

BYLAWS OF THE NEW YORK STATE AVIAN RECORDS COMMITTEE

As Passed By The Council of Delegates of the Federation
Of New York State Bird Clubs on Saturday, October 1, 1977

- I. The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, recognizing the proliferation of sight reports of birds in New York State, the increasing dependence on such records due to legal and ethical restrictions on collecting, and the need for documentation and evaluation of such reports, hereby establishes a committee to perform this evaluation to be known as the New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC). A "report" as used in this writing, refers to an observation submitted voluntarily to the committee which on being accepted is then referred to as a "record." Non-acceptance does not preclude publication anywhere, anytime.
- II. **Duties and Responsibilities.** NYSARC will:
 - A. Establish procedures for submitting reports to NYSARC.
 - B. Publish a list of species or types of reports which are desired or not desired, as appropriate.
 - C. Prepare reports of its proceedings and publish the results of its work periodically in *The Kingbird*, including rejected reports without identifying the observers.
- III. **Composition.**
 - A. NYSARC will consist of five members appointed by the President of the Federation with consideration of geographical representation. NYSARC will select from among themselves a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman. Terms of office will be for five years, but the first committee will have one member appointed to a one-year term, another two years, another three years, another four years, and one for five years.
 - B. The Chairman may appoint a non-voting secretary if necessary.
- IV. **Chairman.**

The Chairman will perform the functions usually associated with such office.
- V. **Members.**
 - A. Each member will separately study the reports received by NYSARC and submit an opinion as to their acceptability. Members will assist the Chairman in preparation of NYSARC reports.

- B. Members will clearly indicate their reasons for acceptance or rejection of each report. Opinions should be frank, unbiased, and professional, based on the member's best judgment. Such opinions will be confidential and not be made public at any time.
 - C. Member's opinions will *not* be discussed with other members until the report has been reviewed by all members of NYSARC.
 - D. Members will not render opinions on their own submitted reports. These will be evaluated by the remainder of the members.
- VI. **Suggested Procedures.** (These are guidelines which, it is hoped, will be followed by the committee.)
- A. The Chairman may assign numbers to each report to replace the observers' names so that each report will be anonymous and thus judged on its intrinsic merits alone.
 - B. **Reports.**
 - 1. Should be submitted on a standard form. Such forms will be made available to clubs and individuals throughout the state.
 - 2. Details of reports should be submitted on one or more 8 and 1/2 x 11 inch pages, no more than one report per page.
 - 3. If available, photographs should be submitted with reports. Photographs should include as much technical photographic data as possible.
 - 4. If reports are substantiated by tape recording(s) and/or specimen(s), they should indicate where said evidence is deposited.
 - 5. All reports submitted to NYSARC will be retained by the committee and shall be available for study by interested persons.
 - C. Members may consult other persons who may have special knowledge of the species or individual bird in question.
 - D. **Evaluation of reports.**
 - 1. Reports substantiated by specimens or tape recordings should be verified by at least one NYSARC member or designate. Primary concern for such will be adequacy or identification and documentation as a specimen or recording taken in New York State.

2. A report is accepted as a record if all or all but one member accept it. If a majority thinks that the bird was incorrectly identified or that the evidence was insufficient for a correct identification, the report is rejected. In all other cases, the report is recirculated to all members along with all comments made on its first review after which a second and final vote will be taken. All reports remain pending until a decision is reached.
3. Decisions of individual members will be confidential within NYSARC. The Chairman will report decisions of NYSARC as a whole.
- E. Records of NYSARC proceedings will be maintained in a standard form to be established by its membership.

VII. Committee Rules.

- A. These bylaws will be reviewed at least annually.
- B. These bylaws may be amended by the Executive Committee of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs.
- C. The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs welcomes and encourages the formation of local records committees by its member clubs to review reports of local interest. However, all persons are encouraged to submit their individual reports to NYSARC.

VIII. Meetings.

NYSARC shall meet at least once a year.

Procedures for Submitting Reports to NYSARC and "Want" List

At the 1977 Annual Meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, the delegates authorized the establishment of a New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC) to review ornithological reports of exceptional interest made in the state. Members of NYSARC were appointed by the President in December 1977. Its present membership, with terms of service, are: Robert F. Andrie (5 years), Robert W. Smart (4 years), Kenneth P. Able (3 years), Thomas H. Davis (2 years), Paul A. DeBenedictis (1 year). At its meeting of 12 Feb. 1978, NYSARC elected Paul DeBenedictis as Chairman and Robert Andrie as Vice-Chairman. Charles R. Smith, of the Laboratory of Ornithology, has been appointed Secretary of NYSARC.