In progress
- General Ornithology Canvass – In progress

4.MD/DCRC Outputs

The following information summarizes projects that generate committee outputs:

4.1 *Maryland Birdlife* Decision Report

The Secretary discussed the history of *Maryland Birdlife* Decision Reports and the status of the next report.

4.2 *The [History of] the Rare Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia* (RBMDC)

The Secretary reviewed the vision and status of this future publication. Note the potential title change.

4.3 Reports/Records Digitization Plan

To prepare for the RBMDC and to distribute the workload among various species account authors, the plan is to digitize all MD/DCRC documentation. The scope of digitization will include slides, photos, text, and references material. As we get ready to plan this project, we will seek the advice of MOS members who have experience in this area. **OPEN.**

4.4 Historical Checklists

A master bibliography is being compiled of historical checklists that encompass Maryland and/or DC. The hope is that most or all of these checklists can eventually be posted to the web as PDF documents. Some are already available online. **OPEN.**

4.5 Integrated Historical Checklist

The Secretary is planning to generate an integrated master checklist that indicates when and by which authority each species was added (as a “first”) to the “official” state checklists (for MD and DC) over time, beginning with the earliest checklists. **OPEN.**

4.6 Review List Chronology

This project is to create a data table that captures the change in status of taxa on the MD/DCRC Review Lists, over time. This table can be used in a number of committee reports and also in the RBMDC species accounts. This project is in-work. **OPEN.**

4.7 MD/DCRC Web Page

MOS MD/DCRC Redesign

The Secretary has marked up the design of the current MD/DCRC web page, providing new links and information; however, this update has not yet been provided to the MOS Webmaster. The Secretary would like to first conduct a best practices survey of other records committees' web pages. **OPEN.**

Adjunct MD/DCRC Web Pages

The following MD/DCRC-related web pages currently reside in a commercial blog space (Word Press) web site:

MD/DCRC Blog

<https://mddcrcblog.wordpress.com/>

MD/DCRC Resources

<https://mddcrcresources.wordpress.com/>

4.8 MD/DCRC Contribution Recognition Award

At the 2009 Annual Meeting, the committee established an MD/DCRC occasional award to recognize field birders that have provide exceptional support to the committee over the years with documentation (written and photographs) of review species in an effort to document the status and history of MD/DC birding. The permanent name of this award will be taken from the first recipient. The Secretary will reinstate efforts to go forward with this award. The presentation of this award will be coordinated with the MOS Executive Board and/or Board of Directors. **OPEN.**

4.9 Outreach

Presentation. A few years ago, the MD/DCRC Outreach Subcommittee was decommissioned after having compiled and presented a slide presentation on Maryland records to many of the MOS local chapters. This presentation was given by then-MD/DCRC Chair, Paul O'Brien. It was suggested that there are now many “stories” of the MD/DCRC that might make a good presentation for local chapters. The Secretary offered to draft such a presentation and it was suggested that some of our committee members could even give the presentation, especially at the farther ends of the state. **OPEN.**

Monthly Outreach Topics. Current Chair, Bill Hubick suggested that the committee try to also re-engage with the birding community via other outreach techniques. One suggestion was to deal with a monthly outreach topic on the local MDBirding Google Group or the bi-monthly MOS newsletter, *The Maryland Yellowthroat*. **OPEN.**

4.10 Other Publications

Now that *Maryland Birdlife* has resumed publication, there are many committee-related articles that can be developed and submitted, for example:

- Maryland's Great Gray Owl
- The Potomac River Ivory Gull
- The Accokeek Trumpeter Swan Tibia Bone
- Unpublished USNM Regional Rarities
- MD/DC Ornithological Pioneer Bios (by Dave Bridge)
- Maryland and DC's "Firsts"
- Results of the MD/DCRC BBL Historical Canvass
- Results of the MD/DCRC BPP Historical Canvass
- Results of the MD/DCRC BBS Historical Canvass
- Results of the MD/DCRC RNBWS Historical Canvass
- A Summary the DC Records Committee Activities
- Regional Passenger Pigeon Records
- Regional Carolina Parakeet Records
- Regional Heath Hen Records
- The Potomac River 1915 Barrow's Goldeneye
- Observations of Rev. White (1600s)
- and more

5. Old Business

5.1 Goals, Policies, and Procedures Document Revision.

An update to the MD/DCRC Goals, Policies, and Procedures Document due to procedures changes over the past year (Pelagic Boundaries and 8-1 Second-Round Accepts) is still pending. **OPEN.**

5.2 eReviews

Procedure Updates. The committee's Goal, Polices, and Procedures Document also needs be updated to reflect the changes implemented to accommodate the recent increases in committee policies and procedures related to increased observer documentation volume via Internet channels. The members previously ratified these proposed changes in 2014. Changes to the Goals document will next follow. **OPEN.**

Access Policy. Administratively, the committee decided to delete access to the Google Drive server once members rotated off the committee; however, we will leave previous package information on the server for reference, especially since previous packages provide examples for new members.

File Compression. Members have the option to either download or just view the eReview files. The PDF files can become quite large so members are cautioned regarding downloads with reference to connect times and/or data charges. Compression of these files was discussed; that could be accomplished by adding another step to the package preparation process; however, it was decided to leave the file size as is.

5.3 Cylburn Collections Task Force

This project by the Secretary is still in progress. Field journals have been analyzed and summary documents prepared for several of the field journal contributors: Kirkwood, Fisher, Cook, Sommers. Work on Hoen is in process. A few others have yet to be done, including Wholey. **OPEN.**

5.4 Exotics/Introduced/Questionable Species Review Policy

Bill Hubick indicated that the Maryland Biodiversity Project currently captures information on all species of birds, including exotics. A committee white paper is in work on this topic by the Secretary and is almost done. Deferred, one more year (!). **OPEN.**

5.5 MD/DCRC Conformance to Previous AOU Changes

Maryland Western Grebe Split and Other Splits vis a vis MD/DCRC Reports

At the 2012 Annual Meeting, the committee addressed the issue of earlier MD/DCRC Pacific Loon reports that pre-dated the AOU split of Pacific and Arctic Loon. We have the same situation with Western Grebe reports, since some older MD/DCRC reports predate the 1985 AOU split into Western and Clark's Grebe. The Secretary has been working with a collaborator (David Mark of NY) to analyze the splits and lumps since Stewart and Robbins (1958) to ensure that there are no other cases of splits that need to be addressed from a records standpoint. A list of splits and lumps since 1957 (the AOU Checklist, 7th edition) is in work and should be done within a week. The preliminary conclusion is that all splits and lumps have been properly accommodated since the committee's founding. **OPEN.**

5.6 Pelagic Boundaries

The next phase of research, due to our recent change of Maryland's pelagic boundaries, focuses on MD records from Wilmington Canyon. Matt Hafner reported the following:

General

From: Matt Hafner <hafner.matt@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: MD/DCRC pelagic records

Date: Sat, 28 Feb 2015 08:33:52 -0500

To: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>, Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>

Phil,

I've had this email drafted for a while, hoping to add more to it. Looking for records in the database with GPS coordinates, I made it to Band-rumped Storm-Petrel taxonomically.

Thanks,
Matt

Overview

With the Wilmington Canyon records, there is only one labeled as such in the database. I did also check some of the records that had GPS coordinates in the database location field. There are also several records just labeled "Pelagic Zone/Atlantic Ocean" that would require a more detailed analysis. We would have to check the actual records to see if there are GPS coordinates that we can confirm the location. I say we assume they are MD records until we come across information that says they are not.

Record labeled Wilmington Canyon in the database:

Long-tailed Jaeger 2014-071 from 9/13/14 - if this record has GPS coordinates, it may not ever need to be reviewed since it was seen after we adjusted the boundaries. **OPEN.**

Records with GPS coordinates that are no longer considered MD:

Black-capped Petrel 1997-500 from 7/18/79 - this record is way outside the boundaries now. **CLOSED.**

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel 2007-092 from 8/24/07 - this record is right on the border, would want to get info from the file. **OPEN.**

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel 2010-145 from 8/15/10 - this record is north of the border. **CLOSED.**

Re-addressing the issue of MD/DCRC review of previous VARCOM accepted records

The Secretary questioned the decision from last year's annual meeting to "grandfather in" decisions that had been accepted by the Virginia Avian Records Committee (VARCOM). The Secretary stated that accession of records to our MD and DC database and lists place the imprimatur of the committee on these records and it did not seem right to just accepted other authorities as equivalent to records accepted by our committee [for example, the 12/30/1979 Yellow-nosed Albatross]. Specifically, it was proposed and agreed to have the MD/DCRC re-review those few VARCOM pelagic records. **OPEN.**

[Note: The Secretary raised this same issue in regard to decisions by the now defunct DC Records Committee. This topic may be broached again next year's Annual Meeting.] **OPEN.**

5.7 Annual Meeting 2014 Minutes

Due to some personal issues, the minutes of last year's Annual Meeting have not yet been published. These will be rolled out shortly.

5.8 2014 Skins Workshop Accounts

Bill Hubick reviewed the status of the 2014 Skins Workshop accounts and the plans for this year's 2015 accounts.

6. Standing Agenda Items

6.1 Fourth Round Discussions.

Current Fourth Round Discussions

No fourth-round votes were slated for discussion at this year's annual meeting.

Proposed Related Policy Change

Our fourth-round discussion procedure can probably be eliminated since we now have the capability to easily share ballot comments electronically and in a more timely manner. With our new eReview processes and procedures, there are steps we can now take to resolve decisions even more quickly and reduce the need for some recirculations, which take time and effort of both the Secretary and the members. Also, more immediate final reviews can ensure that the members who are most knowledgeable about a review item can participate in the final vote, rather than having to hand the final vote over to a new term committee.

The Secretary suggested the following procedure changes:

Fourth-Round Discussions

Rather than waiting for the next Annual Meeting, we can handle fourth-round discussions during the package review period immediately after a third-round 7-2 vote, via real-time open email exchanges. After on-line discussions, the Secretary will "call the question" and members can then decide whether they were swayed via the discussion to change their vote or not. If the revised vote changes to either 8-1 or 9-0, then the report would be considered to be accepted in that third round.

This procedure totally obviates that need for fourth round circulations. The committee agreed to wait for the next fourth-round candidate to try this process in real-time.

Resolving Group and Origin Votes

The Secretary also suggested that this same process could be used for recirculation cases to resolve split Accept-Group and Accept-Origin votes.

When votes are split between Accept and Accept-Group, or between Questionable Origin and Exotic Origin, the members can be asked to review the other members' ballots immediately after voting to determine if they wish to change their vote or to stay pat. The resulting votes would then determine the final Group or Origin decision, according to the committee's existing voting resolution rules.

This process would ensure that the most knowledgeable members resolve the split Group and Exotic cases and avoid further recirculations in these situations.

Likewise, we can take a look at first implementing this process when the next split Group or Origin situation arises.

6.2 Record Re-Openings

A standing agenda item is to solicit from the members if any previous reports or records should be reopened. The committee can re-open records via one of two methods, defined in our Goals and Procedures document. Specific re-openings considered at the meeting were:

6.2.1 1970 Chestnut-collared Longspur

In 2010, Rob Ostrowski first suggested that the committee take another look at the 1970 Sandy Point State Park, Annapolis, MD Chestnut-collared Longspur (CCLO) report [MD/1983-030], which was previously not accepted by the committee. The suggestion to re-open this report may have inadvertently not been previously presented to the committee; however, this year's CCLO sighting prompted the Secretary to re-review the communications that deal with a possible re-opening of this earlier report. **After much discussion, the committee agreed that no new physical or contemporary information has surfaced to support a re-opening of this report. CLOSED.**

For posterity, the email thread discussing the possibly of re-opening this report, from 2010 up to and just before this year's Annual Meeting, is provided in **Appendix 1**.

6.2.2 2006 Cape Verde Shearwater

Past committee members, Sherman Suter and Jonathan Alderfer (National Geographic Field Guides editor), suggested that the committee consider re-opening its 2006 accepted record of Cape Verde Shearwater [MD/ 2006-264], the second record for North America. After a lengthy discussion, the committee used its "majority rule" procedure to decide to re-open this record. The vote was 5-4. However, before reviewing this reopened record, the committee requested that the Secretary place the photos on the web and ask for expert opinions from appropriate venues, including Birdwg01 (Frontiers of Bird Identification) and the Seabird listserver. The email thread and information that supports consideration of a re-opening is provided in **Appendix 2**.

6.2.3 Slaty-Backed Gull. At the 2013 Annual Meeting, Matt Hafner expressed a desire for the committee to post to the web the reports and discussions of the 1999 Conowingo Slaty-backed Gull [MD/1999-052] to the web for the members (and others) to review. Some reasons for this include that (1) this is just an interesting bird and also (2) more relevant reference information has become available over the past years, for example information on hybrids and Slaty-backed vs. Vega Gull separation. The Secretary has not yet been able to post this documentation. **OPEN.**

Interestingly, the Secretary recently received the following email from the former committee Chair, Paul O'Brien:

From: pobrien776@aol.com
Subject: Slaty-backed Gull ID
Date: January 8, 2014 at 17:30:35 EST
To: pdavis@ix.netcom.com

Phil,

Did you see this on ID Frontiers? Is it worth looking back at the photos from the Conowingo bird to check on the gape shape?
Paul

Subject: Slaty-backed Gull gape shape
Date: Wed Jan 8 2014 10:07 am
From: greatgrayowl AT aol.com

Hi all:

In a recent post to Calgulls, Noah Arthur posted a link to photos that he took of a putative Slaty-backed Gull at Tiburon, California (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/73989529@N02/sets/72157639538966754/>). While I am neither supporting nor refuting his identification, a feature struck me on the bird in question that I haven't seen noted in the long and seemingly never-ending discussion about just what is a Slaty-backed Gull. That feature was the shape of the gape.

Many years ago, Michael O'Brien pointed out to me the strong difference in gape shape between Herring (Smithsonian) and California gulls, with Herring's running parallel to the bill and being somewhat short, while Cal Gull's hooked downward in an obvious "frown." I believe that this feature works well on all ages of Cal Gulls. So, I was quite surprised to see this same feature on the Tiburon gull and, particularly, how different that bird's gape shape was from the Western Gull right next door in some of the pix. I quickly looked through a smattering of reported Slaty-backed Gull pix on Flickr and at the Ujihara site (<http://www23.tok2.com/home/jgull/081204Slaty/slaty2.htm>). While many pix showed birds with equivocal gape shapes, many also showed the strongly downturned shape of Noah's bird, particularly on the Ujihara site.

Obviously, if a downturned gape is typical of Slaty-backed and atypical of Western Gull (and other dark-mantled ID contenders), then sussing true Slaty-backed, at least at fairly close range, would become a bit easier.

Sincerely,
Tony Leukering
Largo, FL

6.3 Review List Changes

6.3.1 Taxa Changes

The taxa shown in the exhibits below were discussed and considered as potential changes to the MD and DC Review Lists. Inputs were also solicited before the meeting from other MD and DC birders, especially members of the eBird Teams, such as Paul Pisano for DC. The numbers of Accepted, Not Accepted, and total number of reports for both MD and DC are shown in the table to help portray the relative status of each taxon. Note that not all taxa are reviewable in each jurisdiction and review categories have changed over the years, so the numbers are not absolute. The results of the discussions are also shown in the Exhibits 6.3.1-1 (for MD) and 6.3.1-2 (for DC), below.

Red (rose) highlights means “no change” to the review status; green highlights indicate a change to the review status.

MD Review List Changes Considered

Taxon	Maryland			District of Columbia			Committee Action / Discussion Summary
	Accepted	Not Accepted	Total Reports	Accepted	Not Accepted	Total Reports	
MD Taxa							
Thayer's Gull	1	0	47	n/a	n/a	7	<p>Hugh McGuiness: Personally, I think it was probably a mistake to remove Thayer's from the MD review list. The status of this taxon in the east is really quite unclear, and by reviewing records we could add useful info to the national picture.</p> <p>Discussion: Some of the members may look further into this before the next meeting.</p> <p>Decision: Make no changes at this point.</p>
Le Conte's Sparrow	25	4	36	1	0	1	<p>Discussion: Ten years ago were somewhat regular on the coast. Now, fairly regular lately in the Baltimore area.</p> <p>Decision: Make no changes at this point.</p>
Barrow's Goldeneye	11	8	24	n/a	n/a	n/a	<p>Discussion: (Returning?) males are routinely found each winter. Females and hybrids are still an issue.</p> <p>Decision: Make no changes at this point.</p>
Band-rumped Storm-Petrel	1	0	18	2	0	3	<p>Discussion: Think about these taxa some more. (Clive Harris)</p> <p>Decision: Make no changes at this point.</p>
Leach's Storm-Petrel	n/a	n/a	n/a	10	0	12	

Exhibit 6.3.1-1. MD Taxa Considered for Review List Changes and Resulting Dispositions.

DC Review List Changes Considered

Taxon	Maryland			District of Columbia			Committee Discussion / Decision Summary
	Accepted	Not Accepted	Total Reports	Accepted	Not Accepted	Total Reports	
DC Taxa							
Eurasian Wigeon	2	0	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	<p>Clive Harris: Eurasian Wigeon is on the DC review list but is not reviewable anywhere in MD</p> <p>Decision: Make no any changes at this point.</p>
Anhinga	16	11	41	3	0	3	<p>Paul Pisano: I suggest that the committee consider removing Anhinga from the DC review list, which would be consistent with the MD review list (i.e., they aren't reviewable in Montgomery and PG counties).</p> <p>Discussion: Similarity with DCCO in flight is still an issue; look into how other regional states treat ANHI.</p> <p>Decision: Make no any changes at this point.</p>
Whimbrel	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	0	5	<p>Paul Pisano: I suggest that the committee consider removing Whimbrel from the DC review list, which would be consistent with the MD review list (i.e., they aren't reviewable in Montgomery and PG counties).</p> <p>Decision: Remove from the DC Review List.</p>
Hudsonian Godwit	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	0	6	<p>Clive Harris: Hudsonian Godwit would be a great bird in DC (though I believe Alderfer and Dunn had a small flock go over Rock Creek a few years back one Sept morning) - but equally rare in Montgomery frankly.</p> <p>Decision: Remove from the DC Review List.</p>
Black Skimmer	1	0	1	0	0	4	<p>Paul Pisano: I also suggest considering removing Black Skimmer, though that's less ideal since it's still in the "west of coastal plain" section (4C) for MD. I wouldn't fall on my sword over this (i.e., I wouldn't be upset if they are kept on the DC review list), but throw them out there for consideration.</p> <p>Decision: Make no any changes at this point.</p>
Northern Shrike	18	2	55	3	0	6	<p>Clive Harris: Also, and perhaps I am misreading this, but at present Northern Shrike is reviewable in DC but Loggerhead Shrike is not, which is the opposite of the situation for MD. LOSH is on the DC list of accepted species and is not mentioned on the DC review list dated 9/15/14. Northern Shrike is however mentioned on the DC review list.</p> <p>Decision: Add LOSH to the DC Review List. Retain NOSH on the DC Review List.</p>
Loggerhead Shrike	11	6	21	n/a	n/a	n/a	

Lark Sparrow	7	0	53	5	1	7	<p>Paul Pisano: By the same token (sort of), Lark Sparrow could be considered for removal. It's still quite rare, but there are enough records to consider taking it off.</p> <p>Decision: Remove from the DC Review List.</p>
Henslow's Sparrow	4	0	7	2	0	2	<p>Paul Pisano: I was also thinking of suggesting the removal of Henslow's Sparrow, given the 2 recent records, but I see that it's still on the MD review list east of Allegany, so perhaps it should be kept.</p> <p>Decision: Make no any changes at this point.</p>
Nelson's Sparrow	2	0	9	0	0	1	<p>Bob Ringler: I would recommend removing Nelson's Sparrow [from the DC Review List] even though most of the DC records are from the 19th century.</p> <p>Paul Pisano: I would also be amenable to removing Nelson's Sparrow, even though there are only 2 confirmed records and only one is recent.</p> <p>Decision: Remove from the DC Review List.</p>
Boat-tailed Grackle	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	<p>Paul Pisano: I would consider adding Boat-tailed Grackle, especially since it's in section 4B of the MD review list.</p> <p>Discussion: There are no reports or records of this taxon for DC.</p> <p>Decision: Any report would be a first for DC.</p>

Exhibit 6.3.1-1. DC Taxa Considered for Review List Changes and Resulting Dispositions.

6.3.2 General Review List Criteria Discussion

DC Review Criteria

Clive Harris: I'd argue there is a more general case to be made for aligning the DC review list to the treatment of the neighboring geographical areas (i.e. Montgomery and PG counties).

Yes, DC is a small urban environment which makes the occurrence of some birds exceptional from a listing viewpoint but is that a reason for reviewing reports of birds that would not be reviewable a few miles away over a state line? The other boundaries we use approximate to distinct habitat divisions but this does not. eBird does a great job of tracking unusual sightings so we don't need to perform that function.

For example **Hudsonian Godwit** would be a great bird in DC (though I believe Jonathan Alderfer and Jon Dunn had a small flock go over Rock Creek a few years back one Sept morning) - but equally rare in Montgomery frankly.

Ditto **Eurasian Wigeon** which is on the DC review list and reviewable nowhere in MD.

Nelson's Sparrow mentioned by Paul Pisano is a good example of this point. The obvious exception from alignment would be for species not currently on the DC list of accepted species.

Action: Hugh McGuiness (and perhaps with Paul Pisano) will develop a comparison and analyze for consistency the DC Review List vis a vis the MD Review List. **OPEN.**

6.4 Records Separations/Combinations

The floor is open each year for members to suggest or comment on MD/DCRC reports or records that should be considered for separation (i.e., multiple birds separated into individual reports/records) or combined (i.e., individual records grouped together). Reports/records discussed at the meeting for separation/combination include: **None.**

6.5 Circulation/Species Issues and Concerns. General discussion is encouraged regarding any recirculating and pending reports. Members were welcome to discuss any of the following reports to be recirculated:

St	Rec#	Species	Start	Co	Location	Apkg	Vote1	Vote2	Vote3
MD	2009-003	Green-winged Teal (Eurasian)	01/03/2009	WGOR	Berlin	130	7-2-0	6-3-0	
MD	2009-017	Chukar	03/04/2009	DCDC	Port Deposit	087	0-2-7		
MD	2009-106	Magnificent Frigatebird	06/02/1988	HBRI	St. Michaels	140	1-1-1		
MD	1997-002	American White Pelican	07/11/1990	SMST	Cedar Island WMA	079	5-1-2	5-0-4	
MD	1997-054	Sandhill Crane	10/25/1970	WGOR	Snow Hill	158	6-0-1		
DC	2013-066	Sandhill Crane	12/15/2013		Fort Lincoln	158	6-1-0		
MD	2009-033	Ruff	07/26/1997	BALT	Paper Mill Plate	081	4-5-0		
MD	2009-101	Arctic Tern	07/29/2009	WGOR	Assateague Island	155	6-3-0	5-4-0	
MD	2010-145	Arctic Tern	08/22/2010	WGOR	Ocean City	165	6-4-0	6-3-0	
MD	2013-030	Arctic Tern	05/11/2013	GRTT	Oakland	155	3-6-0		
MD	2009-020	Western Wood-Pewee	10/05/1992	PGEO	Laurel	073	6-5-0		
MD	2009-078	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's)	09/28/2008	CARR	Westminster	125	6-3-0		
MD	2009-094	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's)	11/15/2008	WGOR	West Ocean City	125	6-1-0		
MD	2009-028	White-crowned Sparrow (Gambel's)	11/08/1944	PGEO	Paruxent Research Refuge	082	8-1-0		
MD	2009-061	White-crowned Sparrow (Gambel's)	11/11/2008	WGOR	E.A. Vaughn WMA	080	8-1-0		
MD	2001-061	White-crowned Sparrow (Gambel's)	11/12/2001	MOBT	Black Hill Regional Park	079	8-1-0		
MD	1995-024	Dun-eyed Junco (Oregon)	01/17/1971	BALT	Cherryville	051	8-1-0		
MD	1994-006	Dun-eyed Junco (Oregon)	03/20/1940	HALL	Baltimore City	051	0-1-0	0-9-0	

7. New Business

7.1 Species - "Problem Children." The committee discussed the following reviewable cases:

Garrett Arctic Terns [2013-030] - We discussed about how to handle this report of a flock of terns for the next round. **Action:** Matt Hafner will try to get better photos from Mikey Lutmerding, who also has some notes. The committee will hold for this update. **OPEN.**

Thayer Gull (DC) – We need to review this species for DC; it is currently not on the DC list and we have several submitted reports. A general discussion ensued to lay the ground rules for how the committee will deal with this. The consensus was to circulate all of the DC reports rather than just pick one (“the best” – typically, a first year bird) to try and get it accepted for DC. **OPEN.**

Trumpeter Swan – We discussed the process we will use to review this taxon. (This policy was actually written earlier.) The committee agreed to treat the Great Lakes population as established; following the committee’s “innocent unless guilty” approach that was used for some other cases (such as Barnacle Geese). The members also felt comfortable using a licensed bander’s neck or wing bands as proof of identification.

7.2 Second Round Acceptance. At last year’s Annual Meeting, Sherman Suter proposed accepting records with 8-1 (Accept to Not-Accept) votes on the second round without further circulation. The reasoning for proposing this change is that over the years there have been few instances where committee members shifted their positions between the second and third rounds so it seems more efficient to dispense with the additional circulation of the record, especially in

view of the efficiency of the committee's new paperless eReview processes. The committee accepted this change.

[Note: Last year, the committee did not discuss the "opposite" case of an 1-8 split on the second round. Applying the same reasoning as for the 8-1 case could "not accept" the record with a 1-8 second round vote; however, the committee decided later (via email) that such a further change to our policies and procedures would need an explicit motion by the committee. This could be considered at a subsequent annual meeting. However, no change was proposed at the 2015 Annual Meeting.]

7.3 eBird Impact on Records Committee Documentation

Monthly Reviewable Alerts. In addition to the Documentation and Communications White Paper and related changes to committee procedures, discussed above, the Secretary suggested again that eBird could drastically help with the documentation mining volume challenge by extending the eBird Alert process to a monthly report that aggregates and sorts all of the committee-reviewable taxa reports to include text comments and links to A/V files. This would save a great deal of work on the part of the Secretary. However, such a capability does not seem to currently be in the offing. **OPEN.**

Flickr Group – Bill Hubick suggested that adding a Flickr Group for MD/DCRC reviewable observations could make it easier to locate and access photo documentation. Bill took an action to establish this capability. **OPEN.**

7.4 Skins Workshop Suggestions

Suggestions for study skins for this year's Skins Workshop (21 Mar) were solicited and discussed. Recommendations included the following:

- Shearwaters (Cape Verde, Scopoli's, and Cory's) [Hugh McGuinness]
- Longspurs [Clive Harris]
- Juncos [Russ Ruffing]
- Collared-Doves [Marcia Balestri]
- Lazuli Buntings [Marcia Balestri/Clive Harris]
- Greater White-fronted Geese [Clive Harris]
- Rusty/Brewer's Blackbirds [Russ Ruffing]
- Grackles (Common and Bronzed) [Russ Ruffing]

Bill Hubick noted that for some other workshops, "themes" were used to relate taxa to be studied. The committee agreed that it was too late to consider a theme for this year's workshop; but this could be considered for future workshops.

8. Elections

8.1 New members. Members completing their voting terms are Patty Craig, Rob Ostrowski, and Dan Small. The committee thanks them for all their efforts over the past years. The new members elected for three-year terms were: Kathy Calvert, Tim Carney, and Matt Hafner.

8.2 Chair. Bill Hubick was re-elected as the Chair.

8.3 Secretary. Phil Davis was re-elected as the Secretary.

9. Next Meeting Dates

9.1 2015 Skins Workshop

This year's workshop, hosted by Dave Bridge, will be held on March 21, 2015. Logistic details will be emailed to both the old term and new term members.

9.2 2016 Annual Meeting

The planning date for the 2016 Annual Meeting is Saturday, 27 Feb 2016. This date should not conflict the MOS Board Meeting schedule. If a pelagic trip into Maryland waters should become scheduled for this date, we will reschedule the meeting date.

9.3 2016 Skins Workshop

TBD. We will try to schedule next year's workshop, with our host, for about two weeks after the Annual Meeting, in March 2015.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Davis
MD/DC Records Committee Secretary
2549 Vale Court
Davidsonville, MD 21035
Phone: (301) 261-0184
E-mail: pdavis@ix.netcom.com

Appendix 1

Communications Related to Re-Opening the 1970 MD Chestnut-collared Longspur [MD/1983-030]

Background

For posterity, the email thread dealing with the discussion of possibly re-opening this report, from 2010 and to just before this year's Annual Meeting, is provided, below.

=====
Date: Tue, 7 Sep 2010 11:17:18

Subject: Hal's Chestnut-collared Longspur at Sandy Point

From: Robert Ostrowski <rjostrowski@gmail.com>

To: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>, Michael Bowen <dhmbowen@yahoo.com>, rossgull@baybroadband.net, Ron Gutberlet <rlgutberlet@salisbury.edu>, auk1844@GMAIL.COM, Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, Mikey Lutmerding <mlutmerding@gmail.com>, Fred Shaffer <Fred.Shaffer@ppd.mncppc.org>, djziolkowski@YAHOO.COM, "Paul O'Brien" <POBrien776@aol.com>

Cc: Matt Hafner <mh1920@aol.com>, Marshall Iliff <miliff@aol.com>, hal.lynn@COMCAST.NET, Jim Stasz <jlstasz@aol.com>, Bob Ringler <ringler.bob@gmail.com>

Phil et al,

Apparently the Chestnut-collared Longspur that Hal found on 10/30/1970 at Sandy Point was rejected solely because Chan lost his notes. I came across this record while going through Birdlife a few weeks ago and after reading Hal's great write-up, I was pretty surprised that this wasn't accepted. Hal's write-up (which used details from Chan's notebook) is sufficient, I think, to send this out for re-review.

I'm not part of the committee so this is just a suggestion, but I think it's prudent, unless there are additional reasons I'm unaware of for why this record was rejected.

Here's part of Hal's write-up from Birdlife (Vol. 26 No. 4, Pg 115) :

CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR SEEN AT SANDY POINT Harold Wierenga

"Late on the afternoon of October 30, 1970, I was enjoying a quiet walk in the rain at Sandy Point State Park. Then, out of the sparse clusters of grass flushed four Snow Buntings (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) and an interesting small brownish bird with conspicuous white in the tail. The birds did not fly far, and I was able to watch them at close range while they fed. The brown bird definitely was neither a sparrow nor a pipit. The tail was too white for a Lapland Longspur, and the size of the bird was too small. It was noticeably smaller than the Snow Buntings. I flushed it several times to study the tail pattern, and decided it was a Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*).

That evening I phoned Chan Robbins who passed the word to members in Baltimore and Washington. Early the next morning he and Mrs. Robbins, Carl Carlson, Paul DuMont, Arthur Alexander, and Dr. and Mrs. William Pope met me at the park. The bird showed up also, and we studied it for 15 or 20 minutes at distances of 35 to 50 feet through binoculars and a 20X spotting scope, while it fed with the Snow Buntings. The following comments, taken from Chan's notebook, are included here as confirmation of my identification and in hopes that they may prove helpful to other observers who may be watching for this Great Plains bird in future years. Its most distinctive feature when seen on the ground was the very fine, neat streaking on the breast, a characteristic not shared by any North American sparrow except in some juvenal plumages. There was no rusty color on the wing coverts (which helps rule out the other longspurs). The length was only two-thirds to possibly three-fourths the length of the Snow Buntings~ whereas the Lapland Longspur appears nearly the same length as a Snow Bunting. There was a broad stripe over the eye and a thin median stripe through the crown. A cheek patch was present, but was indistinct. The legs were dark, the tail very short. Although the bird was flushed several times, no call was heard. Upon flushing, the dark triangle on the tail, flanked with white was seen by all observers; the contrast, however was not as distinct as on a breeding male. No white was visible on the tail when the bird was on the ground."

I don't have every committee member's email, so please forward this as you see fit.

Thanks,
Rob Ostrowski

=====
Date: Wed, 8 Sep 2010 13:45:18

Subject: RE: Hal's Chestnut-collared Longspur at Sandy Point

From: "Marshall Iliff" <miliff@aol.com>

To: "Bob Ringler" <ringler.bob@gmail.com>, "Robert Ostrowski" <rjostrowski@gmail.com>

Cc: "Phil Davis" <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>, "Michael Bowen" <dhmbowen@yahoo.com>, <rossgull@baybroadband.net>, "Ron Gutberlet" <rlgutberlet@salisbury.edu>, <auk1844@gmail.com>, "Bill Hubick" <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, "Mikey Lutmerding" <mlutmerding@gmail.com>, "Fred Shaffer" <Fred.Shaffer@ppd.mncppc.org>, <djziolkowski@yahoo.com>, "Paul O'Brien" <POBrien776@aol.com>, "Matt Hafner" <mh1920@aol.com>, <hal.lynn@comcast.net>, "Jim Stasz" <jlstasz@aol.com>

All,

I also strongly agree that the committee erred in rejecting this report. I believe one reason it was rejected was because it was considered to be the first state record, since there was a rumor that the specimen had been lost. This was not the

case, and the early 1900s specimen was found, photographed, and accepted. I would expect that review as a second state record might be sufficient to get this bird accepted.

Some committees go ballistic when re-reviews are suggested without "new and substantial evidence", but I'd argue that in this case it is a compelling report and although the pattern has not changed significantly (actually fewer eastern reports in recent years as population has declined), the new perspective (i.e., not first state record) is reason for re-review.

Along the same vein, several early Mississippi Kites should be re-reviewed, since some compelling descriptions were rejected because they would have been first state records. Now, Marylanders are bummed if they miss the species for their year list! Clearly, the modern perspective should have great bearing on how we treat May-June Mississippi Kites, especially from expected locales.

Best,
MJJ

=====
Date: Thu, 09 Sep 2010 03:03:08

Subject: RE: Hal[old]'s Chestnut-collared Longspur at Sandy Point [MD/1983-030]

From: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>

To: "Marshall Iliff" <miliff@aol.com>, "Bob Ringler" <ringler.bob@gmail.com>, "Robert Ostrowski" <rjostrowski@gmail.com>

Cc: "Michael Bowen" <dhmbowen@yahoo.com>, <rossgull@baybroadband.net>, "Ron Gutberlet" <rgutberlet@salisbury.edu>, <auk1844@gmail.com>, "Bill Hubick" <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, "Mikey Lutmerding" <mlutmerding@gmail.com>, "Fred Shaffer" <Fred.Shaffer@ppd.mncppc.org>, <djzolkowski@yahoo.com>, "Paul O'Brien" <POBrien776@aol.com>, "Matt Hafner" <mh1920@aol.com>, <hal.lynn@comcast.net>, "Jim Stasz" <lstasz@aol.com>, "Gwen Brewer" <glbrewer@comcast.net>

Hi everyone:
A good discussion!

A few comments ...

1. There are still a number of observer discrepancies in the MD/DCRC database between Hal and his father (Harold). I've asked Hal to help me straighten this out ...

2. Re the 1970 Sandy Point report [MD/1983-030] ... the sighting report was published in both MB and AB, but not accepted. MB 26(4):115. AB 25(1):39. I've attached the original MB report, FYI.

3. The 1983-030 committee decision summary follows ...

"Some reviewers felt that the written description was not detailed enough, especially regarding colors and patterns of the head, upperparts, and tail plumage. The addition of the field notes taken at the time was appreciated, but proved insufficient to overcome the reviewers' doubts. Chan Robbins has been unable to locate his field notes for this sighting; if they come to light the record can be reconsidered."

4. A copy of Harold's original field notes were provided to the committee in Jan 1987 by Hal.

5. Marshall contacted Chan about this sighting in Jun 1997. Chan thought the committee already had his field notes. Even though Chan's 1970 notebook has still not been relocated, from reading the file, I believe that Chan thought the committee had his field notes because Harold had quoted Chan's field notes in Harold's MB article.

6. Within a few days of Marshall's discussion with Chan over this and other older reports, Chan recorded his recollection of this (and other) sightings. A copy of Chan's notes is also attached - see the second page.

So, that's the story ...

The MD/DCRC has two processes under which a record can be re-opened. To paraphrase them ... (1) If material "new information" becomes available, then the Chair and Secretary can reopen the report; (2) a majority of the voting members (five or more) of the committee can initiate a re-opening; in such cases, those members are asked to provide a statement stating why the re-opening has been requested. We usually discuss potential re-openings at our Annual Meeting to allow for discussion before taking action.

So, if five or more voting members would like to have the report re-opened, they can do that. (I added Gwen to this distribution and pasted in Rob's original message so that all of the MD/DCRC members have the same information.)

Hope this helps ...

Phil

=====
Date: Thu, 9 Sep 2010 07:32:12

Subject: Re: Hal[old]'s Chestnut-collared Longspur at Sandy Point [MD/1983-030] - Chan's comments

From: Robert Ostrowski <rjostrowski@gmail.com>

To: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>

Cc: Marshall Iliff <miliff@aol.com>, Bob Ringler <ringler.bob@gmail.com>, Michael Bowen <dhmbowen@yahoo.com>, rossgull@baybroadband.net, Ron Gutberlet <rlgutberlet@salisbury.edu>, auk1844@gmail.com, Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, Mikey Lutmerding <mlutmerding@gmail.com>, Fred Shaffer <Fred.Shaffer@ppd.mncppc.org>, dziolkowski@yahoo.com, "Paul O'Brien" <POBrien776@aol.com>, Matt Hafner <mh1920@aol.com>, hal.lynn@comcast.net, Jim Stasz <jlstasz@aol.com>, Gwen Brewer <glbrewer@comcast.net>

Phil, thank you for such a thorough response. And this document from Chan is a gem...

So it sounds to me that Chan's notebook may not have that much more info, if indeed Harold extracted all the important parts from it. My feeling is Chan's notebook would only make a strong enough record even stronger.

I hope the committee takes a look at this.

Thanks again,
Rob

=====
Date: Mon, 02 Feb 2015 03:56:18

Subject: Fwd: Re: Hal[old]'s Chestnut-collared Longspur at Sandy Point [MD/1983-030] - Chan's comments

From: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>

To: Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, Robert Ostrowski <rjostrowski@gmail.com>, Matt Hafner <hafner.matt@gmail.com>

Hi guys:

The Smithsburg CLO caused me to go back and take a look at the earlier reports. Back in 2010, we had a discussion going (below) about the Sandy Point bird. I saw a note in the data record that I had located some related information during my PWRC archives canvass. I located those notes (attached), but they are just references to the bird, no new identification details.

Anyway, I wonder if I dropped the ball on this back in 2010? I don't know if Chan's more recent recollections to Marshall qualify as "new information" that would qualify for an automatic reopening; but at least it seems reasonable to put this on the agenda for this month's Annual Meeting to discuss as a possible consensus re-opening. Make sense?

Thanks.

Phil

=====
Date: Wed, 11 Feb 2015 20:52:19

Subject: MD/DCRC Consideration of re-opening the 1970 MD CLO [MD/1983-030]

From: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>

To: Marcia Balestri <mebalestri@gmail.com>, Patty Craig <walelu67@yahoo.com>, Jared Fisher <Jared.Fisher@gmail.com>, Clive Harris <clivegharris@yahoo.com>, Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, Nancy Magnusson <magnunc@earthlink.net>, Hugh McGuinness <hdmcguinness@gmail.com>, Robert Ostrowski <rjostrowski@gmail.com>, Russ Ruffing <ruff2@verizon.net>, Dan Small <daniel_m_small@yahoo.com>

Hi members:

I think there is ample reason to discuss a re-opening of the MD Sandy Point Chestnut-collared Longspur. I have scanned and attached all of the archives and relevant discussions.

I am not personally advocating a re-opening; however, I think there is enough additional information to consider it. I think this question came up a few years ago; however, either there was not enough support from the members for a re-opening, or your humble scribe erred in not putting it on an earlier meeting agenda ... I'm not sure exactly what happened.

According to our policies, at least five voting members of the committee can agree to a re-opening. (The Chair and Secretary don't vote on these issues.)

Again, at the meeting, we do not need (or want) to resolve a new decision (accept or not accept), but rather just determine if there is a sufficient case (which we would need to articulate) to warrant a re-opening.

Thanks.

BTW, if anyone else has a candidate for re-opening discussions, it would be best to let me know ASAP so I can provide the relevant documentation to the members before the meeting.

Phil

=====
Date: Sun, 15 Feb 2015 13:24:48

Subject: Re: MD/DCRC Consideration of re-opening the 1970 MD CLO [MD/1983-030]

From: Robert Ostrowski <rjostrowski@gmail.com>

To: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>

Cc: Marcia Balestri <mebalestri@gmail.com>, Patty Craig <walelu67@yahoo.com>, Jared Fisher <Jared.Fisher@gmail.com>, Clive Harris <clivegharris@yahoo.com>, Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, Nancy Magnusson <magnunc@earthlink.net>, Hugh McGuinness <hdmcguinness@gmail.com>, Russ Ruffing <ruff2@verizon.net>, Dan Small <daniel_m_small@yahoo.com>

Likewise, as I did several years ago, I vote to re-open this record.

Rob

=====
Date: Mon, 16 Feb 2015 18:02:37

Subject: Re: MD/DCRC Consideration of re-opening the 1970 MD CCLO [MD/1983-030]

From: Clive Harris <clivegharris@yahoo.com>

Reply-To: Clive Harris <clivegharris@yahoo.com>

To: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>

Phil

I went through this and had trouble finding any new information in this that was not considered by the RC back in 1983. But I might've missed something. What is the new information you referred to?

Regards

Clive

=====
Date: Wed, 18 Feb 2015 15:38:59

Subject: Re: MD/DCRC Consideration of re-opening the 1970 MD CCLO [MD/1983-030]

From: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>

To: Clive Harris <clivegharris@yahoo.com>

Cc: Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>

Hi Clive:

My sense was that Marshall had solicited some reflections from Chan, even though his actual journal had not been located, in which case, perhaps nothing new was added. However, sometimes early records are re-opened in view of later records as "patterns of vagrancy" are better understood and this has been treated as "new information." (Remind me to cite the Black-headed Gull story at the Annual Meeting, for the benefit of all.) Some members take more conservative stances on "first" or early records, whereas others will say that a member should use the same approach and criteria on all reports, state first or not. That's always an interesting debate!

Rob has already voted to support a re-opening. I would suggest re-asking your question and opening a discussion of this via email with the members to allow everyone to get engaged before having to vote at the meeting. Ultimately, it's up to you guys ... I don't have a vested interest ...

I move a lot of information and data around here but don't always get a chance to ingest and fully reflect on what I am handling ... sort of a curse of the job ...

Thanks!

Phil

Appendix 2

Communications Related to Re-Opening of the 2006 Maryland Cape Verde Shearwater [MD/ 2006-264]

Background

Past committee members, Sherman Suter and Jonathan Alderfer (National Geographic Field Guides editor) have suggested that the committee consider re-opening its 2006 accepted record of Cape Verde Shearwater, the second record for North America. The email thread and information that supports consideration of a re-opening is provided in the thread, below. After a lengthy discussion, the committee used its "majority rule" procedure to decide to re-open this record. The vote was 5-4. However, before reviewing this reopened record, the committee requested that the Secretary place the photos on the web and ask for expert opinions from appropriate venues, including Birdwg01 (Frontiers of Bird Identification) and the Seabird listserv.

=====
Date: Mon, 9 Dec 2013 11:02:31 -0500
Subject: Cape Verde Shearwater
From: "Alderfer, Jonathan" <jalderfe@ngs.org>
To: Sherman Suter <ssuter@aaas.org>, Phillip Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>

Hey Sherman and Phil,

Just a quick note to ask about the Cape Verde Shearwater record for MD (Oct. 21, 2006). Nat Geo is updating Complete Birds of North America, coming out with a 2nd edition in fall 2014 and we are adding all the species that have been recorded in N.A. since 2005, including, of course, the splits. Ned Brinkley wrote most of those species accounts and I was surprised that for Cape Verde he did not include the MD record. When I asked him about it, he replied "Photos inconclusive - notes inconclusive." So, what gives with that record? The one photo that I saw was not great but I assume that the committee vetted others and saw written reports. Was this a contentious vote? Your thoughts?

Jonathan Alderfer
NG Birding Books

=====
Date: Mon, 09 Dec 2013 14:57:57 -0500
Subject: Re: Cape Verde Shearwater
From: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>
To: "Alderfer, Jonathan" <jalderfe@ngs.org>, Sherman Suter <ssuter@aaas.org>

Hi Jonathan and Sherman:

Hmmm ... not sure why Ned seems negative. Attached is a report from the MD/DCRC database on this record. There was one dissenting vote on the first round, but it sailed through the second time.

If you'd like me to email you the documentation file on this one, so you can judge it for yourself, just let me know.

Hope this helps ...
Phil

=====
Date: Tue, 10 Dec 2013 12:20:46 -0500
Subject: Re: Cape Verde Shearwater
From: "Alderfer, Jonathan" <jalderfe@ngs.org>
To: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>
Cc: Sherman Suter <ssuter@aaas.org>

Hi Phil,

Thanks for your kind offer to email me the documentation for the Cape Verde Shearwater record. I would like to see the file. Hope it's not too much trouble.

Best,
Jonathan Alderfer
NG Birding Books

=====
Date: Wed, 11 Dec 2013 17:24:22 -0500
Subject: Re: Cape Verde Shearwater
From: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>
To: "Alderfer, Jonathan" <jalderfe@ngs.org>
Cc: Sherman Suter <ssuter@aaas.org>

Hi Jonathan:

Here ya go ... This includes the published reports, submitted written reports, relevant emails, hardcopies of photos, and the ballots (both rounds).

If you want/need any of the original jpg images, just let me know.

If you should come to the conclusion that something is amiss with the ID, we would be most interested in that feedback.

Hope this helps!
Phil

=====
Date: Wed, 03 Dec 2014 19:31:11 -0600 (CST)
Subject: MD's Cape Verde Shearwater record
From: sjsuter29@verizon.net
To: pdavis@ix.netcom.com, bill_hubbick@yahoo.com

Hi Phil and Bill,
Jonathan Alderfer has sent me a short summary of his concerns about the October 2006 _Calonectris_ shearwater that was circulated and accepted as a Cape Verde [MD2006-264]. Because the record would be only the 2nd _C. edwardsii_ from North America, he and Jon Dunn have been wondering about it the past couple of years. I voted to accept it, but his interpretation of the photographs casts doubt on two of the features that I had felt strongly supported the ID. At least one of the outside experts who originally supported the ID seems to have second thoughts.

If I remember correctly, reconsideration of a closed record requires support of several (a majority?) of the members of the current committee. I would be happy to pass on Jonathan's email (and, if desired, a paragraph on my current thoughts on the record) to circulate among the members to see whether they are willing to reopen---or as the grounds for a discussion at the committee's next annual meeting.

Given that the experts' understanding of the field separation of Cory's, Scopoli's, and Cape Verde Shearwaters may have changed over the past 8 years, any reconsideration of the record probably should include checking back with those who provided the (overwhelmingly positive) outside advice in 2006. And Jonathan had a couple of suggestions for additional input.

To try to minimize the impact of a reconsideration on Phil's workload, I would be happy to handle as much of the paperwork as the committee felt comfortable leaving in my hands.

Thanks,
Sherman Suter
Port Republic MD 22307 / Alexandria VA 22307

=====
Date: Fri, 06 Feb 2015 14:31:16 -0500
Subject: Re: MD's Cape Verde Shearwater record
From: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>
To: Sherman Suter <sjsuter29@verizon.net>,
Cc: Bill Hubick <bill_hubbick@yahoo.com>

Hi Sherman:
I just realized that I had not already asked you for the backup information (yours and Jonathan's) related to this issue. I am already planning on this for an agenda item, so I would like to get all of the info from you and send it to the members in advance of the meeting. Our meeting this year is on Sat 02/28.

Sorry for not remembering this earlier.

Thanks!
Phil

=====
Date: Fri, 06 Feb 2015 22:35:38 -0600 (CST)
Subject: Re: MD's Cape Verde Shearwater record
From: sjsuter29@verizon.net
To: pdavis@ix.netcom.com

Hi Phil,
Attached is a one-page account of the reasons for initially Jonathan Alderfer and now my reservations about the 2006 MD record of Cape Verde Shearwater. I hope that it will at least convince a sufficient number of committee members that the record warrants reconsideration. Although I twice voted to accept the record, I now believe that the documentation is not sufficient to conclusively identify the bird---even if the most likely alternative to Cape Verde might be Scolopi's. Looking back, I feel that many of us (observers, outside commentators, and committee members) may have been swayed by interpretations consistent with Cape Verde that were not as well grounded as they seemed. It sounds as if at least some of those who supported the original identification are no longer convinced, a shift that may stem in part from an improved understanding of the field identification of the three taxa.

If the record is reopened and you want scans of Mullarney's illustrations, I can scan those from my copy of Petrels Night and Day. And could also make copies of the Jonathan and Jon's accounts of the three taxa from the two editions of their Complete Birds of North America.

Sincerely,
Sherman Suter
3995 Elder Road, Port Republic MD 20676

Argument for Reopening MD2006-264: Cape Verde Shearwater Sherman J Suter

Background:

The record is the second accepted for North America (after a 15 August 2004 sighting 48 km southeast of Cape Hatteras, NC), although there is also a 3 June 1993 (e.g., prior to the elevation of the taxa to full species status) sighting in a large seabird flock at Cape Hatteras. The Maryland bird was accepted 9-0 on 2nd round circulation (Package 116). The author of the single not-accept ballot on the first circulation (Package 109) had rotated off the committee by that time. While working on their second edition of the National Geographic's Complete Birds of North America, Jonathan Alderfer and Jon Dunn wondered whether the documentation provided sufficient support for a second North American record. Jonathan's exchanges with Steve Howell and Ned Brinkley indicated that other experts had reservations about the record as well. In the end, Jonathan and Jon included the record in their second edition. But after looking through the photographs and comments again last fall, Jonathan concluded that he had little faith in the record himself.

I am among those who voted to accept the record on both circulations, but Jonathan has raised four objections that taken together convince me that my "accept" vote was too hasty:

1. Examining the four digital images provided by George Jett, Jonathan does not find any definite cut off of white at the greater primary coverts. In fact, he believes the photos actually indicate some extension of white down onto the primaries, as in Scopoli's Shearwater [*Calonectris diomedea diomedea*]. For example, some white extension down p10 on the left wing on photo #3 and perhaps onto the other outer primaries as well. Given the darkness of the underwings in the photos due to backlighting, he wonders how so many people came to a firm conclusion that the white is clearly cut off.
2. Because of the intense backlighting, the photographs do not provide certain indication of the color of the bill. And given the brevity of the sighting (only 10 to 15seconds "reasonably viewable for plumage details), the observers were unlikely to have been able to conclusively determine bill color either. Jonathan found it "a leap of faith to believe that a COSH would have shown obvious "banana yellow" coloration under those conditions" as Jett claimed in his write up. Rather, one of the dorsal images seems to show some yellow. Paul O'Brien had in fact commented that "the photos don't allow elimination of pale yellow, which is suggested in at least one shot."
3. Although many reviewers and observers cited the thin bill and narrow wings as diagnostic of Cape Verde Shearwater, intense backlighting has the effect of eating away the edges of an image. Thus the thin appearance of the bills (as in photo 3) and to a lesser extent the wings (because they are much broader to begin with) may be an artifact of the lighting. And a thinner bill and narrower wings (in comparison with Cory's) would also be consistent with Scopoli's.
4. The decision in favor of Cape Verde Shearwater is weakened by the absence of a thorough comparison with Scopoli's. In his Petrels, Albatrosses, and Storm-Petrels of North America: A Photographic Guide, Steve Howell notes that Scopoli's "resembles a smaller, more lightly built Cory's with narrower wings, a smaller head and bill, and distinct white basal tongues under the primaries (especially p10)" and also "slightly quicker wingbeats that may at times suggest Great Shearwater."

If the committee is willing to reconsider the record, Jonathan and I believe that it would be worth soliciting new comments from Ned Brinkley, Brian Patteson, Steve Howell, Killian Mullarney, and perhaps others who provided impressions of the record earlier. (Mullarney has studied Cape Verde and provided excellent paintings of all three taxa for Petrels Night and Day.) The experts' understanding of the identification of the three taxa may have shifted (and, one hopes, improved) over the past decade.

Sincerely,

Sherman J Suter
3995 Elder Rd, Port Republic MD 20676 sjsuter29@verizon.net

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Date: Mon, 09 Feb 2015 13:52:43 -0500
Subject: Re: MD's Cape Verde Shearwater record
From: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>
To: Sherman Suter <sjsuter29@verizon.net>
Cc: Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>

Hi Sherman:

Thanks for forwarding this. I will pass it on to the current members right away so they have time to cogitate upon it before the meeting.

I have the references you mentioned. I'll include them with the write-up.

Thanks for your follow-up on this!
Phil

Date: Mon, 09 Feb 2015 13:59:08 -0500
Subject: Fwd: Re: MD's Cape Verde Shearwater record
From: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>

To: Marcia Balestri <mebalestri@gmail.com>, Patty Craig <walelu67@yahoo.com>, Jared Fisher <Jared.Fisher@gmail.com>, Clive Harris <clivegharris@yahoo.com>, Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, Nancy Magnusson <magnunc@earthlink.net>, Hugh McGuinness <hdmcguinness@gmail.com>, Robert Ostrowski <rjostrowski@gmail.com>, Russ Ruffing <ruff2@verizon.net>, Dan Small <daniel_m_small@yahoo.com>

Hi members:

Attached is the email thread and attachment from Sherman Suter and Jonathan Alderfer making the case for re-opening the MD Cape Verde Shearwater record.

I have also attached copies of the Jonathan's accounts from the 2nd edition of the Complete Birds of NA and also the Mullarney plates.

Remember ... at the meeting, all we have to do is to determine if there are at least five members who support re-opening the record; we don't have to actual resolve any ID discrepancy at the meeting.

Thanks!

Phil

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Date: Tue, 10 Feb 2015 00:27:52 +0000 (UTC)
Subject: Re: Fwd: Re: MD's Cape Verde Shearwater record
From: Clive Harris <clivegharris@yahoo.com>

To: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>, Marcia Balestri <mebalestri@gmail.com>, Patty Craig <walelu67@yahoo.com>, Jared Fisher <Jared.Fisher@gmail.com>, Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, Nancy Magnusson <magnunc@earthlink.net>, Hugh McGuinness <hdmcguinness@gmail.com>, Robert Ostrowski <rjostrowski@gmail.com>, Russ Ruffing <ruff2@verizon.net>, Dan Small <daniel_m_small@yahoo.com>

Phil

Since the case for reopening seems to hinge on an assessment of the field characteristics of the bird in question and in part whether or not Scopoli's was properly eliminated, can we see the decision package and associated material? For all I know people considered the points raised below at the time.

Incidentally, scanning through Howell's "Petrels [et]c of NA" its easy to find photos of Cape Verde with yellowish-tinged bills (duller than Cory's for sure but could easily show as a pale yellow) so I am not sure the points cited on the bill color are all that relevant ...but Howell does note a record of Cape Verde from NC and a report from MD so I guess he's not convinced.

Regards

Clive

=====
Date: Tue, 10 Feb 2015 02:59:56 -0500
From: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>
Subject: Re: Fwd: Re: MD's Cape Verde Shearwater record

To: Clive Harris <clivegharris@yahoo.com>, Marcia Balestri <mebalestri@gmail.com>, Patty Craig <walelu67@yahoo.com>, Jared Fisher <Jared.Fisher@gmail.com>, Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, Nancy Magnusson <magnunc@earthlink.net>, Hugh McGuinness <hdmcguinness@gmail.com>, Robert Ostrowski <rjostrowski@gmail.com>, Russ Ruffing <ruff2@verizon.net>, Dan Small <daniel_m_small@yahoo.com>

Hi Clive, et al.

Good point. Attached is a scanned copy of the previous record documentation and the originals of three (but not four) of George Jett's images.

Reminder: The standard that we are looking at now is just is there a sufficient case to reopen the record. We probably don't want to drive towards a final decision at this point.

Thanks.

Phil

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Date: Sun, 15 Feb 2015 13:22:46 -0500
Subject: Re: Fwd: Re: MD's Cape Verde Shearwater record
From: Robert Ostrowski <rjostrowski@gmail.com>

To: Phil Davis <pdavis@ix.netcom.com>
Cc: Clive Harris <clivegharris@yahoo.com>, Marcia Balestri <mebalestri@gmail.com>, Patty Craig <walelu67@yahoo.com>, Jared Fisher <Jared.Fisher@gmail.com>, Bill Hubick <bill_hubick@yahoo.com>, Nancy Magnusson <magnunc@earthlink.net>, Hugh McGuinness <hdmcguinness@gmail.com>, Russ Ruffing <ruff2@verizon.net>, Dan Small <daniel_m_small@yahoo.com>

Hi Phil,

Since I won't be able to attend the annual meeting in person, I want to just go ahead and cast my vote now for re-opening the record. Aside from any valid discussions we could have on the finer points of ID, I think the skepticism expressed by some of the foremost experts taken with the magnitude of the record and perhaps the comparative unfamiliarity that we had of the taxon at the time is enough for me to vote this way. I don't think we should always be swayed by popular opinion, but there's no harm in taking another look and being open to criticism.

Thanks!
Rob

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