

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-065

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Fraker

Date of review: 3/30

Circulation number: 2nd circulation [resubmission]

Vote: A-E(ph)

Comments: [required as this is a 2nd circulation]

I do like what I see in these pics for Mottled Duck, combined with the observer and his record for detail.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-065

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Davida Kalina

Date of review: 15 April 2019

Circulation number: 2nd circulation [resubmission]

Vote: U-I

Comments: [required as this is a 2nd circulation]

From my own limited experience with Mottled Ducks in Florida and Texas, I can relate to the value of good-quality photos in dealing with MallardxMottled Duck hybrids. The low-quality photo supplied with the resubmission appears to favor MODU over ABDU, but it cannot rule out a MALLxMODU hybrid. The written submission rules out a male MALLxMODU hybrid on the basis of lack of a curled center tail feather. But a female hybrid cannot be ruled out, since the submitter never observed the entire speculum. On this basis, I am voting to reject the record.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-065

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Walter Marcisz

Date of review: 4-18-19

Circulation number: 2nd circulation [resubmission]

Vote: A-E (photo)

Comments: [required as this is a 2nd circulation]

During the previous circulation I voted to reject this record based on the detailed Leukering/Pranty article “Mottled Duck Hybridization” (eBird, 2015), which indicates that characteristics to look for in hybrids include heavy cheek streaking, a very long dark eyeline, a reduced gape spot, paleness in the tail, a reddish or chestnut wash on the breast (males), and slightly curved central rectrices (males). Based on that article, I felt that Bohlen’s photos were too blurry to make any assessment of the amount of cheek streaking, but after looking at many study skins of presumed “pure” (non-hybrid) Mottled Ducks at the FMNH during the last IORC meeting, I believe that the Leukering/Pranty article goes a little overboard in its assessments. Specifically, amount of head-streaking doesn’t seem to be a significant issue – some Mottled Ducks have a significant amount of head-streaking, others have virtually none at all. A chestnut wash on the breast of male hybrids was another red flag mentioned in the Leukering/Pranty article, but at the FMNH we also saw some “pure” male Mottled Ducks that also showed this character. Therefore, I now believe that the characteristics shown in Bohlen’s photos (black gape spot, dark warm-brown body plumage, dark tail) are sufficient to identify the bird as a Mottled Duck and I am changing my vote to accept.

Literature Cited:

Leukering, T and B Pranty (2015). Mottled Duck Hybridization. eBird.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-065

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Adam Sell

Date of review: 4/26/19

Circulation number: 2nd circulation [resubmission]

Vote: U-I

Comments: I still think, even with the second photo, that there isn't enough to rule hybridization with a Mallard. With the explosion of hybrids coming out of the Florida area, I think extra caution is needed with this complex, especially in light of more recent literature that further complicates the issue. No doubt that the observer is excellent in the field, and this very well could be a Mottled Duck, but I still feel uncomfortable voting to accept considering the amount of new information that has come to light regarding the identification of Mottled Ducks.

For a good read on the topic, please check out the 2015 [Leukering/Pranty article](#) that both Paul and Walter referenced.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-065

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Douglas Stotz

Date of review: 27 May 2019

Circulation number: 2nd circulation [resubmission]

Vote: A-E(photo)

Comments: [required as this is a 2nd circulation]

I think the new photo along with Bohlen's additional discussion convinces me that this bird is truly a Mottled Duck and not a hybrid. It may be that hybrids are common enough that we'll never be sure about any Mottled Duck. This record seems like about as good as we can reasonably expect.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-065

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Paul Sweet

Date of review: 6/22/19

Circulation number: 2nd circulation [resubmission]

Vote: U-I

Comments: [required as this is a 2nd circulation]

I don't see anything new in either the documentation or the comments since the last circulation.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-065

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Geoffrey A. Williamson

Date of review: 25 March 2019

Circulation number: 2nd circulation [resubmission]

Vote: A-S(1)

Comments: [required as this is a 2nd circulation]

I have been generally very cautious about accepting Mottled Duck records, and I do feel that the identification pitfalls in the associated group are underappreciated within the Illinois birding community. However, in this case I, at least presently, feel that there is suitable justification for a vote to accept. I have been all over the map in my votes, and I am now going to back to my original A-S with this second go-around with the additional photo.

I don't think the photos alone are enough to exclude a hybrid possibility. But the combination of the set of photos and Bohlen's remarks, the photos make a good case for Mottled Duck. A missing element is a view of the spread wing. Nonetheless, I am okay to accept without this.

I will also add that at the February 2019 meeting of IORC, we examined the collection of Mottled Duck skins. I was struck by the amount of variation in cheek streaking. Some were very plain, and some had quite a bit of streaking in the cheek. These latter seemed, based on date and site of collection, to be good Mottled Ducks.