

REPORT OF THE NEW YORK STATE AVIAN RECORDS COMMITTEE

A total of 56 reports representing 38 records of birds for 1983 plus an additional report for 1982 was submitted to the New York State Avian Records Committee through early 1984. Of these records, 26 have been accepted, one is thought to pertain to a bird possibly escaped from captivity, nine have been declined and three are still under review.

Additionally, we have solicited details for several of the species listed as "Hypothetical" in the *Birds of New York State* (Bull, 1974; Doubleday/Natural History Press, Garden City, NY). The NYSARC found details submitted for a record of Golden-crowned Sparrow to be satisfactory, but details for Lewis' Woodpecker (1947-2-A) and Brewer's Sparrow (1947-1-A), though expanded from the brief notices originally published, remain unsatisfactory. After 40 years it is not surprising that the details of these observations have become fuzzy. Some of the observers are now deceased, have moved away or are pursuing other interests. Their insights are lost forever. It is cases such as these that reinforce the point that the most important function of the NYSARC, and any other records committee, is to provide a permanent repository for the details of observations of rarities.

We are pleased to report that we have been less plagued by illegible and difficult to copy reports than in previous years. However, the primary reason for not accepting, and for delay in processing reports, remains insufficient details. Indeed, for some of the records accepted in this and in past years and for which individual reports were submitted by multiple observers, one or more of the individual reports were in themselves unacceptable. Had only these reports been submitted, the NYSARC would have been forced to reject the record. In such cases it was the total evidence that convinced the NYSARC that the record was acceptable. We continue to emphasize the importance for each observer of an extreme rarity to submit an independently prepared report of their observation, and to include as complete a description as possible, even for supposedly "unmistakable" species.

Dr. Robert Andrie has been reappointed for another term as Committee Member. We are equally pleased to report the continuing participation of Tom Davis following his recent illness. After two years of service, Dr. John Confer has requested a leave of absence as Secretary of the Committee to meet his own professional demands. We thank John for his good work and look forward to the time when his obligations will permit renewed service with the NYSARC. The Committee is pleased to accept the offer of Mr. Steve Sibley at the Laboratory of Ornithology of Cornell University to serve in Dr. Confer's place. Reports to the

NYSARC should be addressed to:

The Secretary, NYSARC
c/o The Laboratory of Ornithology
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York 14850
attn: Mr. Steve Sibley

As in past years, only contributors of reports are acknowledged in the summary of records below, regardless of the actual number of observers. The term "substantiated" means that physical evidence accompanies the documentation submitted to the NYSARC. In summaries of species' status, we ignore any reports since 1978 which have not been reviewed by this Committee.

1954 ACCEPTED REPORT

- ✓ **GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*). 1954-1-A-D. "Immature" which molted to definitive Alternate plumage, Jones Beach, Nassau Co. 31 Jan to 24 Apr (GC, WS, RG). Several other observers were contacted, who did not have original field notes, distinctly recalled seeing this bird. This record is the basis for its former "hypothetical" status in New York State. The nearest substantiated reports are from Massachusetts and New Jersey.

1982 ACCEPTED REPORT

- ✓ **RAZORBILL** (*Alca torda*). 1982-50-A one in Basic plumage, mouth of Niagara River off Fort Niagara, Niagara Co., 27 Nov (FB). This appears to be the second record from upstate New York, where Thick-billed Murre (*Uria lomvia*) is more frequent.

1983 ACCEPTED REPORTS

- ✓ **EARED GREBE** (*Podiceps nigricollis*). 1983-18-A adult in Alternate plumage Jones Beach, Nassau Co., 4 Aug (ROP). This is an exceptionally early record of a species not normally reviewed by the NYSARC.
- ✓ **NORTHERN GANNET** (*Sula bassanus*). 1983-29-A immature Derby Hill, Oswego Co., 13 Nov (DWC). Several other individuals were reported from the Canadian side of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River about this same time period.
- ✓ **TRICOLORED HERON** (*Egretta tricolor*). 1983-19-A, B immature Crown Point, Essex Co., 15 Aug (RKH, GC). 1983-21-A immature El Dorado Shores, Jefferson Co., 1-12 Sept (GAS). These are upstate records of a species normally confined to Long Island, both firsts for their respective Kingbird reporting regions.
- ✓ **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** (*Anser albifrons*). 1983-3-A immature Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area, Erie Co., 13 Mar (RFA). 1983-5-A adult Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge Orleans Co., 24 Mar (JSM). This species was removed from the list of species under review in 1981 and no longer will be reviewed by this Committee.

- ✓ **ROSS' GOOSE** (*Chen rossii*). 1983-2-A-F adult Round Pond, 2.5 miles north of Amenia, Dutchess Co., 13-14 Mar (JWK, MCK, TS, FLG, DMF, MWY). Full details of this first report from New York appear in *The Kingbird* 33: 153; 1984. It follows a number of other reports from the Atlantic Flyway.
- ✓ **COMMON EIDER** (*Somateria mollissima*). 1983-35-A adult male in flight Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Seneca Co., 28 Apr (VAD). This is one of the few documented records from upstate New York.
- ✓ **BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE** (*Elanus caeruleus*). 1983-7-A-C adult Hopewell Junction, Dutchess Co., 26-27 Apr (MCK, JWK, KMMvD). Full details of this first New York record appear in *The Kingbird* 33: 151; 1984. The report is without precedent. The nearest prior records are from Illinois and South Carolina.
- ✓ **SANDHILL CRANE** (*Grus canadensis*). 1983-9-A one Tivoli North Bay, town of Red Hook, Dutchess Co., 4 May (EK). 1983-10-A adult Derby Hill, Oswego Co., 5 May (GAS). These are the 18th and 19th records from New York; they could pertain to a single bird.
- ✓ **PIPING PLOVER** (*Charadrius melodius*). 1983-22-A immature Sylvan Beach, Oneida Co. (DWC), photograph on file. This is the first upstate New York report reviewed by the NYSARC since 1978.
- ✓ **AMERICAN AVOCET** (*Recurvirostra americana*). 1983-27-A female Carlton, Orleans Co., 4 June (RGS). A late spring upstate report, at which time the species is most often reported there.
- ✓ **LITTLE STINT** (*Calidris minuta*). 1983-17-A-D adult Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Queens Co., 17-22 July (THD, DS, HM, PAB). This rusty-headed individual was variously identified as this species and Rufous-necked Stint, (*Calidris ruficollis*). European authorities, observers familiar with both species, and the Committee concur that its characteristics agree with those now believed diagnostic of Little Stint. This is the first record from New York State. There are several other recent records from the Atlantic seaboard of the United States. This bird is known to have been photographed, but the Committee has been unable to locate any of the original photographs; we urge the photographer to deposit one or more originals at a repository of his choice.
- ✓ **STILT SANDPIPER** (*Calidris himantopus*). 1983-6-A adult Ithaca, Tompkins Co., 2 Apr (GMcH). 1983-26-A adult Hamlin Beach, Monroe Co., 8 May (RGS). Still more spring records, the first extraordinarily early, of a shorebird far more numerous in New York during the fall migration.
- ✓ **ROYAL TERN** (*Sterna maxima*). 1983-25-A,B adult west spit Braddock Bay, Monroe Co., 31 Jul-2 Aug (RGS, KCG, SH); photograph on file. This is the first substantiated record from upstate New York. Its ap-

- pearance is apparently not correlated with any meteorological event.
- GREAT GRAY OWL** (*Strix nebulosa*). 1983-36-A one NY Rt 86 east of Ray Brook, Essex Co., 30 Dec (JC). This is the only report received for a minor incursion of the species; the great numbers seen in the previous incursion in no way alleviate the need for careful review of reports of this species.
- WESTERN KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus verticalis*). 1983-34-A one Miner Hill, South Otselic, Chemung Co., 16 Oct (DS); photographs on file. 1983-37-A one Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Seneca Co., 25 Sept(RE). Upstate records of a species more regular on Long Island.
- WHITE-EYED VIREO** (*Vireo griseus*). 1983-31-A adult Fulton, Oswego Co., 18 Dec (FGS). This is the latest documented record from New York by nearly a month. The NYSARC has not seen details for a comparable report noted in *The Kingbird* 33: 142; 1984.
- YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** (*Dendroica dominica*). 1983-38-A-C adult showing characteristics of the western race *albilora*, Webster, Monroe Co., 13 Nov (RGS, MAS, CC). This species is most unusual at any time in upstate New York.
- PAINTED BUNTING** (*Passerina ciris*). 1983-8-A adult male Richmond Co., 2 May (B & NS), photograph on file. 1983-11-A adult male Pine City, Chemung Co., 6-7 May (RC). Full details of the first report, including a photograph, appear in *The Kingbird* 33: 230; 1983. There are perhaps a dozen records, some of dubious origin, from Long Island and two prior records from upstate New York.
- SHARP-TAILED SPARROW** (*Ammospiza caudacuta*). 1983-24-A-D one Westport, Essex Co., 24 Oct (GC, DMR, JMCP, RKH). An upstate New York record of a species seldom found away from Long Island.

1983 REPORT, IDENTITY ACCEPTED, ORIGIN UNCERTAIN

- BARNACLE GOOSE** (*Branta leucopsis*). 1983-4-A adult Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge, Genesee Co., 16 Mar (RFA). Although seen during a period of migration, it is impossible to establish the origin of this individual, as the species is so common in zoos and private collections.

1983 REPORTS NOT ACCEPTED

- WESTERN GREBE** (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*). 1983-33-A one Aurora, Cayuga Co., 9 Nov.
- SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER** (*Calidris acuminata*). 1983-16-A adult Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Queens Co., 16 July.
- PHALAROPE** (*Phalaropus sp.*). 1983-1-A-C one in Basic plumage, Irondequoit Bay, Monroe Co., 2-3 Jan. Reported both as Red (*P. fulicaria*) and Red-necked Phalarope, (*P. lobipes*). The description is equivocal. The former is far more likely at this season.

DOVEKIE (*Alle alle*). 1983-28-A one Ontario Beach, Charlotte, Monroe Co., 22 Sept.

THREE-TOED WOODPECKER (*Picoides tridactylus*). 1983-14-A female Rathbone, Steuben Co., 16 June.

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*). 1983-12-A immature Big Flats, Chemung Co., 18 May.

BACHMAN'S WARBLER (*Vermivora bachmanii*). 1983-15-A female Poa Brook, Delaware Co., 14 July.

VIRGINIA'S WARBLER (*Vermivora virginiae*). 1983-20-A adult Johnstown, Fulton Co., 24 Aug.

SHARP-TAILED SPARROW (*Ammodramus caudacutus*). 1983-13 one Annandale-on-Hudson, Dutchess Co., 17 May.

With the addition of Ross' Goose, Black-shouldered Kite, Little Stint and Golden-crowned Sparrow, the New York state list now includes 427 species.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dr. Robert F. Andrle
Dr. Kenneth P. Able
Mr. Thomas H. Davis
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