

## Minutes of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee: Meeting on 18 January 2025

Present: Geoff Williamson (Secretary), Nathan Goldberg, Steve Huggins, Davida Kalina (Vice Secretary), Terry Walsh, Dan Williams, Kyle Wiktor

Absent: none

This meeting of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee (the "Committee") was called to order at 1:04 PM via videoconference. There being seven voting members present, quorum was met to transact business.

Goldberg moved and Williams seconded that the minutes of the 24 July 2024 meeting be approved. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Williamson presented his Secretary's report for 2024.

The status of IORC's archives was discussed. Goldberg reported that he has been working with Doug Stotz to obtain from him the IORC materials from Stotz's time as IORC secretary. The Committee requested that Goldberg request that Stotz provide these before the end of March 2025. Williamson noted that the photographic material that has been stored in the Field Museum of Natural History was digitized some time ago but that he is unsure as to where in the Field Museum the original photographic material. Williamson also noted that there is a body of paper archives at the Field Museum that needs to be catalogued at the least or digitized.

There were no proposed changes to the Review List. However, several members requested that at the next IORC meeting, a proposal be considered to place American Goshawk on the Review List for observations that take place away from the established hawk watches.

Williamson informed the Committee of the records placed during 2024 in the "Suspense File" (the listing of IORC records that the Secretary has opted not to review). The rationale behind the suspense file, including the relevant passages in the IORC bylaws, were discussed.

The Committee discussed record 2023-084 (Long-tailed Jaeger), which is moving into its 4th circulation. The record will be circulated among the members in attendance at this 18 Jan 2025 meeting.

The Committee discussed record 2017-090 (Clapper Rail), which is to undergo its 1st circulation. This record involves observation of a large rail that at the time was concluded to be a King Rail, with the documentary evidence entirely within eBird. Michael O'Brien marked several of the photographs as misidentified, and the record went back into eBird's review queue and from there into IORC consideration. The taxonomy and natural history of the collection of forms previously lumped together under the name Clapper Rail were briefly reviewed. The record will be circulated among the members in attendance at this 18 Jan 2025 meeting. Williamson will be sure that all identification comments, photographs, and audio recordings available within the eBird database for this sighting are included in the IORC record material prior to circulation.

The Committee discussed record 2024-068 (Short-tailed Shearwater), which is to undergo its 1st circulation. Williamson noted that an article regarding separation of Sooty Shearwater and Short-tailed Shearwater is available in *Birding* vol. 40 no. 2. Goldberg referred the Committee to a video by Brandon Holden that conveys Holden's views on why Short-tailed Shearwaters are starting to appear on the Great Lakes. The record will be circulated among the members in attendance at this 18 Jan 2025 meeting.

The Committee discussed record 2022-042 (Swainson's Warbler, accepted). Goldberg conveyed to the Committee information he had obtained regarding (1) attempts by southern Illinois birders to relocate the bird in this record shortly after its initial report, (2) the status of several warbler species at the location of the observation that were both included and not included in the eBird checklist that comprised the documentary evidence for this record, (3) and the substance of his communications with individuals who know the observer in this record. Given the receipt of this new information regarding the record, the record will be circulated among the members in attendance at this 18 Jan 2025 meeting.

The Committee discussed record 2001-057 (Vega Gull), the materials for which had been received by IORC some two dozen years ago, without the record having been circulated. The Committee recommended that opinions be obtained from experts such as Peter Adriaens, Amar Ayyash, Alvaro Jaramillo, and Paul Lehmann. Larry Balch and Sulli Gibson were also mentioned as individuals with whom the Committee could consult. After receipt of external opinions, the record will be circulated.

Williamson reviewed with the Committee a list of various projects, all on a back burner currently, for improving the functioning of IORC.

A list of all Mew Gull records was presented by Williamson. The vast majority of these were submitted as Mew Gull. Some were originally submitted as the (then) subspecies level, with some of those accepted as the *brachyrhynchus* subspecies (now Short-billed Gull) and one rejected as the *canus* subspecies (now Common Gull subspecies *canus*). Since the split of Mew Gull into Short-billed Gull and Common Gull, re-submission of two of these original Mew Gull records as Common Gull has occurred. Those records have not yet been circulated due to materials pertaining to those records being in the possession of Doug Stotz and not currently available for inclusion with circulated materials. The Committee directed the Secretary to wait until the end of March 2025, which is the deadline that was requested for Stotz to turn over to IORC the various materials in his possession, and then circulate the records at that time with whatever materials is available.

Members whose terms were expiring were Davida Kalina and Kyle Wiktor. Wiktor was eligible to serve another consecutive term, but Kalina was not. Candidates nominated by members prior to this included Matthew Cvetas and Jacob Drucker (nominated by Goldberg) and Steve Freed and Kyle Wiktor (nominated by Kalina), with all willing to serve if elected. Each of the seven members present at the meeting was instructed to cast one vote for each of two distinct members from this list. The 14 votes cast were tallied as five each for Freed and Wiktor and two each for Cvetas and Drucker. Steve Freed and Kyle Wiktor were thus each elected to a three-year term.

Geoff Williamson was nominated by Williams prior to the meeting as Secretary for 2025, and he expressed willingness to serve if re-elected. He was elected by unanimous vote.

Geoff Williamson nominated Nathan Goldberg for the position of Vice-Secretary for 2025. Goldberg indicated willingness to serve and was elected by unanimous vote.

The list of available IORC alternates was considered by the Committee. Given the relative infrequency with which alternates have been called to duty, the Committee decided to reduce the current list to the following three individuals: Bob Hughes, Walter Marcisz, and Adam Sell. Williamson will confirm with each of these individuals their willingness to serve as alternates.

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 PM.

DRAFT