

Minutes of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee: meeting of 28 February 2021

Present: Geoff Williamson (Secretary), Matt Fraker, Davida Kalina, Walter Marcisz, Adam Sell, Doug Stotz, Paul Sweet (Vice Secretary)

Absent: none

This meeting of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee (the "Committee") was called to order at 12:00 PM via Zoom videoconference. There being seven voting members present, quorum was met to transact business.

Adam Sell moved and Paul Sweet seconded to approve the minutes of the 20 February 2020 meeting. They were approved by unanimous consent.

Members whose terms were expiring were Adam Sell and Doug Stotz. Adam Sell was eligible to serve a second term. Geoff Williamson nominated Stephanie Beilke and Adam Sell as candidates to fill the vacant positions. Adam Sell was willing to serve if elected. The willingness of Stephanie Beilke to serve if elected was not yet known, but she informed Geoff Williamson that she would know within a week. Both Stephanie Beilke and Adam Sell were elected by unanimous vote to serve a three year term during 2021-2023, with Beilke's case conditioned on her agreeing to serve.

Paul Sweet nominated Geoff Williamson to serve as Secretary for 2021, and Williamson was elected by unanimous vote.

Walter Marcisz nominated and Adam Sell seconded Paul Sweet for the position of Vice-Secretary. Paul Sweet indicated he was willing to serve. He was elected by unanimous vote.

Geoff Williamson indicated that his Secretary's Report for 2020 had been distributed to the Committee.

Paul Sweet presented the work of the Archives Subcommittee (Subcommittee Chair: Paul Sweet; other committee members: Adam Sell, Doug Stotz). He noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had prevented any work with the physical archives at the Field Museum. He led a discussion about materials that IORC would archive in instances of records drawn from eBird and iNat information. He stated that maintaining at least two portable backup copies of the electronic archives, kept in separate locations, was important.

The Committee considered changes to the Review List.

1. Walter Marcisz moved and Davida Kalina seconded to remove Neotropical Cormorant from the Review List. After discussion, the motion passed by unanimous vote.
2. Walter Marcisz moved and Doug Stotz seconded to remove White-winged Dove from the Review List. After discussion, the motion passed by unanimous vote.
3. The Committee discussed the possibility to remove Pacific Loon and/or Townsend's Solitaire from Review List, but after discussion there was no motion to do so.

Record 2019-022 (Little Gull), which is awaiting its 4th circulation, was discussed by the Committee. This record will be circulated for evaluation and voting (4th circulation) among the Committee members present for the discussion.

Geoff Williamson pointed out that 2019-013 (Swainson's Warbler 10 May 2019, Sexton Creek, Alexander County) and 2019-073 (Swainson's Warbler 5 May 2019, Sexton Creek, Alexander County) may warrant merger. The Committee directed the Secretary to contact the documenters for these records to secure a more precise location of the respective observation of the birds in each instance so that a determination can be made as to whether merger is appropriate.

The Committee discussed information and photographs provided to the Secretary by Steven Bailey regarding a very large woodcock taken by hunters in Illinois. The Committee's sense was that the poor resolution of the photographs presented challenges for ascertaining the specific identify of the large woodcock. The Committee felt that encouraging submission of the material would be warranted if better photographs became available.

The Committee was informed of records added to the Suspense File during 2020 and the early part of 2021.

Revisions to sections VII(A), (F), and (G), insertion of a new section between current sections VII(G) and (H), and addition of a new section VIII (Archives) were proposed by Geoff Williamson. These revisions concerned the following.

1. Minimal standards for evidence in records for the purpose of archiving (section VII(A)).
2. Redefinition of voting classes (section VII(G)) together with new definitions of "classes of records" along with the method to determine to which class a record belongs (new section inserted between current sections VII(G) and (H)).
3. The assignment of record numbers to all received documentary material (section VII(F)) and the replacement of the suspense file with an "unreviewed" class for records (section VII(G)).
4. Establishment of fundamental operating guidelines regarding the Committee's archives (new section VIII).

The proposed bylaws revision was modified to adjust the new voting and record class of unaccepted for archiving standards to be one of unaccepted for reasons other than origin or identification.

The modified proposal to amend the bylaws was adopted by unanimous consent.

The Committee discussed how to handle records involving information in eBird checklists in situations where the material content of those checklists is not submitted directly to the Committee. The sense of the Committee was that the following principles are appropriate to follow.

1. In general, eBird checklists and their associated Macaulay Library assets may be treated similarly to specimens in museum collections.
2. Any individual, including IORC Members and the IORC Secretary, may submit an eBird checklist or checklists as part of an IORC record. In such instances, the checklist identifier and identifiers

for all associated Macaulay Library assets will be noted in the record. The current URL for the checklist will be noted in the record. As with any record, the following details as provided in the eBird checklist are to be noted in the record: species involved, the number of individuals, the date(s) of observation, the observation location (including county), and the observer(s) name(s).

3. For IORC records for which material from eBird checklists not yet submitted to be part of the record is pertinent for the record's review, the Secretary or any Member is encouraged to submit such checklists to be part of the review. Such submission may occur during a circulation of the record. The Secretary is encouraged to submit such additional eBird checklists prior to circulation of the record.
4. A facsimile (e.g. "print to pdf") of the text portion of an eBird checklist may be included in IORC's archives, but the Committee deems this not to be necessary.
5. Photographs, audio recordings, video recordings, or other similar material associated with an eBird checklist will not be included in IORC's archives of the record, nor shall any facsimile of such material.
6. The Committee desires that a listing of all eBird checklists and associated Macaulay Library assets used by any member in adjudication of records be included as part of the record material in the archives.

The Committee discussed the facts that material in eBird checklists may be changed at any time by the individual who submitted the checklist and that Macaulay Library assets may be deleted at any time by their contributors. The Committee noted that these facts are somewhat problematic for the preservation of material associated with an IORC record.

The Committee briefly discussed the consideration of subspecific and hybrid forms. The Committee expressed general comfort with maintaining the present practice of case-by-case determination of whether such records will be considered.

The Committee briefly discussed the problems that current procedures and voting categories pose for consideration of breeding records. The Committee was receptive to development of clearer procedures to include in the bylaws.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.