

APPENDIX A-JUDGING THE STATUS OF EXOTIC SPECIES IN FLORIDA

1. Philosophy: The Committee follows a philosophy about Exotic species similar to that of the AOU and most other ornithological organizations. Exotic birds are not really part of the avifauna and do not have a place on the State List until they are demonstrated to have or be part of an established, self-supporting population breeding freely in the wild. Information on the occurrence of unestablished Exotics has value, however, particularly for species whose ecological requirements are such that potentially they might become Established in Florida.
2. Exotic Report log. As indicated in Duties of the Secretary paragraph 1.c., the Secretary shall maintain a log of Reports of Exotic species in Florida regardless of Establishment. This log is primarily intended for Reports provided to the Committee, but the Secretary may also enter published but unrepresented Reports of species in Florida considered Exotic, rather than entering them into the published claim log referred to under Secretary's Duties paragraph 2.a. (intended for circulatable Reports), or ignoring them altogether. The Secretary shall bring the Exotic Report log and underlying files to each Committee Meeting. As an agenda item, the Committee shall review the log and file and decide on a case-by-case basis whether to agree with the Secretary's designation, or to treat a given Report as possibly pertaining to Natural Appearance. A vote by two members of the Committee shall deny continued treatment of the report as Exotic. Reports denied continuing Exotic treatment shall be transferred to the appropriate log: circulatable Reports, precirculatable Reports, or published claims, and shall be handled accordingly. Reports retaining Exotic treatment shall be logged out to the Society's archives, along with each page of the log itself as all items on that page are disposed of. If sent to the archives, in the case of provided Reports, the Secretary shall write a letter of acknowledgment and disposition to the provider, making clear that identification or provenance.
3. Criteria for Establishment. An exotic species (see Glossary) may appear in Florida because of deliberate transport and release by humans, or because of inadvertent escape from captivity. Some of these species may establish feral populations in one part of Florida and then spread to other parts of the state, or may persist locally as a small population indefinitely. Other such local groups may disappear quickly, or only after a prolonged period of persistence. Different exotic species will respond differently to release into Florida environments because of variation among them in their physiological, ecological, and behavioral characteristics and requirements, which will ordinarily be largely unknown or speculative. An exotic species will be deemed "established" in Florida if a stable or increasing population of that species has persisted continuously in one or more areas for at least 15 years (Persistence Criterion) and meets one or both of the following additional criteria:
 - o a. An exotic species that has exhibited rapid population growth by widely evident natural reproduction, accompanied by evidence of extensive range expansion within (and perhaps beyond) Florida, may be deemed "established." The example of the Eurasian Collared-Dove in Florida during the late 20th century provides a model application of this rule (Population Growth and Range Expansion criteria), even though the origin of this species in the state may be in doubt. See 3b for publication requirement

- b. An exotic species for which there is acceptable evidence that successful nesting (fledged young) is a characteristic of one or more local populations of several hundred individuals, that this nesting activity is recruiting young adults into the population(s), that (if applicable) the population(s) have exhibited resilience in the face of major perturbations such as hurricanes or habitat disruptions, and that there is little or no evidence that ongoing releases play a significant role in population maintenance, may be deemed “established,” but only after such evidence as is available has been published in at least one scientific source (e.g., peer-reviewed journal, technical book), or after this evidence has been amassed by a Committee member or some other interested individual and reviewed by the Committee. In the last instance, a detailed analysis of the issue must be published in a suitable scientific source if a judgment of Establishment is rendered by the Committee. Furthermore, by extension, the requirement for publication applies to species considered “established” under section 3a as well.
 - c. Species that occur or have occurred in Florida as a result of unassisted vagrancy or dispersal from an Exotic population outside Florida, which clearly meets all tests of Establishment within their range, shall be evaluated as if they were Naturally Appearing even though they are Exotic. Thus, the placement of the House Finch on the State List, for example, does not require that it be evaluated for Establishment within Florida.
- 4. Criteria for Disestablishment: A species designated as an Established Exotic on the State List shall be considered disestablished if the following applies: the Committee determines that the exotic species, which was previously deemed to have been established as a viable population with a definable range in Florida, has become naturally extirpated in that range.
- 5. Review procedures. The Committee shall review the status of any Exotic species if a credible scientific publication suggests that its status on the State List (present as Established, or absent) is incorrect, or if any 5 members of the Committee requests a review. A review shall also be undertaken if a credible scientific publication suggests that the taxonomic treatment of an Established Exotic on the State List may be incorrect, notwithstanding present treatment by the AOU. The Committee shall follow the following special procedures in reviewing the status of an Exotic species in Florida in addition to the normal procedures for reviewing Reports which shall include using the deliberation progress log as appropriate to monitor review of these matters:
 - a. When reviewing an Exotic species for a new designation of Established as set forth above in paragraph 3.ff.; whether the population’s identity and taxonomy is adequately known and Verifiable; and whether these subjects are adequately documented in a credible scientific publication. If adequate documentation does not exist, the Committee may not Vote until such documentation is published, but it should encourage the Society’s members or others, including the Committee’s own members, to undertake such research and to publish the results. The Vote thresholds to reach a Decision are the same as for Naturally Appearing vagrants.
 - b. When reviewing an Established Exotic for possible Disestablishment, the Committee shall first publish a call for evidence of the continued persistence of a viable population of that species in Florida and should allow sufficient time, not

less than one year, for that evidence to be collected and provided by the Society's members and others. If an Established Exotic fails to meet the criteria set forth above in paragraph 3.ff., the Committee shall make a further determination whether the species should be treated under paragraph 4.a. as never having been Established, or under 4.b. as formerly Established. Voting thresholds to reach a Decision shall be the same as for other matters. If the Committee decides that paragraph 4.a. applies, the species shall be removed from the State List. If the Committee determines that paragraph 4.b. applies, the species shall be retained on the State List but annotated that a viable population no longer exists.

- c. When reviewing as Established Exotic for possibly incorrect taxonomic treatment, the Committee shall examine all salient literature, specimens both from natural populations and from those Established in Florida, and all other relevant material. If, after this review, the sense of the Committee is that the current taxonomic treatment by the AOU Check-List of the population Established in Florida is incorrect, it shall encourage FOS members, other ornithologists, or its own members to publish a scholarly paper that sets forth the issues and proposes a resolution. Upon publication of such material, the Committee shall call it to the attention of the AOU Check-List Committee and request their review if such review has not already been undertaken. The Records Committee shall be bound by the published taxonomic and nomenclatural treatment in the AOU Check-List and its supplements.