

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-016

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Robert Hughes

Date of review: 02/28/2020

Circulation number: 1st [resubmission]

Vote: U-I

Comments:

An examination of the photos shows evidence of hybridization with Mallards, namely, curled central uppertail coverts and white in the tail.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-016

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Davida Kalina

Date of review: 19 February 2020

Circulation number: 1st [resubmission]

Vote: U-I

Comments:

In submitted photos #1, 2, and 5, the white band on the trailing edge of the speculum is too broad for Mottled Duck, but is consistent with a MODUxMALL hybrid. In submitted photos #3 and 4, the slightly up-curved tail feathers are also consistent with a MODUxMALL hybrid.

I am voting to reject this submission based on the fact that MODUxMALL hybrids cannot be ruled out.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-016

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Walter Marcisz

Date of review: 2-27-20

Circulation number: 1st [resubmission]

Vote: U-I

Comments:

Two individual birds are shown in the series of five photos taken by Luis Munoz. Based on their bright yellow bills, both are apparently males. One of the individuals appears to be very slightly (but distinctly) larger and paler than the other. One of the birds also shows a very broad white trailing edge to the secondaries, the other less so. It is my suspicion that the larger, paler bird has the broader white trailing edge to the secondaries. This assessment is based on a comparison of the plumages of the two birds (in Photos #3 & #4, the smaller bird shows a pale diagonal line on the left side of the dark portion of the neck exactly at the point where it meets the buffy portion of the upper neck & head; but this pale diagonal line does not show on the left side of the neck in the bird with a broad trailing white secondary edge in Photo #5). Per Leukering & Pranty (2015): "...on Mottled Duck, the white tips are obviously narrower than the posterior black speculum border. *"A putative Mottled Duck with wide white tips to either or both of the greater coverts and secondaries is almost certainly of mixed parentage."* Based on this character alone, the individual shown in Photo #5 is almost certainly a hybrid. Also per Leukering & Pranty (2015): "...*the curled aspect to the central retrices in male Mallards seems to be a strongly dominant trait that is expressed in most males of mixed parentage to a greater or lesser extent.*" The larger (right) bird in Photo #3 clearly shows this characteristic and therefore is most likely a hybrid. The smaller (left) bird in Photo #4 may or may not also show this characteristic – it is difficult to be certain from the photo. Again, per Leukering & Pranty (2015): "...*whitish in the tail is often the single character expressed in hybrids that is most noticeable and most quickly damning when looking at a putative Mottled Duck.*" To my eyes, both birds at least appear to show some whitish in the retrices in Photos #3 & #4, suggesting that both are hybrids. In conclusion, I strongly believe that the larger, paler bird is a hybrid, and the available evidence suggests that the smaller, darker bird may be a hybrid as well. I also wonder if these two closely-associating males originated from the same family group. I vote to reject.

Literature cited:

[Leukering, T and B Pranty \(2015\)](#). Mottled Duck Hybridization. eBird

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-016

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Adam Sell

Date of review: 3/1/20

Circulation number: 1st [resubmission]

Vote: U-I

Comments: Not sure how we missed it the first time. I guess our minds weren't as clued into the fact that hybridization must always be taken into consideration. The amount of white in the speculum and the obvious curled central rectrices are the most evident marks of these being hybridized with Mallards.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-016

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Douglas Stotz

Date of review: 19 February 2020

Circulation number: 1st [resubmission]

Vote: U-I

Comments: I think that the photos show evidence of hybridization in both birds with curled tail feathers, a lot of white in speculum and reddish tones in the plumage of the necks and breast. I have to vote against accepting these birds as Mottled Ducks.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-016

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Paul Sweet

Date of review: 2/20/20

Circulation number: 1st [resubmission]

Vote: U-I

Comments: After examining the abundance of Mottled X Mallard hybrids in Florida and their ID issues, it's clear that the curled uppertail coverts on these birds indicates hybrid ancestry. It is concerning that the rather sudden uptick in Mottled Duck records in Illinois appears to coincide with a dramatic increase in Florida hybrid populations.

IORC EVALUATION FORM

Record #: 2013-016

Name of bird form: Mottled Duck

Committee member name: Geoffrey A. Williamson

Date of review: 18 February 2020

Circulation number: 1st [resubmission]

Vote: U-I

Comments:

For the reasons noted in the request for resubmission (both birds showing curled tail feathers, the reddish cast to the chest area of both birds, and the broad white speculum border of at least one of the two birds), I feel we cannot safely conclude that either bird is a pure Mottled Duck.