

NEWSLETTER OF THE
LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE
Annual Meeting Report 2016

Annual Report, August 27, 2016

Louisiana's Newest State List Additions



Three species are new to the State List since the last LBRC Newsletter. Our latest additions (left to right, in chronological order of their discovery) are: Sooty Shearwater (LBRC 2014-031, photo Will Selman), Pyrrhuloxia (LBRC 2015-058, photo Dan O'Malley), and Mew Gull (2016-003, photo Charles E. Lyon). Excellent photographs above were taken by their discoverers. These three species were considered long overdue to occur in Louisiana. See *Nineteenth Report of the Louisiana Bird Records Committee* (p. 6) for complete record information.

Annual Meeting: 11 June 2016

Synopsis of the 2016 LBRC Annual Meeting

by: **Donna L. Dittmann, Secretary**
& **Steven W. Cardiff, Chair**

The LBRC's 2016 Annual Meeting was originally scheduled for 12 March but was postponed after heavy rains and local flooding impacted travel for some Members, especially those from the northern and southeastern portions of the state. The Meeting finally took place on the next available unanimously compatible date of 11 June 2016, at the LSU Museum of Natural Science.

Eight Voting Members were in attendance: Steven W. Cardiff (Chair), Paul E. Conover, John K. Dillon, Donna L. Dittmann (Secretary), Robert C. Dobbs, Erik I. Johnson, Nancy L. Newfield, and Curtis C. Sorrells. Phillip A. Wallace was unable to attend due to illness.

The Meeting was called to order at 9:56 AM and, due to a packed agenda, continued uninterrupted (not even for a lunch break!) until adjournment at 5:45 PM.

The purpose of the Annual Meeting is threefold. First, this is when Member elections are held. Second, additional business can be discussed and resolved, including final resolution of Fourth Circulation "Discussion" records. And, finally, the Meeting provides an opportunity to fast-track acceptance of numerous straightforward First Circulation records. This year, the agenda was heavy on Discussion records!



Curtis C. Sorrells retires from the LBRC

Curt Sorrells was elected to the LBRC in 2004 for a one year term as a First Alternate Member. Subsequently, in 2005 Curt was nominated and elected as a Voting Member and has served on the Committee ever since.

LBRC Members past and present thank Curt for his long service and wish him good health, good fortune, and great birding into the future!

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Completed E-156

“E-Round” 156 (18 records) was initiated shortly prior to the Meeting so that a first circulation could be completed, allowing discussion at the Meeting of included specimen records of difficult to identify species. Resolved records from E-156 are included in the *Nineteenth Report of the LBRC* (see p. 6). Records not resolved in this E-Round will be circulated in upcoming E-157.

Fourth Circulation Record Discussion

In lieu of voting on first circulation records typically included on the Annual Meeting’s agenda, this year most of the Meeting was budgeted towards resolving the numerous Fourth Circulation “Discussion Round” records that had accumulated since 2015. Eighteen records were discussed and resolved: eight were accepted, one was not accepted on origin, and nine were considered not accepted on identification. All are included in the *Nineteenth Report of the LBRC* (see p. 6).

Member Elections

Terms of two Voting Members concluded at the Spring 2016 Meeting: Curtis C. Sorrells (Metairie) and Steven W. Cardiff (St. Gabriel). Steve Cardiff was re-nominated and re-elected for another four-year term. Curt Sorrells opted to retire from the Committee. Daniel F. Lane (Baton Rouge) was nominated and elected to fill the vacancy.

The LBRC welcomes Dan Lane. Dan is originally from New Jersey but has been a Louisiana resident since 1995 when he entered graduate school at LSUMNS. After obtaining his Master’s Degree he has remained a research associate with the museum assisting on South American expeditions. Dan leads birding tours for Field Guides Inc. and is an accomplished artist and illustrator. Welcome Dan!

Officers Donna L. Dittmann (Secretary) and Steven W. Cardiff (Chair) were also each re-elected for new one-year terms.

In Memory of Joseph P. Kleiman



The Committee regrets having to report the passing of former LBRC Voting Member Joseph P. Kleiman, on 13 April 2016. Joe was 82.

Joe was elected a Member of the LBRC in 1992 to fill out the remainder of R. D. Purrington’s term (when Dan temporarily moved out of state), was re-elected to a full term in 1993, and continued serving on the Committee until 1999. He was a co-author of the *Eighth Report of the Louisiana Bird Records Committee* (<http://www.losbird.org/lbrc/8thOLD.pdf>)

Joe made many other contributions to Louisiana ornithology and he will be sorely missed by the LBRC and by the entire Louisiana birding community!

Photo above from The Advocate’s Obituary: <http://obits.theadvocate.com/obituaries/theadvocate/obituary.aspx?pid=179621501>

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Review List Discussion

The Committee maintains, and annually reassesses, a Review List of rare/vagrant species that have been accepted to occur *at least once* in the state. As per guidelines in the LBRC Bylaws, species qualify for the Review List if they average four or fewer *accepted* occurrences annually averaged over the preceding ten-year period or, in the case of exotics, if a species is potentially colonizing the State. In some cases, a species may remain on the Review List even though the number of reports exceeds the threshold for “de-listing.” This is usually either because the LBRC has judged that the difficulty of identification warrants retaining the species on the list, or because the number of actual *accepted* records *on file* is substantially fewer than the total number of reports generated by the birding community. By a majority vote of Members at an Annual Meeting, the LBRC may delete species from, or add species to, the Review List.

In advance of this Meeting, LBRC Member and Pending Record Pages webmaster Paul E. Conover suggested that the Committee consider removing several species from the Review List. Donna L. Dittmann (Secretary) then assessed the status of the proposed species and provided Members with a synopsis of their status, which included all accepted records published through the *Eighteenth Report of the Louisiana Bird Records Committee* (<http://www.losbird.org/lbrc/Newsletter2015.pdf>).

Species that were proposed for removal are discussed below - only those bold-faced exceed 40 **total accepted state records**. It was ultimately decided that none of the proposed species had reached or exceeded the threshold for removal.

1 - Glaucous Gull. First accepted record in 1976; 48 accepted records to date – but only 23 in the last ten years. The most accepted records during a single year (twice in LBRC history) = five. Identification is compounded by hybridization with Herring Gull.

2 - Great Black-backed Gull. First accepted record in 1981; 45 accepted records to date – 14 of those in the last ten years. Most accepted records in a single year = three (once in LBRC history). Hybrids with Herring Gull frequently encountered.

3 - Cory's Shearwater. Possibly regular along the continental shelf edge, but offshore coverage is a major factor limiting records. First accepted record was in 1997, and there are only 17 total to date. A potential split of sibling (sub)species (two



forms have been documented to occur in Louisiana waters; photo left probable *C. b. borealis* by Dittmann pending LBRC review) complicates identification.

4 - Audubon's Shearwater. Possibly regular (perhaps more so than Cory's Shearwater), but limited offshore coverage obscures status. First record was in 1954, but there are only 19 accepted occurrences (five from 1961 are specimens following Hurricane Carla). Maximum reports in one year = three. The similar Manx Shearwater complicates identification.

5 - Leach's Storm-Petrel. Possibly regular, but lack of offshore coverage is a major limiting factor. First accepted record was in 1956, next was in 1998. There are 21 accepted records, most documented with specimens (including nine from 2002). That all but one occurrence are from summer (when species should be breeding) is curious and needs further study.

6 - White-tailed Hawk. First occurrence was in 1888, next was in 1995. Species is increasing in frequency, but still only 12 accepted records since the 1995 record (note also same individual that returned for several winters counted as a separate record). Three records (2013) is most accepted records in one year to date.

7 - Brown-crested Flycatcher. Species first documented in 1961, now with 33 accepted records <many specimens representing two subspecies>. Only year with four accepted records is 1994 (all specimens). Species represents an identification issue.

8 - Great Kiskadee. First accepted record was in 1992: *note does not include records* in Lowery (1974), which have not been reviewed. There are now 29 accepted records (some involving same individuals from different years). Records appear to be increasing in frequency and species is being found at new locations. Maximum of four records/year (from different sites) in 2011 and 2013. Successful breeding is documented.

9 - Tropical Kingbird. First record was in 1984. Seven total accepted records and no obvious trend towards becoming more regular. Identification of non voice-recorded individuals (even specimens) is difficult, and many reports end up as Tropical/Couch's kingbird. Possible local breeding (Cameron Parish) in 2011.

10 - Couch's Kingbird. First recorded 1965 and only 17 accepted records to date with maximum of two in one year. Likely increasing and there is local breeding evidence.

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11 - Gray Kingbird. First accepted record in 1985 (some earlier records not yet reviewed). About 35 accepted records to date with most accepted in single year = four (2013).

Occurrence is nearly annual.

12 - Black-whiskered Vireo. First accepted record is 1986 (a specimen from 1957 has not been reviewed). About 41 accepted records and nearly annual occurrence. Most recent years 2-3 records/year is typical; five in one year (2015, not added to record tally above), was exceptional.

13 - Spotted Towhee. Following species split and elevation to species status, added to Review List on 7 September 1996. There are 38 accepted records since but note towhee invasion of 2012 accounts for 13. Otherwise, one year maximum accepted is four records. Considered by some as 'regular' in northern LA and, therefore, possibly some records are not being reported. Hybrids pose a potential identification issue.

14 - Black-headed Grosbeak. This species was added to Review List 11 March 1989 based on declining records and potential identification issues. There are 36 accepted records since, with 23 occurring in the last 10 years. There is a maximum of five records in one year (2010).

15-Bullock's Oriole. Following a species split and elevation to species status, was added to Review List on 7 September 1996. There are only 24 accepted records since and maximum in one year = three (2013). Separation of female-plumaged birds from dull Baltimore Orioles is problematic. Hybrids also potentially occur.

Some Members were concerned about a drop-off in record submissions for species that seem to be increasingly regular, including many on the above list. We discussed whether or not there was a growing trend of observers not reporting Review List species, especially some species that may no longer be perceived 'as rare' (e.g., Brown Booby, Great Kiskadee, stake-outs of certain other species). Also "bursts" of records in one or a few years, or coverage issues (e.g., pelagics) creates pressure to de-list species. In the above list, Great Kiskadee provides the best case for removal because of annual occurrence, expanding distribution, documentation of residency/breeding, and

identification is not an issue. However, Steve Cardiff noted that some of the "traditional" localities may no longer be occupied. The LBRC acknowledged 'folks not reporting records' is nothing new (whether they are too busy, apathetic, or, especially in the case of mass observations of stake-outs, believe others will report, etc.). An extensive discussion regarding how eBird influences observers to report or *not report* rarities followed. Ultimately, there was consensus among Members that none of the species proposed for de-listing should be removed at this time. Many of the species listed above have been discussed for possible removal at other Annual Meetings. However, none surpass the threshold of greater than 4 records/year averaged over a 10 year period. Paul Conover suggested that many of these species are annual in occurrence and the Committee should consider reassessing Review List listing criteria to consider reducing the threshold for removal, but no action was taken to amend the Review List's current definition. The LBRC continues to emphasize the need to submit documentation for Review List species even though a species may appear to be more regular and/or approaching the threshold for removal from the Review List.

Additions to the Review List

Three species were added to the State List bringing the total to 482 species: Sooty Shearwater, Mew Gull, and Pyrrhuloxia. These were the only new additions to the Review List, which now stands at 152 species.

The LBRC also requests documentation for records of the following recognizable subspecies or forms: "Great White" Heron, Northern "Red-shafted" Flicker, Yellow-rumped "Audubon's" Warbler, and non-"Slate-colored" forms of Dark-eyed Junco (e.g., "Gray-headed," "Oregon," and "Pink-sided" types have occurred in Louisiana). There are no accepted records of "Red-shafted" Flicker. A record of "Great White" Heron is pending review and would be Louisiana's first accepted record. The LBRC also requests documentation for any species not currently accepted on the State List, including species of captive/introduced origin not currently recognized on the State List (e.g., Monk Parakeet) or Review List (e.g., Black Francolin and Ring-necked Pheasant).

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LBRC and eBird

Members addressed the growing popularity of eBird and the potential loss of record submissions because records are entered to eBird but not concurrently submitted to the LBRC. At the moment there is no consistent “feedback loop” between eBird and the LBRC of material submitted to eBird (or vice versa). Once an observer’s record is ‘confirmed’ by the eBird reviewer, there may not be the impetus for the observer to also submit the record to the LBRC because it has been ‘confirmed.’ Facilitating consistent treatment of records of Review List species between eBird and the LBRC would be to the benefit of both entities. Members noted that at present, eBird does not reflect the correct number of species on the State List and that it contains ‘confirmed’ records that have not been reviewed/accepted by the LBRC. The LBRC needs to be more actively engaged in monitoring Review List records submitted to eBird and soliciting that information for LBRC review. Dr. J. V. Remsen, Louisiana eBird State Reviewer, directs observers to the LBRC, but once a record is validated in eBird, then observers may not follow through and submit documentation to the LBRC. In a perfect world, the LBRC could review eBird submissions of Review List species in real or near-real time. Thus, a Committee review process could be maintained and records additionally archived at eBird. With this in mind, the LBRC needs to develop a template that would be available to observers when they submit a new eBird list so that all relevant information is submitted for Review List species and the entry can represent a LBRC record submission. Similarly, old or new rare bird report forms could be uploaded to lists via the eBird “media” option. Better LBRC record integration with eBird would also provide a secondary LBRC record archive.

LBRC Website

The *Photo and Record Gallery* is a work in progress. Paul E. Conover is gradually updating this page: <http://www.losbird.org/lbrc/reviewlist.html>. Obviously, this is a time-consuming, long term project. See an example of one of the pages - Lesser



Nighthawk <http://www.losbird.org/lbrc/rllenib.html>. Each species account has an occurrence map and lists accepted records as well as unaccepted reports.

Although it may appear that the LBRC has a substantial record backlog based on records listed on the *View Pending Records Pages* (<http://www.losbird.org/lbrc/viewreport.html>), most of these records have now been resolved and will be gradually transferred to the “gallery.” Most other outstanding Pending Page records will be included in upcoming E-Rounds and resolved relatively soon.

**Introducing LBRC Facebook**

We also discussed how to better reach out to observers via Social Media and, as a result, LBRC officially launched its Facebook page on 22 June 2016. John K. Dillon spearheaded this effort. Direct link is: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1054650801280355/> Paul Conover, Donna Dittmann, Dan Lane, and Erik Johnson are also Page administrators. The page was off to a quick start with over 50 members joining on its first day! We hope that this page will facilitate discussion and education about Louisiana rare bird species, how best to document rarities, and species' changing status according to submitted and accepted LBRC records. Please note that this will not be a “help-identify-the-bird” page. Help requests should be submitted to LABIRD (but no attachments, please) or LABIRD Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/LABIRD/>.

It is important to realize that the LBRC cannot comment on species identification of records currently pending or under review. Record outcomes will be published in the official LBRC reports in the annual LBRC Newsletter. The LBRC does anticipate providing information on identification and links to informative articles. We also encourage this page to be used to report or track the occurrence of Review List Species - so it can be used in effect as a Rare Bird Alert.

Louisiana's First Sooty Shearwater (*Ardenna grisea*)



LBRC 2014-031



Will Selman was able to document this first state record with close-up photos of this worn and somewhat water-logged Sooty Shearwater (2014-031) as it swam in the Sabine Pass Ship Channel on 18 June 2014.

Long predicted to occur in Louisiana, there are 18 accepted records for Texas waters (TBRC 2014), many of which are late-spring summer individuals such as this. Although such individuals may suggest being ship-assisted, especially when found in the proximity of a shipping lane, the body of Texas records seems to provide an established pattern of natural occurrence in the NW Gulf of Mexico.

Nineteenth Report of the Louisiana Bird Records Committee

Donna L. Dittmann, LBRC Secretary & Steven W. Cardiff, LBRC Chair

format follows that of LBRC reports previously published in the *Journal of Louisiana Ornithology*

see: http://losbird.org/jlo/jlo_v8.pdf

The Louisiana Bird Records Committee (henceforth LBRC or Committee) was established in 1979 to evaluate and archive records of unusual species that occur in Louisiana. The LBRC strives to determine record acceptability to aid in understanding the patterns of occurrence of rarities in the state. Each record (in the form of observers' written reports, copies of field notes, photographs, videotapes, audio recordings, or specimens) is reviewed by each of nine elected LBRC Voting Members (in accordance with LBRC Bylaws, *LOS News* No. 87; Bylaws last amended 12 March 2011 and viewable at www.losbird.org). All records submitted to the LBRC are archived at the Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science (henceforth LSUMNS) and/or on the LBRC webpages.

The *Nineteenth Report of the Louisiana Bird Records Committee* includes 199 records, including 127 accepted records and three new species for the state list. The official state list now stands at 482 species. Although an acceptance rate of 65% seems low considering the generally high quality of submissions (most now include photographic documentation), it is important to note that this report includes many older records that were held back in the files awaiting additional reports or photographs that were never submitted. Records included in this report were circulated in E-Rounds 151 through 156. A few records to be included in the *18th Report* (from E-137 and inadvertently overlooked) are also included. The following LBRC Members (past and present) reviewed records contained in this report: Steven W. Cardiff, Paul E. Conover, Paul M. Dickson, Donna L. Dittmann, John K. Dillon, Robert C. Dobbs, William R. Fontenot, James L. Ingold, Erik I. Johnson, Joseph P. Kleiman, Charles E. Lyon, David P. Muth, B. Mac Myers III, Nancy L. Newfield, Dave Patton, Alfred E. Smalley, Curtis C. Sorrells, Ronald J. Stein, Phillip A. Wallace, and Peter A. Yaukey.

Records are arranged taxonomically in each of three sections (accepted records, unaccepted records: identification, unaccepted records: origin) as per the *AOU Check-list of North American Birds* (AOU 1998: <http://checklist.aou.org>) through the 57th supplement (Chesser et al. 2016). Within each species account, records are arranged in chronological order by observation date and include age and sex (if known), plumage (=aspect), number of individuals, LBRC record number, date(s) of observation, locality (parish in *italics*; for offshore records beyond the three-mile limit, “*Gulf of Mexico*” is used in lieu of parish), and names of observers who submitted some form of documentation.

The LBRC thanks all who contributed to this Report, regardless of whether submitted records are considered accepted or unaccepted. The following individuals submitted documentation or assisted the Committee by providing expert commentary (in alphabetical order): Robby J. Bacon, Mike Bailey, Michael Ballard, Jeff Barnhill, Linda Beall, James W. Beck, Michael Bernard, Laurence C. Binford, Devin Bosler, Justin Bosler, Matthew L. Brady, Roger J. Breedlove, Steven W. Cardiff, Jay Carlisle, Daniel G. Christian, Jonathan Clark, Gerry Click, Walter Clifton, Paul E. Conover, Rebecca L. Crofton, Kermit C. Cummings, Terry Davis, Dennis Demcheck, Paul M. Dickson, John K. Dillon, Donna L. Dittmann, Danny Dobbs, Robert C. Dobbs, Brennan Domangue, Minor Domangue, Laurie Dugan, Lehman Ellis, Erik Enbody, Sally Farrell, Joelle Finley, Tom Finnie, William R. Fontenot, Andrew From, Joan Garvey, Carrie Gawne, John P. Gee, Elizabeth Guidry, Robert B. Hamilton, Gary Hampton, Jan Hansen, Tommy Harold, Jeffery W. Harris, Austin Hebert, Hubert C. Hervey, Emily Holcomb, Jim Holmes Jr., Katrina Hucks, Jay V. Huner, Crystal Johnson, Erik I. Johnson, Oscar Johnson, Billy Jones, Linda Kingsland, Richard L. (Rick) Knight, Daniel F. Lane, Michael LeRay, Will Lewis, Steve Locke, George H. Lowery, Jr., Richard Lowery, Charles E. Lyon, James M. Maley, Beth Maniscalco, Willie Matthews, Ronnie Maum, Bridget H. Mayo, Mary Mehaffey, Sean Minns, John C. Mittermeier, Pamela Morgan, Michael J. Musumeche, David P. Muth, Dan O’Malley, Bridget H. Mayo, B. Mac Myers III, Norton Nelkin, Nancy L. Newfield, Robert L. Norton, Stephen L. Pagans, Dave Patton, Dwight Peake, Noel Peyton, Steve Picou, Jeff Pollack, Matthew T. Pontiff, H. Douglas Pratt, Richard Prentki, Robert D. Purrington, Larry Raymond, Edward J. Raynor, J. V. Remsen, Virginia Rettig, Janine Robin, Kenneth V. Rosenberg, Nichola Russel, Cameron Rutt, Rosemary Seidler, Will Selman, Michael A. Seymour, Thomas W. Sherry, Steve Shively, Jody Shugart, C. Britain Sledge, Bob Stander, Paul Sweet, Claire Thomas, Jeff Trahan, Phillip A. Wallace, Carol Wells, Tina Webb, Melvin Weber, Walker Wilson, Matt White, John Whittle, Carrina Williams, Jon W. Wise, George C. Wood, Bobbe Womac, and Lizette Wroten. As per LBRC policy, names of observers are listed only for accepted records. If photographic (ph) or specimen (LSUMZ catalog number, or preparator’s initials and prep number) documentation is submitted as part of the record, then that abbreviation follows the observer’s name. If the original discoverer(s) is known and submitted a report, then their name is **boldfaced**; if the discoverer is known but did not submit a report, then the discoverer is mentioned at the end of the record entry. The LBRC record archives, as well as all specimens reported herein, are housed at the Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science (LSUMNS). For archival purposes, the LBRC will accept additional reports/documentation or corrections for any resolved record. As necessary, corrigenda will appear in subsequent Reports.

The LBRC continues to work to clear its backlog of records. In addition to resolving records posted on the LBRC *Pending Reports* pages at the LOS website, this report includes many older hard copy records that were scanned so that they could be circulated by E-Round. Some of these records began in earlier circulations (paper rounds), but, for various reasons, were never resolved.

The LBRC maintains a “Review List” of vagrant species that have been confirmed at least once in Louisiana. Records of these species (or of species not currently on the official Louisiana list) must be submitted to, and reviewed by, the LBRC in order to be considered a valid entry into Louisiana’s ornithological history. Because species status/occurrence can change, the LBRC annually considers whether species should be added to or removed from the Review List. As a result of decisions published in this Nineteenth Report and assessment of the Review List at the 2016 Annual Meeting, three species are added to the Review List by virtue of their addition to the state list, and no other species are added or removed at this time. For records of species included in this Report that were subsequently removed from the Review List, the date of removal is included at the end of the species account. In order to make the LBRC archives as comprehensive as possible, the LBRC welcomes submissions of older not-previously-reviewed records from prior to a species’ removal from the Review List. The Review List currently stands at 152 species (plus three subspecies), or 32% of the species known from Louisiana. A link to the 2016 Review List is available at the LOS-LBRC website: <http://www.losbird.org/lbrc/lbrc.htm>.

For more information about Louisiana boundaries and Review List guidelines please visit the LBRC Bylaws: <http://www.losbird.org/lbrc/bylaws.htm>.

Abbreviations used in this report: Ave. (=Avenue); Blvd. (=Boulevard); ca (= about or approx./approximately); CBC (=Christmas Bird Count); Dr. (=Drive); FOSRC (= Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee); Hwy. (=Highway); Ln. (=Lane); mi. (=mile/miles); p (primary feather); Peveto Woods Sanctuary (as used in previous LBRC Reports = Baton Rouge Audubon Society Peveto Woods Sanctuary at Johnsons Bayou, Cameron Parish; also =Peveto Beach Woods- sanctuary is remaining wooded area within this much larger chenier now converted to pasture or subdivision); NWR (=National Wildlife Refuge); Rd. (=Road); SP (=State Park); St.(=Street); “Sureway Woods” (as used in previous Reports = TNC Landry-LeBlanc Tract, Grand Isle, Jefferson Parish); TNC (=The Nature Conservancy); White Lake WCA (= White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area); WMA (=Wildlife Management Area). Note that Johnsons Bayou (used here and in previous LBRC reports) = Johnson Bayou or Johnson’s Bayou (also commonly used). Compass directions are abbreviated and capitalized (e.g., W = west of).

ACCEPTED RECORDS

IDENTIFICATION AND NATURAL ORIGIN IS ACCEPTED FOR THE FOLLOWING 127 RECORDS:

Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)

One male (2009-109) on 16 March 2009, *Union*: beaver pond W Hwy. 33 bridge, N. side D’Arbonne Lake in Eagle Point subdivision; Gerry Click submitted the report of a bird found and photographed by Richard Lowery (ph, p. 26).

Cinnamon Teal was removed from the Review List on 14 March 2015.

White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*)

One (2014-102) on 18 March 2014, *St. Tammany*: Madisonville, Madisonville Boat Launch; Mary Mehaffey (ph, p. 26).

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

One adult (1993-063) on 19 December 1993, *Cameron*: gulf off Johnsons Bayou Beach; Phillip A. Wallace.

One (2014-097) on 14 November-7 December 2014, *Union*: D’Arbonne Lake at Pleasure Island Rd.; Stephen L. Pagans, Willie Matthews (ph, p. 26), and Mary Mehaffey. Although as many as two were reported at this location at D’Arbonne Lake, Members believed that the documentation supported only one individual at this site. See Western/Clark’s Grebe account below.

Western/Clark’s Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis/clarkii*)

One (2014-107) on 30 October 2014, *Union*: D’Arbonne Lake at boat launch road N of Hwy. 33; Stephen L. Pagans. This record was originally submitted as Clark’s Grebe, which would have been the first state occurrence. Photographs showed an obvious *Aechmophorus* and were suggestive of Clark’s but did not convincingly identify that species, and the written details and analysis did not convincingly eliminate Western Grebe. This record could possibly pertain to better documented 2014-097 present nearby during the same period (accepted above).

One (2014-098) on 14 and 18 November 2014, *Union*: D’Arbonne Lake at the dam; Stephen L. Pagans. Following a Discussion Round, all Members believed that based on the distance and relatively superficial description, documentation only supported identification to genus.

Vaux’s Swift (*Chaetura vauxi*)

Six (2008-001) discovered on 2 January and two observed on 4 January 2008, *Caddo*: Shreveport, C. Bickham Dickson Park; **Matt White** (ph) and Hubert C. Hervey.

Eight (2008-084) on 24 January 2008, *East Baton Rouge*: Baton Rouge, City Park Lake; Devin Bosler.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*)

One immature male (2003-048) on 27 December 2003, *Ascension*: 18712 Manchac Highlands (residence of Anne L. Gregory); Laurence C. Binford.

One immature male (2004-086) on 10-11 January 2004, *East Baton Rouge*: Baton Rouge, 1180 Stanford (residence of Carol Foil); Nancy L. Newfield (banded, Y03366) and Dennis Demcheck (ph only, p. 26).

Broad-tailed Hummingbird was removed from the Review List on 7 September 2002, but documentation had been received so these records were reviewed out of courtesy.



Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)

One immature male (1994-132) on 23 December 1994-15 February 1995, *Lafayette*: Lafayette, 919 W. Pinhook; Paul E. Conover (ph, see left).

One immature male (2003-041) from December 2003-5 February 2004, *Caddo*: Shreveport, residence of Bobbe Womac; Rosemary Seidler and Paul M. Dickson (ph only). Reported banded by Paul Dickson prior to Christmas and recaptured to confirm identification on 5 February.

One immature male (2005-034) on 21 November 2005, *Lafourche*: Thibodaux, 206 Pamela Place; Beth Maniscalco.

Allen's Hummingbird was removed from the Review List on 16 March 2013.

Broad-billed Hummingbird (*Cynanthus latirostris*)

One male (2016-011) on 12-22 February 2016; *Jefferson*: Marrero, woodlot at the end of Caddy Dr., vicinity of N29.8658423°, W 90.1158446°; **James W. Beck** (ph), Linda Kingsland (ph only, p. 26), Jon W. Wise, Janine Robin, Nancy L. Newfield, and Joan Garvey (ph only).

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*)

One (2003-049) on 26 December 2003, *St. Tammany*: Slidell, 309 Rue Piper; Noel Peyton (ph, p.27).

Yellow Rail was removed from the Review List on 23 April 1994. The LBRC decided to review this record that was submitted and accompanied by hard evidence documentation.

Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*)

Two females, one in juvenal plumage and one in non-breeding plumage (2014-072) on 1 October 2014, *Acadia*: Crowley, Crowley Wastewater Treatment Facility; Oscar Johnson (ph, p. 27).

One female in Basic (non-breeding) plumage (2015-064) on 18-24 December 2015, *Jefferson Davis*: SSW Thornwell, near intersection of Hwy. 14 X 99; **Steven W. Cardiff** and Donna L. Dittmann (ph), Robert C. Dobbs, Dave Patton (ph only, p. 27).

Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*)

One adult male in breeding plumage (2015-038) on 28 May 2015, *Cameron*: Rutherford Beach; **Billy Jones** (ph) and Tom Finnie (ph, p. 27).

Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)

One adult (1993-081A) on 18 December 1993, *Cameron*: Gulf of Mexico 1 mi. SE Holly Beach; Donna L. Dittmann and Steven W. Cardiff. See also 1993-081B (Unaccepted records).

Parasitic Jaeger was removed from the review list on 16 March 2013.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)

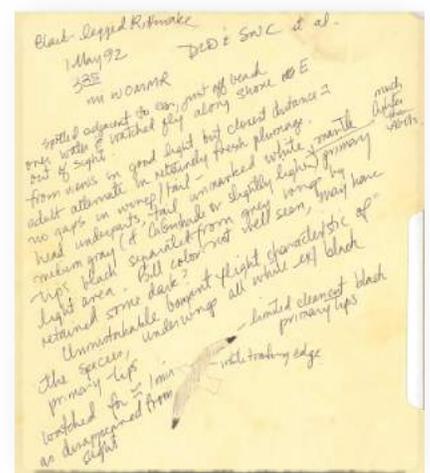
One adult mostly in breeding plumage (1992-091) on 1 May 1992, *Cameron*: Rutherford Beach; Donna L. Dittmann (field notes written on a manilla envelope, right) and Steven W. Cardiff.

Mew Gull (*Larus canus*)

One first year (2016-003) on 1-24 January 2016, *Caddo*: Shreveport, Cross Lake; **Charles E. Lyon** (ph only, p. 1), Robert C. Dobbs (ph), Larry Raymond (ph, p. 10), Paul E. Conover (ph, p. 10), Jay V. Huner (ph), John K. Dillon (ph), Devin Bosler (ph), J. V. Remsen (ph, p. 10), Dave Patton (ph only), and Ronnie Maum (ph only, p. 10). This represents the first state occurrence.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*)

One second year (2015-031) on 25 April 2015, *Cameron*: Rutherford Beach, 0.5 mi. W cattle guard; Phillip A. Wallace (ph, p. 27) and David P. Muth (ph).





Louisiana's First Mew Gull

Discovered by Charles E. Lyon on 1 January 2016 while birding Cross Lake by boat, this first year Mew Gull (LBRC 2016-003) was just one day late for his 2015 Louisiana Big Year list! Accessible only by boat, Charlie was able to accommodate numerous birders seeking this first state occurrence during January. Although missed on some trips, when present it could be approached fairly closely, as evidenced by the many excellent documentary photographs. It typically arrived with late PM influxes of Ring-billed Gulls, bathing, loafing, and eating offerings of popcorn. Some of the photos from the boat trips: Ronnie Maum (top two left) and Larry Raymond (middle left) on 10 January; Paul E. Conover (bottom left and top right on 10 January) and J. V. Remsen (bottom right) on 24 January.



Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*)

One first year male (1994-127) on 16 April 1994, *Cameron*: approximately 4 mi. W old mouth Mermentau River (Rutherford Beach); Donna L. Dittmann (ph on p. 27) and Steven W. Cardiff (LSUMZ 160609). Published in *Field Notes* 48(3):309.

One second year female (2002-029) on 19 May 2002, *Cameron*: approximately 5 mi. W old mouth Mermentau River (Rutherford Beach); Donna L. Dittmann (ph on p. 27) and Steven W. Cardiff (LSUMZ 173570).

One adult female (2015-051) on 11 October 2015, *Cameron*: Rutherford Beach, about 5 mi. W community; Paul E. Conover (ph) and Donna L. Dittmann (prep only, DLD 10879, ph on p. 27). This record was accepted after four circulations. The relatively early date, somewhat large black band on P5, and relatively large general size and bill (for a female) were bothersome. But, overall, the bird was consistent with a Thayer's and all Members accepted as such.

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides*)

One first winter (2014-081) on 11 March 2014, *St. Landry*: E. side Brooks Rd., about 1/2 mi. S intersection with Hwy. 358, 1 mi. N intersection with Dusty Rd.; Jay V. Huner (ph, p. 28).

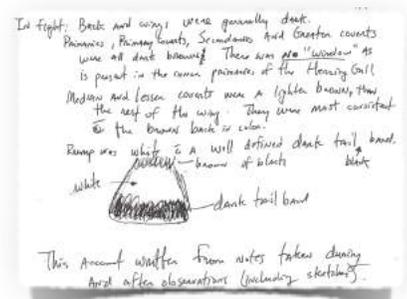
Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)

One first year (1994-072) on 20 April 1994, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, Grand Isle SP; Jim Holmes, Jr. (notes; a portion of field notes shown at right).

Lesser Black-backed Gull was removed from the Review List on 7 September 1996.

Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*)

One first year (2015-009) on 5 January 2015, *Jefferson*: Elmer's Island WMA, E. end; Erik I. Johnson (ph, p. 28).



Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*) - cont.

One first year (2015-020) on 17 March 2015, *Cameron*: Holly Beach, Hwy. 82 at mile 21; Jay V. Huner (ph, p. 28).

One first year (2016-008) on 13 January-23 March 2016, *Jefferson and Lafourche*: ranging from Elmer's Island WMA west to Bay Champagne; Dan O'Malley (ph), Donna L. Dittmann (ph, p. 28) and Steven W. Cardiff.

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)

One adult (1991-053) on 27 October 1991, *Lafourche*: Fourchon Beach; Norton Nelkin and Robert D. Purrington (ph only, p. 28).

One third year (1995-074) on 26 March 1995, *Orleans*: New Orleans, Seabrook Bridge; Phillip A. Wallace (ph, p. 28).

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)

One adult (2015-070) on 10 July 2015, *Plaquemines*: Breton NWR, Breton Island; David P. Muth (ph, p. 28).

This represents the eighth state occurrence and first in 15 years.

Great Shearwater (*Ardenna gravis*)

Five (2015-050) on 21 September 2015, *Gulf of Mexico*: ca 31 mi., 34 mi., and 50. mi. SE of Southwest Pass Mississippi River, N28.566389°, W89.113333° (three with Bridled Terns), N28.393889°, W88.876944° (one with Leach's Storm-Petrel), and N28.560833°, W89.063611° (one); David P. Muth (ph) and Dan O'Malley (ph, p. 29).

Sooty Shearwater (*Ardenna grisea*)

One (2014-031) on 18 June 2014, *Cameron*: Sabine River near mouth Sabine Pass, approximately N29.698494°, W93.840962°; Will Selman (ph, p. 1 and 6). This represents the first state occurrence.

Audubon's Shearwater (*Puffinus lherminieri*)

One (2015-071) on 6 September 2015, *Gulf of Mexico*: ca 20.5 mi. SE Southwest Pass Mississippi River, N28.670000° W89.217500°; David P. Muth (ph, p. 29) and J. V. Remsen (ph, p. 29).

One (2015-049) on 21 September 2015, *Gulf of Mexico*: ca 49 mi. SE Southwest Pass Mississippi River, N28.393889°, W88.876944°; Dan O'Malley (ph, p. 29).

Leach's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*)

Two (2011-157) on 24 July 2011, *Gulf of Mexico*: ca 46 mi. SSW Southwest Pass Mississippi River; Devin Bosler (ph, p. 29) and Jeffrey W. Harris (ph, p. 29). Several were reported, but Members agreed that only two individuals could be confirmed by the submitted documentation.

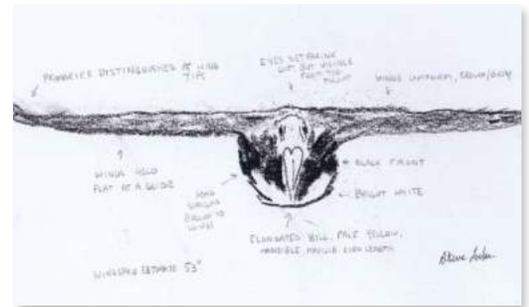
One (2015-073) on 21 September 2015, *Gulf of Mexico*: ca 34 mi. SE of Southwest Pass Mississippi River, N28.393889°, W88.876944°; J. V. Remsen (ph), David P. Muth (ph), Charles E. Lyon (ph only), and Jeff Trahan (ph only, p. 29).

Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*)

One immature (2015-021) on 23 March 2015, *Gulf of Mexico*: ca 170 mi. S Marsh Island, N27.014455°, W91.747738°; Paul Sweet (ph, p. 30).

Up to 20, including up to 15 adults/near adults and 5 immatures (2015-022) from 28 March-25 December 2015, *St. Tammany and Jefferson parishes*: general vicinity of Lake Pontchartrain Causeway; Nancy L. Newfield, Steve Locke (sketch, right), Pamela Morgan, Matthew L. Brady, Dave Patton (ph), Paul E. Conover (ph, p. 30), Robert C. Dobbs (ph, p. 30), C. Britain Sledge, Lehman Ellis, Jody Shugart, Janine Robin, Crystal Johnson (ph), David P. Muth (ph, p. 30), Dan O'Malley (ph, p. 30), and Devin Bosler (ph). Individuals are still being reported from the Causeway as of August 2016.

Two immatures (2015-036) on 11 May 2015, *Gulf of Mexico*: 72 mi. SW Raccoon Island, N28.132883° W91.488667°; Laurie Dugan (ph, p. 30).



Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*) - cont.

One immature (2015-040) on 2 June 2015, *Gulf of Mexico*: 77 mi. SW Raccoon Island, N28.07550°, W091.58272°; Laurie Dugan (ph, p. 30).

One adult (2015-041) on 6 June 2015, *Gulf of Mexico*: 50 mi. SW Pointe Au Fer Island, N28.692524°, W91.800507°; Laurie Dugan (ph, p. 30).

Harris's Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*)

One adult (2007-018) on 1 January 2007, *Orleans*: Recovery 1 at railroad tracks; Phillip A. Wallace (ph, p. 30). A majority of Members accepted as Origin-Hypothetical. Although there are several accepted wild occurrences from SW Louisiana, it is a species commonly kept by falconers and thus the origin of this individual east of the previously accepted records is problematic.

White-tailed Hawk (*Geranoaetus albicaudatus*)

One immature (2010-122) on 27 March 2010, *Calcasieu*: Fruge Rd.; Tommy Harold (ph, p. 30).

One second year (2014-035) on 13 September 2014, *Cameron*: vicinity of Johnsons Bayou; Paul E. Conover (ph) and Dave Patton (ph only, p. 30).

One immature (2015-048) on 21 September 2015, *Cameron*: near mile marker 8 on Hwy. 82, ca 4 mi. W Johnsons Bayou; Paul E. Conover (ph, p. 30).

One second year (2016-009) on 30 January 2016 and presumably the same individual on 3 February 2016, *Calcasieu*: near intersection of Frugé and Nunez roads near Holmwood, first sighting at N30.091625°, W93.038086°;

Katrina Hucks (ph, p. 30); and Michael J. Musumeche (ph). An additional report from 11 February, although possibly correctly identified, did not provide adequate support to extend the date range of this record.

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)

One immature (2015-016) on 2-28 February 2015, *Morehouse*: Upper Ouachita NWR, Mollicy Unit; Jeff Barnhill (ph, p. 31). Although as many as four were reported, Members did not believe evidence provided with the report was adequate to support acceptance of more than one individual.

Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*)

One (2010-124) on 7 February 2010, *Plaquemines*: Bay Chaland Headland; Edward J. Raynor (ph of habitat, p. 31).

One (2015-056) on 19 November 2015, *Lafourche*: Fourchon Beach, N29.13235°, W90.14476°; Dan O'Malley (ph, p. 31).

One (2015-065) on 15 December 2015-8 March 2016, *Jefferson*: Elmer's Island WMA, beach/dune area near mouth of Bayou Von Thunder, ca 1.5 km W of where WMA entrance road intercepts beach; Donna L. Dittmann (ph, p. 31) and Steven W. Cardiff.



Red-naped Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus nuchalis*)

One female (2015-054) on 1 November 2015, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary; **Carrina Williams** (ph, above) and Paul E. Conover (ph). This represents the third accepted state occurrence.

Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*)

Up to five, including two pairs (2009-002) 25 June-1 August 2009, *Bossier*: Cane's Landing on the Red River; Terry Davis.

Two (2009-112) on 12 July 2009, *Caddo*: Charles and Marie Hamel Park; Terry Davis.

Two (2009-061) on 17 July and 16 August 2009, *Bossier*: Elm Grove; Terry Davis.

One (2014-089) on 15 May 2014, *Cameron*: Hackberry Ridge, 2 mi. WSW Johnsons Bayou School; Robert C. Dobbs (ph, p. 31).

Willow Flycatcher was removed from the Review List on 14 March 2015.

Pacific-slope Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*)

One (2009-094) on 3 October 2009, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou area; Paul E. Conover (LSUMZ 184921) and Donna L. Dittmann (DLD 9821 only, ph).

One (2015-068) on 20 October 2015, *Iberville*: 4 mi. N St. Gabriel, 435 Pecan Dr.; **Donna L.**

Dittmann (DLD 10869, ph) and Steven W. Cardiff (LSUMZ).

One (2015-069) on 20 October 2015-14 January 2016, *Iberville*: 4 mi. N St. Gabriel, 435 Pecan Dr.;

Donna L. Dittmann (DLD 10871, ph) and Steven W. Cardiff (LSUMZ). This specimen, along with 2015-068 key out as Pacific-slope Flycatcher and, during a Discussion Round, all Members accepted both specimens as such. See page 31 for photographs of these specimens.

Cordilleran Flycatcher (*Empidonax occidentalis*)

One (2010-098) on 28 December 2010, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, TNC Landry-LeBlanc Tract; Robert C. Dobbs (ph, audio; photo and sonogram appear on p. 31). This is the third accepted record.

Pacific-slope/Cordilleran flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis/occidentalis*)

One (2015-067) on 22 September 2015, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, TNC Landry-LeBlanc Tract; Donna L. Dittmann (ph, p. 31) and Steven W. Cardiff.

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)

One (2000-071) on 30 December 2000, *Plaquemines*: woodlot downriver and opposite side Hwy. 23 from Fort Jackson; B. Mac Myers III, James W. Beck, and Phillip A. Wallace.

One (2004-022) on 18 and 22 December 2004, *La Salle*: S. side Catahoula Lake, N of diversion canal spillway; Roger J. Breedlove (ph, p. 32).

Say's Phoebe was removed from the Review List on 14 March 2015.

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*)

One (1990-058) on 19 December 1990, *Acadia*: 4 1/2 mi. E Morse, Lyons Point Gully; Donna L. Dittmann (sketch) and Steven W. Cardiff (card only).

Two (1995-010) on 21 January 1995, *Plaquemines*: across Hwy. 23 from Fort Jackson; Phillip A. Wallace (ph, p. 32).

Ash-throated Flycatcher was removed from the Review List on 7 September 1996.

Brown-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*)

One (2015-006) on 2 January 2015, *Plaquemines*: across Hwy. 23 from Fort Jackson; Phillip A. Wallace (ph, p. 32).

One (2015-024) on 29 March 2015, *Plaquemines*: Port Sulphur, north of Trigg Ln. and W of River Rd.; Cameron Rutt (ph, p. 32).

One (2015-026) from 26 December 2015-27 January 2016, *St. Bernard*: Chalmette, Chalmette Battlefield; Janine Robin (ph), J. V. Remsen (ph, left and p. 32), David P. Muth (ph), Jay V. Huner, and Erik I. Johnson. Reportedly found on 26 December 2015 by Christina Riehl and Tom and Jennifer Coulson during the New Orleans CBC. See also eBird: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S26474296> (includes photo by Joan Garvey). Whereas, this species is nearly annual in occurrence (up to three accepted records/year, e.g., 2015 above), many records involve staked out individuals (such as photographed left), this species has not yet met the threshold for removal from the Review List (see also p. 3). Brown-crested

Flycatcher also remains an identification challenge, with only 66% of the submitted records accepted to date.

Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)

One (2013-056) on 31 January 2013, *Cameron*: E. end Nunez Rd. (=extreme W. end of Nunez Woods/Cow Island), approximately 8 mi. E Grand Chenier, N29.740267° W92.843817°; Walker Wilson (ph, p. 32). May involve one of at least two individuals present at this site since 2009 (e.g., 2009-048, see LBRC Newsletter 2010, p. 9).

One (2014-085) on 10 April 2014, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou; Carrie Gawne and Will Lewis.

One (2015-028) on 13 April 2015, *Cameron*: Rockefeller Refuge, Nunez tract; Jay Carlisle. Record may pertain to same bird(s) involved in 2009-048, 2013-056, etc.

Pair plus offspring (2015-035) on 5 May-28 June 2015, *Calcasieu*: Sulphur, Hidden Ponds RV Park; Cameron Rutt (ph, p. 32), Tom Finnie (ph), Oscar Johnson, Michael J. Musumeche (ph), Jay V. Huner, Robert C. Dobbs (ph), and Devin Bosler (ph). This pair produced young and thus provides the first successful nesting in Louisiana; the pair remained present through 2015. First reported at this site in 2013 (2013-067).

One (2015-072) on 14 December 2015, *Vermilion*: Flying J Ranch, ca 1 mi. W Hwy. 82 and 2 mi. S Pine Island Rd., N29.817765°, W92.345849°; Phillip A. Wallace (ph, p. 32).

Couch's Kingbird (*Tyrannus couchii*)

One (2014-096) from 4 November 2014-13 January 2015, *Caddo*: Shreveport, C. Bickham Dickson Park; Emily Holcomb (ph, p. 33), Terry Davis (audio), Charles E. Lyon (ph), Jeff Trahan (ph), Jay V. Huner, and Jeff Pollack (ph only).

One (2015-008) on 3-13 January 2015, *Vermilion*: Lomire Rd., 7.1 mi. SSW Kaplan; **Erik I. Johnson** (ph), Michael J. Musumeche (ph, p. 33), Mary Mehaffey (ph), and Oscar Johnson (ph only). This may be the same individual (2013-049) returning for its second winter to same locality.

Two, possibly a pair (2016-012) on 16-17 February 2016; *Cameron*: Coastal Club Lodge, 10.1 mi. SSW Bell City; Erik I. Johnson (ph, p. 33).

Tropical/Couch's Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus/couchii*)

One (2000-019) on 9 April 2000, *Lafourche*: Port Fourchon, Lumcon Rd. off Hwy. 3090; Robert D. Purrington (ph, p. 33). Submitted as a Tropical Kingbird, but Members accepted to complex only.

One (2012-158) on 22 October 2012, *Cameron*: 0.3 mi. E Sabine Pass bridge on N side Hwy. 82; Rebecca L. Crofton (ph, p. 33). Submitted as a Couch's Kingbird, but Members accepted to complex only.

One (2014-086) on 22 April 2014, *Cameron*: Mae's Beach Rd.; Billy Jones (ph, p. 33) and Paul E. Conover (ph). Reportedly found by Jonathan L. Dunn earlier in the day.

One (2015-032) on 26 April 2015, *Cameron*: Earl Rd., ca 3 mi. E Cameron; Dave Patton (ph, p. 33).

One (2015-033) on 1 May 2015, *Cameron*: Willow Island, 7 mi. E Cameron; Dave Patton (ph, pl. 33). Conceivably the same individual as for (2015-032, ca 1 1/2 mi. between sites and found six days earlier along Earl Rd.), but treated as a separate occurrence.

One (2015-062) on 26 November 2015, *Jefferson*: levee across from Jefferson Park, River Rd. N29.955676°, W90.165250°; Erik I. Johnson (ph, p. 33).

One (2016-010) on 11-23 January 2016, *Calcasieu*: Rossignol Rd. east of Fontenot Rd.; Melvin Weber (ph) and Danny Dobbs (ph only, p. 33). This record was originally submitted as a Couch's, but all Members agreed that documentation did not support a specific identification and it was accepted only to complex.

Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*)

One (1998-048) on 3 May 1998, *Gulf of Mexico*: 61 mi. S East Timbalier Island, Ewing Bank 826 oil platform; Richard L. (Rick) Knight (ph, p. 33).

One (2014-090) on 15 May 2014, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, N. end of Landry Ln.; Cameron Rutt and John C. Mittermeier (ph only, p. 33). See also 2014-052 (accepted 18th Report/2015 Newsletter – accepted as different individual).

One (2014-091) on 5 June 2014, *Terrebonne*: Trinity Island; Robert C. Dobbs (ph, p. 33).

One (2015-029) on 20 April 2015, *Plaquemines*: Pass a Loutre WMA headquarters; Dan O'Malley (ph, p. 33).

One (2015-030) on 21 April 2015, *Plaquemines*: Hwy. 23 just E intersection Diamond Rd., N29.5250°, W89.7420°; Dan O'Malley (ph, p. 33).

One first spring male (2015-034) on 2 May 2015, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, Exxon Fields at Orleans Ave. X Campsite Rd.; Erik I. Johnson (ph, p. 33).

One (2015-037) on 15-16 May 2015, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, Grand Isle SP; Erik I. Johnson (ph) and Jay V. Huner (ph, p. 33).

Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*)

One (2007-073) on 14 September 2007, *Cameron*: 3.2 km ESE Johnsons Bayou School; Robert C. Dobbs.

One (2007-074) on 15 September 2007, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Beach Woods; Robert C. Dobbs.

One (2007-080) on 15 September 2007, *Bossier*: Bossier City, Cane's Landing on Red River; Terry Davis. *Note we will not review the "probable" record from 27 Sep or the 'one between' 15 and 27 Sep.*

One (2014-099) on 16 November 2014, *Cameron*: Cameron Prairie NWR, Pintail Loop; Paul E. Conover.

Bell's Vireo was removed from the Review List on 14 March 2015.

Yellow-green Vireo (*Vireo flavoviridis*)

One (2014-046) on 11 October 2014, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary; **Paul E. Conover** (ph, p. 34) and Jay V. Huner.

One (2015-042) on 5-18 June 2015, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle SP adjacent to Admiral Craik Rd., ca 0.2 mi. W park entrance; **Erik I. Johnson** (audio), Janine Robin, Dan O'Malley (ph, p. 34), Nancy L. Newfield, Robert C. Dobbs (ph), and Steve Locke (color illustration).

One (2015-045) on 10-13 June 2015, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary; **Dave Patton** (ph), John Whittle (ph, p. 34), Jay V. Huner, and Devin Bosler.

One (2016-015) on 15 May 2016, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary; Paul E. Conover (ph, p. 34).

Black-whiskered Vireo (*Vireo altiloquus*)

One (2014-112) on 4 July 2014, *Orleans*: New Orleans, City Park Couturie Arboretum; Jody Shugart (ph, p. 34).

Two (2015-043) on 8 June 2015, *Plaquemines*: Pass a Loutre WMA, Cadro Pass Campground; Dan O'Malley (ph, p. 34).

One (2015-044) on 8 June 2015, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle SP adjacent to Admiral Craik Rd., ca 0.2 mi. W park entrance; Janine Robin (ph, p. 34).

One (2015-046) on 12 June 2015, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary; Matthew T. Pontiff (ph, p. 34).

One (2015-025) on 5 April 2015, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, TNC Landry-LeBlanc Tract; Erik Enbody (ph, p. 34).

One (2015-027) on 11-19 April 2015, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary; Dave Patton (ph), Paul E. Conover (ph), Tom Finnie (ph, p. 34), and Dan O'Malley (ph).

Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)

One female (1954-04) on 17 April 1954, *Cameron*: Cameron, near courthouse; John P. Gee, G. H. Lowery 5296, and Donna L. Dittmann (ph only, of LSUZ 20187, right). Published in Lowery (1974); this represents the first state occurrence.



One first year male (2016-005) on 10-16 February 2016, *Rapides*: Alexandria; Jay V. Huner (ph), Paul E. Conover (ph), Dave Patton (ph only), and Michael J. Musumeche (ph, p. 35). Homeowner reports present until 2 April 2016 (*vide* Jay V. Huner). This represents only the fifth state occurrence.

Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)

One (2008-005) on 12 January 2008, *Caddo*: Shreveport, Shreveport Regional Airport; Devin Bosler.

Five (2015-015) on 7 February 2015, *Caddo*: Shreveport, Shreveport Regional Airport; Dan O'Malley (ph, p. 35).

Yellow-rumped 'Audubon's' Warbler (*Setophaga coronata 'auduboni-group'*)

One male (2010-138) on 27 April 2010, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary; B. Mac Myers III and Dave Patton (ph only, p. 35).

Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Setophaga nigrescens*)

One female (2015-059) on 5 December 2015- 27 February 2016, *Orleans*: New Orleans, City Park, Roosevelt Mall, N29.9914°, W90.1019°; Nancy L. Newfield, David P. Muth (ph), and Joan Garvey (ph only, p. 35). This is likely an individual returning for its second winter (see LBRC 2015-003).

Hermit Warbler (*Setophaga occidentalis*)

One male (1973-08) on 20 April 1973, *Cameron*: woods near Johnsons Bayou; H. Douglas Pratt (HDP 175) and Donna L. Dittmann (ph only of LSUMZ 73128, right). Published in Lowery (1974).

**Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*)**

One adult male (1995-054) on 14 April 1995, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary; William R. Fontenot (card only).

One adult male (1998-052) on 18 April 1998, *Gulf of Mexico*: 80 mi. S Patterson, South Marsh Island 66C oil platform, N28.64667° W91.937500°; Daniel G. Christian.

One adult male (2002-072) on 4 January 2002, *Vermilion*: Vincent mini-refuge area of Crowley CBC; Kenneth V. Rosenberg.

One adult male (2005-056) on 31 December 2005, *St. Tammany*: Abita Springs, 22315 Main Street; Walter Clifton (ph, p. 35).

One in non-breeding plumage (2008-061) on 27 December 2008, *Iberville*: 3.7 mi. N St. Gabriel, 545 Pecan Dr.; J.V. Remsen.

Western Tanager was removed from the Review List on 16 March 2013.

Pyrrhuloxia (*Cardinalis sinuatus*)

One (2015-058) on 18-26 December 2015, *Jefferson Davis*: Wild Rd., 0.8-1.1 mi. E Hwy. 99; **Dan O'Malley** (ph, below and p. 1), Donna L. Dittmann (ph) and Steven W. Cardiff, Jay V. Huner, Robert C. Dobbs (ph), J. V. Remsen (ph), Paul E. Conover (ph), and Devin Bosler (ph). Reportedly present until 31 December 2015. This represents the first state occurrence.

Louisiana's First Pyrrhuloxia

This fairly cooperative individual was discovered by Dan O'Malley during the Lacassine NWR-Thornwell CBC on 18 December 2015. Bird seed added along the roadside assisted observers locating through December. It frequented a tree line, however that habitat extended away from the roadside and the bird tended to wander away from the road itself. Although the species had long been expected to occur and was thought most likely to show up in SW Louisiana, the semi-inland location near Thornwell in Jefferson Davis Parish was somewhat of a surprise.

**Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)**

One first year male (2016-007) on 29 January-31 March 2016, *East Baton Rouge*: Baton Rouge, 6206 Destrehan Dr.; Bridget H. Mayo (ph, p. 35).

Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*)

One male (2014-087) on 29 April 2014, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, N. edge of TNC Grilletta Tract, W to corner of Ludwig Ln. and Medical Ave.; Robert C. Dobbs (ph, p. 35).

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*)

One female (2007-013) on 15-24 February 2007, *Vermilion*: Gueydan, 1000 5th Street; Elizabeth Guidry (ph, p. 35).

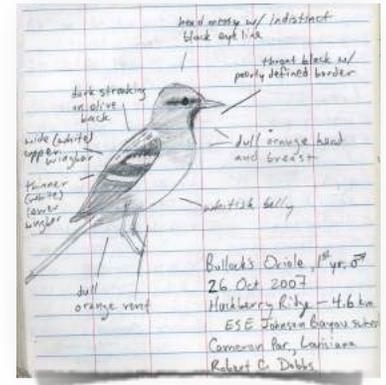
One immature male (2007-075) on 26 October 2007, *Cameron*: Hackberry Ridge, 2 mi. WSW Johnsons Bayou School; Robert C. Dobbs (sketch, see right).

One adult male (2010-121) on 24 April 2010, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary; Paul E. Conover (ph, p. 35).

One female (2014-103) on 15 December 2014, *Jefferson*: Harahan, Colonial Ln.; Lizette Wroten (ph, p. 35).

One adult male (2015-060) on 23 December 2015, *Orleans*: New Orleans, 3261 Derby Place; Steve Picou (letter plus photo, p. 35). This is likely a returning bird previously accepted (LBRC 2015-004, 18th Report).

One immature male (2015-061) on 22 March 2016, *De Soto*: Stonewall, 203 Hervey Dairy Farm Rd.; Jay V. Huner (ph, p. 35). Reportedly found on 28 December 2015 by Hubert C. Hervey.

**UNACCEPTED RECORDS: IDENTIFICATION QUESTIONABLE**

Each record below is accompanied by a brief explanation of why the report was not accepted based on its identification. In nearly every case the primary reason is that the written documentation was ultimately considered insufficient to confirm species identification. Evaluation and interpretation of a record's written details is, of course, a balancing act and the Committee's general policy has been that if details are not adequate, are too subjective, or otherwise conflict with a correct identification, then we would prefer to err on the conservative side, which means we may possibly not accept a report that is correctly identified. For many of the records that follow, reviewing Members stated in their reviews that they believed that the observer probably did correctly identify the species, but that the written details were somehow insufficient for official acceptance. Whereas our evaluations focus on a variety of parameters (description, details of the observation, observer skill/reputation/experience, etc.) we simply cannot "fill-in missing or overlooked details," which would embellish upon a record, no matter how "unmistakable" a species may be or how well Members may know or realize an observer's skill level or reputation. Records that fall outside documented patterns of geographical and/or seasonal occurrence receive greater scrutiny. Included here are many older submissions that were backlogged in the files, awaiting additional information or reports that were ultimately never received, or were awaiting a Fourth Circulation Discussion Vote.

The following 67 records (includes one also accepted to genus above) were considered unaccepted based on questionable identification.

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)

Two (2015-023) on 29 March 2015, *Webster*: Hwy. 70/80 between Minden and Dixie Inn. Although the observer reported that there were photos, none were ever submitted. Therefore, Members were unable to confirm identification, which would be necessary to then evaluate issues of origin.

Tundra/Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus columbianus/buccinator*)

Seven (2012-148) on 3 November 2012, *Caddo*: Shreveport, Press Rd. and Hwy. 20. The swans were observed while driving on the interstate. Although perhaps correctly identified as "swan sp.," the description did not provide enough detail to determine species, which would be a prerequisite to then assessing origin issues, etc.

American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*)

One (1993-021) on 30 December 1993, *Rapides*: Cheneyville-Echo Rd., entrance to catfish farm. The report was based on memory and submitted long after the observation. Although the description sounded fairly good, it was nevertheless considered insufficiently detailed to eliminate the very similar Mottled Duck or Mallard X American Black Duck hybrids.

Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)

One female (2014-082) on 23 March 2014, *Cameron*: N of Broussard Beach (video). This record was resolved at a Discussion Round. Review of specimens of female teal reinforced upon Members that their identification is not a trivial matter. Details of the bird were difficult to resolve in the video, and some key characters (an obvious eye line, dark lores, and a partial superciliary) were more suggestive of Blue-winged Teal even though the overall plumage was somewhat brownish and the bill appeared somewhat larger and more spatulate in some frames compared to Blue-winged. After considerable deliberation, Members agreed that the video was, at best, inconclusive for Cinnamon Teal. Cinnamon Teal was removed from the Review List on 14 March 2015.

White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*)

One group of 20-30 individuals and at least two other smaller groups (2008-026) on 7 March 2008, *Cameron*: offshore less than 5 mi. W Holly Beach. The minimal description (“black ducks with white wing patches”) was problematic, even for such an “obvious” species, and Members were also concerned that Gadwall (in poor lighting conditions) may be mistaken for this species. The number of individuals reported was unprecedented.

One first winter male (2009-106) on 15 March 2009, *Cameron*: Gulf off Broussard Beach. Primary concerns were that the report was based on memory, the description was rather vague, distance to the birds was unclear, and viewing/sea conditions were not described. Following a Discussion Round, all Members believed that the documentation was insufficient.

One (2014-083) on 23 March 2014, *Cameron*: Gulf off Little Florida Beach. Despite the observer’s reported familiarity with scoter species, all Members agreed that the incomplete description of a very distant bird did not warrant acceptance.

Two, possibly six (2015-018) on 28 February 2015, *Rapides*: SE arm of Cotile Lake, 428 Hickory Hill Dr. A distant observation with minimal details. Although possibly this species (which had been documented at this location in the past), all Members agreed that the documentation was inadequate for acceptance.

Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*)

Two females (2014-100) on 22 November 2014, *Union*: Lake D’Arbonne Dam. These birds were observed from a considerable distance, and, although possibly correctly identified, the supporting description was rudimentary and critical field characters were either not seen or not described.

One female (2015-010) on 13 January 2015, *St. Tammany*: Slidell, 393 Carr Dr. Most Members were concerned that the description was extremely brief given the reported circumstances/viewing conditions, and that the similar Red-breasted Merganser was not convincingly eliminated.

Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*)

One (2015-057) on 29 November 2015, *Pointe Coupee*: Morganza Forebay at floodgate pullout. A potential sixth state occurrence seen briefly at a distance and only in flight, most Members were hesitant to accept given the circumstances and the lack of supporting hard evidence.

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)

Two (1974-020) on 5 November 1974, *Caddo*: Shreveport, Cross Lake. This report is based on memory long after the observation and, although this is a very distinctive species (or at least genus), there was resistance to accepting even as “*Aechmophorus* sp.” due to the brevity of the details. Lowery (1974) reports Western Grebe on Cross Lake during winter 1973-1974 (that record would be the second state record and has never been reviewed by the LBRC). There are no other reports or cards for winter 1974-1975 and, for that reason, some Members were concerned whether memory of year was accurate, especially considering the rarity of Western Grebe at that time and that, technically, this would represent only the third state occurrence. As with any other record the Committee would re-circulate the record with additional reports.

Clark’s Grebe (*Aechmophorus clarkii*)

One (2014-107) on 30 October 2014, *Union*: D’Arbonne Lake at boat launch road N of Hwy. 33. Photographs showed an obvious *Aechmophorus* and were suggestive of Clark’s but did not convincingly identify that species, which would represent Louisiana’s first state record. The record was accepted as *Aechmophorus* sp. (see p. 8).

Antillean Nighthawk (*Chordeiles gundlachi*)

One male (2000-073) on 23-25 June 2000, *Orleans*: New Orleans, Audubon Park Zoo (audio). Observers noted that sonograms were made, but these were never received by the LBRC. Because this individual was not singing the classic “*pitty-pit-pit*” commonly associated with Antillean, most Members believed that the song more likely represented an aberrant Common Nighthawk.

One male (2011-147) on 30 April-5 May 2011, *Cameron*: Lighthouse Rd., ca. 10 mi. W Johnsons Bayou (audio; video). This well-documented record was not accepted because the song did not fit the classic “*pitty-pit-pit*” of Antillean Nighthawk. Rather, vocalizations sounded more like an aberrant Common or perhaps a hybrid Common X Antillean or Common X Lesser. Also, the bird would occasionally give more typical Common Nighthawk calls.

Blue-throated Hummingbird (*Lampornis clemenciae*)

One male (1994-025) on 7 September 1994, *Orleans*: New Orleans, 6055 General Meyer Ave. Members were nearly unanimous in agreeing that this potential second state record could not be accepted due to the brief, naked-eye observation and lack of hard evidence.

Allen’s Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)

One immature female (2007-085) banded 2 January 2008, *St. Tammany*: Mandeville, 17190 Antenor. During the Discussion Round vote, Nancy L. Newfield discussed two identification keys used to identify in-hand Rufous and Allen’s hummingbirds. She also reviewed her banding data for this species. There are few acceptable records of immature female Allen’s documented for Louisiana. We discussed the utility of bander data, the importance of supporting photos showing scale/ruler, measurements alone as documentation, the possibility of mensural error (especially on the scale of a hummingbird), and in-hand measurements of a bird versus of those of removed feathers. Although the report stated that there were photos, these were never received by the Committee. A vote was taken and all (including Newfield) but two Members voted to accept; the record was not accepted.

Allen’s Hummingbird was removed from the Review List on 16 March 2013.

Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*)

One heard (2015-014) on 3 February 2015, *Cameron*: Cameron, Wakefield Rd., marsh near Tiger Tanks Company. All Members were in agreement that more than a single “*urrr*” call was needed to document this species.

Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*)

One in near breeding plumage (1993-088) on 20 April 1993, *Jefferson Davis*: Parish road P-5-40, W Hwy. 99, 4 mi. N I-10. All Members believed that this sight report by a single observer was not sufficient for acceptance as a first state occurrence.

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)

One in non-breeding plumage (1994-070) on 5 April 1994, *Cameron*: Hackberry Ridge, 2 mi. WSW Johnsons Bayou School. Most Members believed that the description did not support the identification. Although the observer noted some differences between this and similar species, diagnostic features (e.g., rump) were not confirmed, nor were any photos obtained.

Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*)

One (2014-101) on 22 November 2014, *St. Tammany*: Slidell, Convention Center on Oak Harbor Blvd. The description was considered too vague for acceptance of such a rare shorebird observed only in flight by an observer with no prior experience with this species. Some superficially similar species were not considered in the write-up.

Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)

One juvenile (1993-081B) on 18 December 1993, *Cameron*: 1 mi. SE Holly Beach. (See Accepted records). The original report included observations of an adult (previously accepted; see also 1993-081A) and a juvenile, but, ultimately, a majority of Members believed that details provided for the juvenile were not adequate to support its identification.

Parasitic Jaeger was removed from the review list on 16 March 2013.

Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*)

One adult in breeding plumage (1999-095) on 4 September 1999, *Gulf of Mexico*: ca 110 mi. SW Morgan City, South Marsh Island 147 oil platform. At the time of this observation, there were only seven accepted occurrences and *no accepted records of adults*. The observation was brief and relatively distant, and the description is relatively brief. Although this species/plumage might be considered “unmistakable,” given the circumstances and the lack of hard evidence for such an outstanding occurrence, following a Discussion vote all but one Member opted not to accept.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*)

One adult (2015-013) on 24 January 2015, *Plaquemines*: west side Hwy. 23, off Tidewater Rd., north of Venice landfill. Views were brief and relatively distant, and photos could not be obtained. Because this also would have represented the first occurrence for *Plaquemines* and only the third well-documented occurrence for SE Louisiana (and first adult), most Members were ultimately reluctant to support the record.

Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*)

One first year female (2003-032) on 4 May 2003, *Cameron*: ca 2 mi. W Holly Beach (LSUMZ 177043). This specimen is a small individual with a proportionately small bill. It is similar in overall appearance to LSUMZ 160609 (see accepted records above) with which it shares very worn remiges. It is whiter on throat and chest following a partial body molt. It does have a dark/contrasting secondary bar, however, this individual has a more banded appearance to the tail (versus mostly all dark), which is an Iceland/Kumlien's character. This specimen was genetically examined and results did not support identification of Thayer's (per Sarah Sonsthagen allelic probability as Herring but SNP [single nucleotide polymorphism] recovered Slaty-backed and Lesser Black-backed) pattern. Genetic results and tail pattern may better support a potential hybrid. Members agreed that it would be prudent to be conservative and not accept this specimen as a Thayer's Gull at this time.

One first summer (2014-080) on 22 February 2014, *Vermilion*: 1 mi. W Mouton Cove (ph). All Members agreed that photographs and the accompanying description were not sufficient to rule out similar species.

One first year (2015-019) on 16 March 2015, *Terrebonne*: Isles Dernieres, Raccoon Island (ph). Following review of specimens and guidelines developed by the LBRC on ‘what a Thayer's Gull should look like,’ all Members believed that this individual was more Kumlien's-like in appearance and voted not to accept this record.

One adult (2015-039) on 27 May 2015, *Cameron*: Hwy. 82 along Holly Beach. In the absence of hard evidence, all Members believed that the description was not thorough enough to document such a rare and difficult to identify species, especially from late May.

Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)

One adult in breeding plumage (1994-077) on 28 November 1994, *Cameron*: Holly Beach. Most Members believed that the identification was likely correct, but the description lacked information on proportions, iris color, wing tip and tail pattern, and especially, mantle shade. Without these critical details, the record was determined to be unacceptable.

One first winter (1995-099) on 26 November 1995, *Orleans*: New Orleans, Seabrook Bridge (ph). All Members agreed that the photos did not support identification of this species.

Lesser Black-backed Gull was removed from the Review List on 7 September 1996.

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)

One adult almost in breeding plumage (1994-010) on 15 February 1994, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, Grand Isle SP. This sight record had a rudimentary description, relying mainly on size and mantle color for the identification. Leg color was not seen and primary pattern was not described. Following Discussion, two Members continued not to accept on grounds of an insufficient description and noting that there were only sixteen accepted records prior to this sighting.

One first year (1995-075) on 4 March 1995, *Lafourche*: Fourchon Beach (ph). Following Discussion, two Members remained concerned that relative size (compared to adjacent Herring Gulls in photos), bill size, and presence of a Herring-like pale inner primary flash did not support identification as a pure Great Black-backed Gull.

One first winter (1995-100) on 26 November 1995, *Orleans*: New Orleans, Seabrook Bridge (ph). All Members agreed that the photos did not support identification of this species.

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) - cont.

One juvenile (2014-094) on 12 October 2014, *Jefferson*: Elmer's Island (ph). In the report, it was assumed that this was the same as a previously accepted individual (2014-071; 18th Report/2015 Newsletter). Most Members believed that the photo better fit a Herring Gull and not 2014-071, and, regardless, there was generally not enough detail (based on the quick fly-by observation) to rule out superficially similar species or hybrids.

One adult breeding/alternate plumage (1996-086) on 28 April 1996, *Cameron*: Broussard Beach (ph). This record was originally submitted as a Kelp Gull (1996-084, reviewed and not accepted). It was resubmitted as a Great Black-backed Gull by other observers, but the original photos were of limited use, there were no additional photos, and some critical features were not studied. Ultimately, a majority of Members could not be convinced that the identification was certain beyond a reasonable doubt.

One adult (2000-047) on 30 September 2000, *Lafourche*: ½ mi. W Elmer's Island (ph). In the photos, the bird is distant and partially obscured. Also, the bird was not seen in flight. These factors caused a majority of Members to have concerns about the identification and whether other species or hybrids could be decisively excluded.

One first year (2015-011) on 13 January 2015, *East Baton Rouge*: North EBR landfill, West Irene Rd. impoundments (ph). The bird was seen at a distance and never in flight. Photos were suggestive of this species, but some features of the bird seemed inconsistent or ambiguous for Great Black-backed and the documentation lacked a thorough analysis addressing these potential problems. A majority of Members voted not to accept.

One adult (2015-017) on 8 February 2015, *Jefferson*: Elmer's Island, 0.25 mi. E intersection of road and beach. Quite possibly correctly identified by an observer who claimed to be familiar with this species. However, several key characters were not observed during this brief sighting. There were no other reports of an adult Great Black-backed Gull from this well-covered location during winter 2014-2015.

Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*)

One adult (2009-113) on 7 February 2009, *Jackson*: Caney Creek Reservoir. This report almost certainly pertained to LBRC 2009-001 (found on 24 January 2009) but the report was based on memory and details were superficial. Most Members believed that the documentation did not warrant extending the "last observed" date for 2009-001.

Elegant Tern (*Thalasseus elegans*)

One (2014-093) on 4 October 2014, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, Grand Isle SP. This would represent the first occurrence for Louisiana. Most Members believed that this bird may well have been an Elegant Tern based on overall size, the long droopy crest, and size, shape, and color of the bill. However, the limited black approaching the eye was a noted concern by some Members and, although this character may be within the range of individual variation of Elegant Tern, it is not the 'classic' head pattern for this species. It is unfortunate that the bird was relatively uncooperative and observers could not obtain a more extensive series of photos. There were no photos (especially flight) that showed details of remiges, rectrices, and rump, which are important to ascertain molt/age and required to support identification of this species. Members noted that extralimital 'orange-billed' terns are especially problematic with hybrids known, noting a recent record of an "Elegant" Tern breeding in a Royal Tern colony in Florida with hybrid offspring suspected (see Paul et. al 2003). Elegant Terns have been confirmed in Europe (by DNA analysis; Dufour et al. 2016) where the species has been present (banded individuals) for years in Sandwich Tern colonies; hybrids have also been documented there. There are no similar studies to confirm identification of eastern US occurrences.

Audubon's Shearwater (*Puffinus lherminieri*)

Around nine (1995-102) on 16 September 1995, *Gulf of Mexico*: 55-67 mi. S Venice. This observation occurred on a LOS pelagic trip and many observers including LBRC Members were onboard, and photos were supposedly obtained. However, photos were never submitted and only one observer submitted a written report, which did not provide adequate details to support the identification. There is a card (3 X 5 file) that indicates "20 individuals seen from 45-65 mi. S of Southwest Pass" but provides no additional details! The record can be re-reviewed if new information eventually surfaces.

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*)

Up to 24 (1995-064) on 27 May 1995, *Gulf of Mexico*: 45-55 mi. SSE of South Pass of the Mississippi River. This record predates the first accepted state record. Neither the descriptions or the now-degraded video were considered adequate to support the identification of these storm-petrels as Band-rumped.

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel was removed from the Review List on 7 September 2002.

Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*)

One (1982-065) on 13 March 1982, *Orleans*: along Hwy. 11, N of Hwy. 90. Note: there is an accepted record (see *Second Report*) on 30 January 1982. This record was submitted long after the observation and most Members agreed that the elapsed time, the observer's inexperience (at the time), and inappropriate habitat were problematic.

Two dark morphs (1994-004) on 3 January 1994, *Tensas*: Tensas River NWR. The description was not detailed enough to eliminate Red-tailed Hawk from consideration.

One light morph (1994-007) on 21 January 1994, *Rapides*: on Cheneyville-Echo Rd. A brief observation, during which the observer was struck by dark wrist marks and dark belly, but there was not enough time to study other characters. The observed field marks, while intriguing, were not enough to convince a majority of Members.

One light morph immature (1994-011) on 13 February 1994, *Cameron*: Rutherford Beach Rd., about 1 mi. N of the beach. Although the description was fairly good, feathered tarsi were not noted and some Members were uncomfortable with the lack of hard evidence. Also, it was not possible to eliminate a hybrid Swainson's X Rough-legged (of which there is a Louisiana specimen).

One immature (2015-052) on 19 October 2015, *Natchitoches*: from I-49 at vicinity of mile 150. All Members believed that the circumstances of the observation (brief, naked-eye of flying bird from moving vehicle) and details were not sufficient for acceptance of such a rare species.

Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*)

Two light morph adults (2014-109) on October/November 2014, *Cameron*: ca 5 mi. SW Holmwood. Most Members agreed that the circumstances as well as the lack of specifics and hard evidence (especially for a report involving *two* individuals) justified non-acceptance.

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)

One immature (2014-105) on 27 December 2014, *Morehouse*: Upper Ouachita NWR, Mollicy unit (ph). The photos provided better supported identification as a Bald Eagle.

Western Wood-Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*)

One immature female (2000-061) on 29 October 2000, *Cameron*: 1.5 mi. E old mouth Mermentau River (LSUMZ 171770). Although a relatively dark individual, and reportedly heard giving *sordidulus* vocalizations, the specimen is otherwise consistent with, and identified in the collection as, an Eastern Wood-Pewee.

One (2015-055) on 1 November 2015, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary; (ph and audio). Excellent documentation was provided by one of several observers. Most Members believed that the sound recordings were more consistent with a hoarse Eastern Wood-Pewee (e.g., same cadence) than a Western. The plumage also supports a typical Eastern Wood-Pewee, e.g., noticeable crown-nape contrast, overall coloration not dark enough for Western, and lacking Western's more uniform dark brownish wash across the chest. Note also that hybrids are known to occur (Robbins and Manthey 2016), a possible explanation for certain odd-sounding/ appearing individuals.

Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*)

One (2014-088) on 7 May 2014, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou (ph). Although the bird was captured and banded, there is only a single photo (which is more suggestive of Acadian Flycatcher), and in-hand measurements seem equivocal.

Willow Flycatcher was removed from the Review List on 14 March 2015.

Cordilleran Flycatcher (*Empidonax occidentalis*)

One (2013-079) on 17 October 2013, *Cameron*: Johnsons Bayou, Peveto Woods Sanctuary (ph). Following initial circulations, this record went to Discussion Round as a "Western Flycatcher" because several Members were willing to accept to "complex." However, after comparison of the three photos with specimens, the Committee was evenly split. Members voting not to accept were not convinced that Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was adequately eliminated from consideration by the photos, description, or described calls.

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)

One (1993-090) on 30 December 1993, *Rapides*: Cheneyville-Echo Rd., entrance to catfish farm. This is a report based on memory by a single observer, submitted after being "flagged" in eBird. The record could pertain to

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) - cont.

a "returnee" Say's, as one was present in the same general area the previous late winter (LBRC 1993-010, accepted in 10th Report). At the time of the observation this would have represented only the seventh state occurrence and, although most Members believed that the identification was likely correct, there was simply not enough evidence to support acceptance of (at the time) such a rare bird. All but one Member voted not to accept. As would be the case for any record, the LBRC strives to obtain as much documentation as possible for all Review List species and would re-review this record if additional information is ever submitted to better document the occurrence.

Say's Phoebe was removed from the Review List on 14 March 2015.

Brown-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*)

One (2014-092) on 12 October 2014, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, Lafitte Woods Preserve (ph). This record received mixed reviews and all agreed that the bird was certainly at least superficially suggestive for Brown-crested. But, the prevailing majority of dissenting Members were concerned about the lack of convincing details on multiple diagnostic characters (e.g., voice, mouth color, tail pattern, tertial pattern, etc.) that would decisively eliminate Great Crested or Ash-throated flycatchers, especially in the case of a relatively early individual and potential first occurrence for Grand Isle.

Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*)

One (2009-111) on 25 June 2009, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, Bridgeside Marina on E. side Caminada Pass. Possibly correctly identified, but the brief, naked-eye sighting and sketchy description were ultimately problematic.

Black-whiskered Vireo (*Vireo altiloquus*)

One (2014-111) on 11 April 2014, *Orleans*: New Orleans, City Park, Couturie Arboretum (ph). The initial in-the-field identification was Red-eyed Vireo. However, after reviewing the photos, the observer believed that the bird possessed a black whisker mark. The photos did suggest the presence of a black whisker mark, but most Members believed that this could be an artifact of how the throat feathers were arranged. Other characters visible in the photographs (bill proportions, head pattern) seemed more consistent with Red-eyed Vireo.

Chihuahuan Raven (*Corvus cryptoleucus*)

One (2012-137) on 14 May 2012, *Cameron*: Cameron, Calcasieu River ferry landing. All Members agreed that the circumstances of the observation (a very brief fly-by and lack of hard evidence) were inadequate to document a potential second state occurrence.

Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*)

One adult (1994-076) on 5 November 1994, *Cameron*: Sabine NWR nature trail. This record just barely received a majority negative vote following the second circulation. Most Members believed that this species was probably seen, but the details were written well after the observation and after additional individuals of this species had been observed on a trip to the western USA, and parts of the description seemed incompatible for the species (e.g., "rich, dark brown back").

Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*)

One heard (2015-012) on 18 January 2015, *Jefferson Davis*: Thornwell on Potter Rd. This was a brief encounter and essentially a heard-only observation. Most Members believed that, although calls of this species are "unmistakable" for an experienced observer, more robust documentation would have been desirable for such a rare species (would be only 10th state record).

Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)

Four (1988-024) on 26 December 1988, *Caddo*: Shreveport, Shreveport Regional Airport. Although reported from a traditional wintering site for this species, the brief description and discussion did not elaborate on separation from other species. In addition, the reported flight behavior prompted some Members to question whether the observer adequately eliminated Sprague's Pipit.

Townsend's Warbler (*Setophaga townsendi*)

One female (2011-124) on 30 October 2011, *Cameron*: Willow Island, 7 mi. E Cameron. Most Members believed that the description was too superficial to support identification of such a rare species (only 12 accepted records) or eliminate similar Black-throated Green Warbler.

Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*)

One adult male (2015-053) on 30 October 2015, *Cameron*: Willow Island, 7 mi. E Cameron. This record received a mixed vote, with the majority of Members of the opinion that the description was too brief to safely identify this species and eliminate potential hybrids with Eastern Towhee.

Saltmarsh Sparrow (*Ammodramus caudacutus*)

One (2014-095) on 14 October 2014, *Cameron*: Cameron, East Jetty Park (ph). After review of the photos, the consensus among Members was that bird was within the range of variation for Nelson's Sparrow.

Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco (*Junco hyemalis* 'oreganus-group')

One adult male (2014-079) on 16 February 2014, *La Salle*: near Nebo, near the E. end of Red's Place Rd. The observer failed to provide convincing details supporting identification of this subspecies group.

Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*)

One male (1992-051) on 6 June 1992, *Lafourche*: Port Fourchon, w. end of Theriot Rd. off Fourchon Rd. Following three circulations, a majority of Members believed that the reported size was inconsistent with a Shiny Cowbird (too large), and details on other characters were too vague for acceptance.

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*)

One immature male (2015-007) on 22 November 2015, *St. Martin*: Lake Martin (ph). The observer had been encouraged to submit the record by a Committee Member. Although the images were superficially suggestive of this species, most Members agreed that the photos also showed some characters consistent with a Baltimore Oriole and thus had to be considered inconclusive.

UNACCEPTED RECORDS: ORIGIN

The following six records were considered unacceptable on the basis of questionable wild origin. In each case, a majority of Members believed that a human-assisted scenario was most plausible.

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)

Two (2014-084) on 31 March 2014, *St. Mary*: ¼ mi. N Intracoastal Canal Bridge (ph). All Members agreed that the birds were correctly identified as a large form of Canada Goose, but the location, circumstances (apparent pair), and late spring date most likely indicated feral origin.

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*)

Two juveniles (2014-062) on 23-27 November 2014, *Avoyelles*: 4 mi. S Simmesport (video). Excellent close-up video (with a cell phone) of tame individuals strongly suggested to Members that the birds had recently escaped from captivity. Apparently, this species is commonly kept/readily available in the aviculture trade.

American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*)

One adult and one juvenile (2011-111) on 3, 12, and 19 October 2011, *Plaquemines*: Pass A Loutre WMA, ca 2.75 mi. SE Pilottown. This was a well-documented record supported by photographs of adult and juvenile – both individuals were unbanded. The record went to Discussion Round. Identification seemed straightforward, but Members were divided regarding provenance, with major differences of opinion on interpreting general patterns of vagrancy in flamingoes, records of individuals of known provenance, and movements of wild and feral birds in association with tropical weather systems. Only one known wild individual (banded "HDNT," originating from the Yucatan population photo right) has occurred in Louisiana (see 10th, 13th, and 15th Reports of the LBRC). A couple of other



American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) cont.

banded Yucatan birds have turned up in Cuba and Florida. However, provenance of free-flying Florida birds is clouded by known feral populations and the propensity of known feral/escaped flamingoes (of various species) to turn up in “good flamingo habitat,” specifically note HDNT’s companion (see photo previous page) *was a known escape*. With few confirmed records of known wild flamingoes, it is difficult to assess wild origin of “vagrants.” Another aspect of this record was that it involved an adult with a juvenile (not just an immature), and some Members believed that this was more indicative of feral origin inasmuch as one could argue that adults would be much less likely candidates for long distance vagrancy. Ultimately, three Members believed “questionable origin” was the most prudent course, and, although other Members accepted as “origin hypothetical,” this vote resulted in the record becoming unacceptable based on questionable origin.

Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiaca*)

One first year male (2000-050) on 21-23 November 2000, *St. Bernard*: Chalmette, at Ted’s Boat Launch on Paris Rd. (LSUMZ 171841, ph by Donna L. Dittmann). First observed on a shrimp boat 21 November, then reported tangled in its net the next day, this individual was retrieved by Audubon Park Zoo rehabber Sally Farrell on 23 November. It was diagnosed with a broken right shoulder and euthanized, and specimen is now deposited at LSUMNS. Because there was only a modest Snowy Owl invasion into the northern US during Fall 2000 (New England, and in Minnesota by the beginning of October, see cover photo and photo caption in *North American Birds* vol. 55, no. 1), most Members were hesitant to accept an unassisted origin, especially given the circumstances of the discovery and subsequent capture/injury.

Black Catbird (*Melanoptila glabrirostris*)

One (2013-075) on 3-4 June 2013, *Gulf of Mexico*: aboard the MV Munin Explorer; initially discovered at N24°46.68’, W89°31.55’ ca 230 mi. N Yucatan Peninsula, then riding the ship 162 mi. into Louisiana waters. It was last observed at N26°14.55’, W91°31.29’, ca 193 mi. SSE of Raccoon Island (ph). An exceptional observation of a bird discovered onboard a ship and hitching a ride into Louisiana waters, but LBRC Bylaws state “a record will not be accepted on origin when the origin is *known* or *highly suspected* to be man-assisted.”

Tricolored Munia (*Lonchura malacca*)

Three (2015-047) on 7 August 2015, *Terrebonne*: Chauvin, Bayou Sale Rd. (ph). Native of India, Sri Lanka, and southern China, this species is accepted by the AOU-Checklist as an Introduced and expanding species (North and Middle America) where currently found in the Greater Antilles, Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico. Records from the Dry Tortugas, FL were considered vagrants from the established population on Cuba (fide Andrew W. Kratter, FOSRC). There are no established populations in Florida, Mississippi or Alabama. So, there is no reason to consider the species as possibly ‘Introduced’ in Louisiana at this time. It is important to track the potential arrival of exotics.

Corrigenda

10th Report: delete record Gray Kingbird (1998-111) on 2 Sep 1998, *Orleans*: New Orleans, UNO East Campus; Peter H. Yaukey (ph).

The correct record number is LBRC 1998-054 and the record is accepted in the *9th Report*.

10th Report: – no observer or specimen numbers were provided for two Couch’s Kingbirds (2004-060). Full information for these two immature female kingbirds: Steven W. Cardiff prep numbers SWC 8311 (LSUMZ 177865) and SWC 8312 (LSUMZ 177866).

11th Report: year of observation is incorrect. Correct date is 25 May 2008 for Gray Kingbird (2008-46) on <25 May 2005>, *Terrebonne*: Isles Dernieres, Trinity Island, along California Canal; Justin Bosler (ph).

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The LBRC regrets that only a small percentage of submitted photographs can be showcased in the Annual Newsletter and LBRC Report. Due to space limitations, photographs appearing in the LBRC Showcase pages are chosen by the Newsletter Editor for a variety of reasons including (and these are well-represented herein): 1) to provide an image of the individual bird(s) accepted (whether by the person who found the bird, a photo taken within the record's date range of occurrence, or from the last day the bird was observed); 2) illustrate the importance of photographic documentation; 3) show the range of photographic images submitted to the LBRC for documentation; 4) stress the importance of *all photographs* to the documentation process - whether or not they are blurry (but species still recognizable) or tack sharp. A grainy or poorly exposed photo can often be as useful as one that is beautifully composed and professional-appearing; and finally, 5) as a means to encourage observers to carry a camera because, with practice, most observers can produce fine images of birds. And remember, even if others are photographing the same bird, their photos may not come out, be lost, or you can capture some aspect of the bird not captured by others - always have your camera handy or you might miss that "record" shot.

The LBRC is very appreciative of the time and effort observers have expended to submit photo and written documentation to the Committee.

Please keep up the good work!

Showcase I: Ducks to hummingbirds



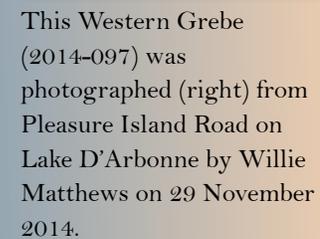
2009-109

Male Cinnamon Teal (2009-109) at Lake D'Arbonne (left), photographed by Richard Lowery on 16 March 2009.

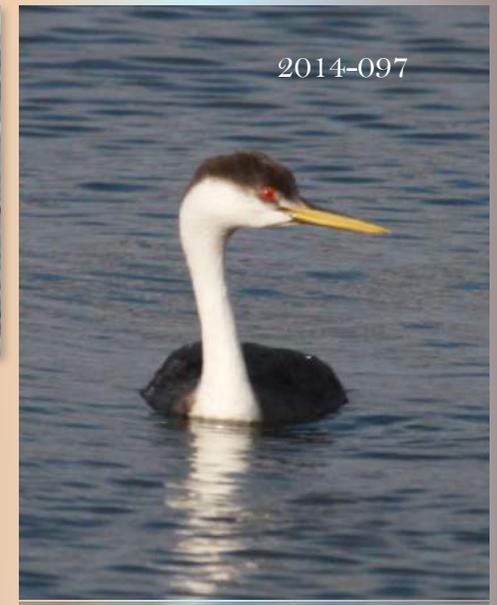


2014-102

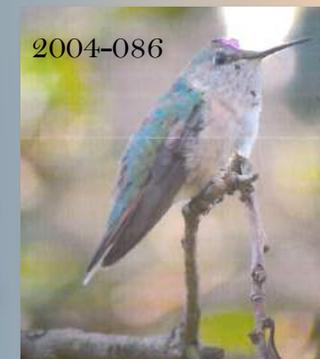
A distant White-winged Scoter (2014-102) at the Madisonville Boat Launch (below left) was photographed by Mary Mehaffey on 18 March 2014.



This Western Grebe (2014-097) was photographed (right) from Pleasure Island Road on Lake D'Arbonne by Willie Matthews on 29 November 2014.



2014-097



2004-086

This immature male (color-marked 'pink') Broad-tailed Hummingbird (2004-086) at Carol Foil's feeder in Baton Rouge was photographed (left) by Dennis Demcheck on 11 January 2004.



2016-011

Linda Kingsland obtained this lovely photograph (below) of the Broad-billed Hummingbird (2016-011) during its February 2016 stay in a woodlot in Marrero.

Showcase 2: Yellow Rail through gulls (part)



2003-049

The Yellow Rail (2003-049) at left was rescued from a swimming pool in Slidell and photographed by Noel Peyton on 26 December 2003. This presumed very late migrant was transferred to a wildlife rehabilitator for treatment; the bird's fate is unknown.



2014-072



2015-064

Adult Ruff in basic plumage (2015-064), photographed (left, with a Stilt Sandpiper on right) at Thornwell by Dave Patton on 24 December 2015.

This may potentially represent a "returnee" back for its third winter. Two female Ruffs (2014-072), one basic plumage (top right) and one juvenile (right) photographed at the Crowley Wastewater Treatment Facility by Oscar Johnson on 1 October 2014.



This handsome male Red-necked Phalarope (2015-038) was photographed (below left) at Rutherford Beach by Tom Finnie on 28 May 2015.



2015-038

This second-year California Gull (2015-031) was photographed (right) on Rutherford Beach by Phillip A. Wallace on 25 April 2015.



2015-031

Thayer's Gulls: identification is not always straightforward and DNA analysis may not be helpful.

Three specimen records of Thayer's Gull were accepted, all from along Rutherford Beach. A first year male (1994-127, LSUMZ 160609; top right) was approximately 4 mi. W old mouth Mermentau River on 16 April 1994 and one second year female (2002-029, LSUMZ 173570; middle right) was approximately 5 mi. W old mouth Mermentau River on 19 May 2002. Identification based on DNA analysis was equivocal, but the Committee accepted identification based on Thayer's Gull plumage characters. The DNA of the adult female (2015-051; lower right) was not analyzed. Although this individual seemed rather large and large-billed, especially for a female, all other characters supported identification as a Thayer's Gull. See also *Big gulls really do present a headache*, p. 36.

Photos of specimens by Donna L. Dittmann.



1994-127



2002-029



2015-051

Showcase 3: Gulls (end) through terns



All but one Member agreed that characters of this first year gull (2014-081; photos right and left), photographed in St. Landry Parish by Jay V. Huner on 11 March 2014, best fit Iceland Gull. One dissenting Member was concerned that the flight photo (right) was not clear enough to ascertain feather pattern. This represents the fifth accepted state occurrence.



Erik I. Johnson photographed (two photos at left) this first year Glaucous Gull (2015-009) at Elmer's Island on 5 January 2015.



The first year Glaucous Gull (2015-020) at Holly Beach (right) was photographed by Jay V. Huner on 17 March 2015.



This first year Glaucous Gull (2016-008) was seen on numerous occasions ranging from Elmer's Island west to Bay Champagne between 13 January and 23 March 2016. Here photographed (right) by Donna L. Dittmann on the day it was discovered just W of Elmer's Island.



This adult Arctic Tern (2015-070) was photographed (below) by David P. Muth on Breton Island on 10 July 2015. It was the first accepted occurrence since year 2000.

Two older records of Great Black-backed Gull were accepted. Robert D. Purrington photographed (above) the adult (1991-053) at Fourchon Beach on 27 October 1991; and Phillip A. Wallace photographed (below) the third year individual (1995-074) on the New Orleans waterfront on 26 March 1995.



Showcase 4: Tubenoses



2015-050

This Great Shearwater (left; 2015-050) photographed by Dan O'Malley was one of five found during a Gulf of Mexico pelagic off SE Louisiana on 21 September 2015.



2015-071

Two records of Audubon's Shearwater were accepted. One (right; 2015-071) was about 20.5 mi. SE of Southwest Pass of the



2015-071



2015-049

Mississippi River on 6 September 2015 (top photo by J. V. Remsen, bottom photo by David P. Muth). Note that primary molt is in progress, which can allow separation of individual birds and help confirm number of birds potentially present.

The other (2015-049) was photographed (left) by Dan O'Malley about 49 mi. SW of Southwest Pass of the Mississippi River on 21 September 2015.



2011-157

Two Leach's Storm-Petrels (2011-157) were well-documented about 46 mi. SSW Southwest Pass on 24 July 2011. Photos by Justin Bosler (left) and by Jeffrey W. Harris (below). Note the differences in primary molt/wear of these two individuals.

Another Leach's Storm-Petrel (2015-073) was photographed (below right) by Jeff Trahan about 34 mi. SE of Southwest Pass on 21 September 2015. There are still relatively few well-documented occurrences of this species, most of which have been found during late May-August. This is the first accepted September occurrence.



2015-073

Showcase 5: Brown Booby to hawks



2015-036



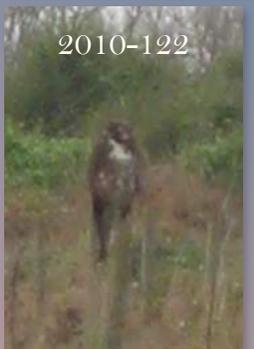
2015-040



2015-041



2007-018



2010-122



2014-035



2015-048



2016-009

Paul Sweet photographed this immature Brown Booby (top right; 2015-021) about 170 mi. S Marsh Island on 23 March 2015.

The Brown Booby invasion of Lake Ponchartrain (2015-022) continues! Boat trips on the lake along the Causeway during June-July 2015 confirmed that more than just a couple of individuals were involved. Up to 20, including 15 adults or near adults and five immatures were counted 28 March-25 December 2015.

Individuals are still being reported from the Causeway as of August 2016. Photo by David P. Muth (opposite right, upper) shows six individuals in view on 2 July; adult by Robert C. Dobbs (opposite right, lower), and immature (right, inset) by Paul E. Conover on 26 July; and, adult (bottom right) by Dan O'Malley on 28 May 2015. Additional pelagic Brown Boobies documented by Laurie Dugan included an immature (top left; 2015-036) about 72 mi. SW Raccoon Island on 11 May 2015, another immature (middle left; 2015-040) 77 mi. SW Raccoon Island on 2 June 2015, and an adult (opposite left; 2015-041) 50 mi. SW Pointe Au Fer Island on 6 June 2015.

Distant flight shot (left) by Phillip A. Wallace documents this Harris's Hawk (2007-018) on 1 January 2007 in Orleans Parish. Because of species' popularity in falconry and SE location, record was accepted Origin Hypothetical (see p. 12).



2015-021



2015-022



Four White-tailed Hawk records accepted in the *Nineteenth Report* are shown above. From left to right: immature (2010-122) photographed by Tommy Harold along Frugé Road on 27 March 2010; a second year bird (2014-035) photographed by Dave Patton near Johnsons Bayou on 13 September 2014; an immature (2015-048) photographed by Paul E. Conover W Johnsons Bayou on 21 September 2015; and a second year (2016-009) photographed by Katrina Hucks near the intersection of Frugé and Nunez roads, Calcasieu Parish, on 30 January 2016.

Showcase 6: Golden Eagle through *Empidonax* flycatchers



2015-016

Jeff Barnhill obtained this photograph (left) of a Golden Eagle (2015-016) at Upper Ouachita NWR Mollicy Unit on 28 February 2015.



2015-065

Three records of Burrowing Owl were accepted and include one (right; 2015-056) photographed along western Fourchon Beach by Dan O'Malley on 19 November 2015. Although the image is blurry, the species is still recognizable. Not too far to the east, a different individual (2015-065) was at Elmer's Island WMA 15 December 2015-8 March 2016, here (left) photographed by Donna L. Dittmann on 15 February 2016. Documentation for a third record



2015-056



2014-089

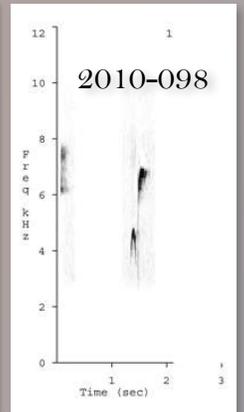
(2010-124) included a photograph of the habitat (old tire on barrier beach, right) on the Bay Chaland Headland, by Edward J. Raynor on 7 February 2010; the owl flushed before he could obtain a photograph. Unfortunately, it was not relocated.



This Willow Flycatcher (left; 2014-089) at Hackberry Ridge was photographed by Robert C. Dobbs on 15 May 2014.



2010-098



2010-098

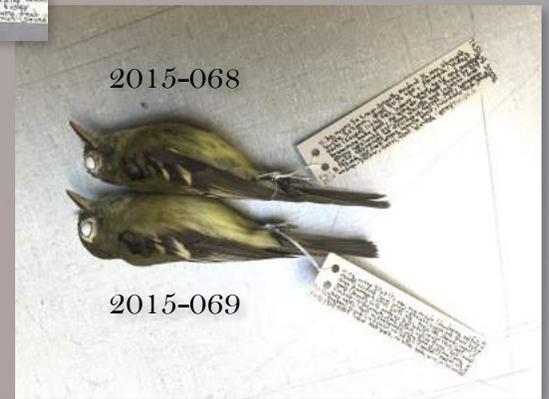
Robert C. Dobbs provided both photographic and audio evidence (right) to support identification of this Cordilleran Flycatcher (2010-098) discovered at Grand Isle on 28 December 2010. His discussion included the sonogram of the bird's call, critical for confirming this third state occurrence.



2009-094

Also at Grand Isle, this worn and silent *Empidonax* (below) was accepted as a "Western" Flycatcher (2015-067) but could not be identified to species. Photograph by Donna L. Dittmann on 22 September 2015.

Three records of Pacific-slope Flycatcher were accepted - all are documented by specimens. These represent the fourth through sixth state occurrences. One (above; 2009-094, LSUMZ 184921) was found in the Johnsons Bayou area on 3 October 2009. The other two (right) are both from the same location near St. Gabriel. Both individuals were present beginning 20 October 2015 when an immature female (2015-068) was collected (LSUMZ uncat., DLD 10869); the second immature female (2015-069) was detected intermittently until its collection on 14 January 2016 (LSUMZ uncat., DLD 10871). Photographs of the specimens by Donna L. Dittmann.



2015-068

2015-069



2015-067

Showcase 7: Say's Phoebe through Great Kiskadee



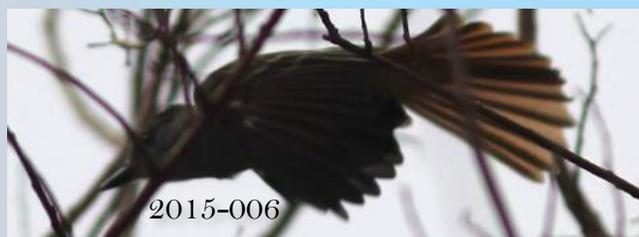
2004-022

Say's Phoebe (2004-022) at Catahoula Lake on 18 December 2004, photographed by Roger J. Breedlove (above left). This represents the tenth accepted occurrence for Louisiana.

One of two Ash-throated Flycatchers (right; 1995-010) photographed by Phillip A. Wallace at Fort Jackson, 21 January 1995.



1995-010



2015-006



2015-024



2015-026

Three records of Brown-crested Flycatcher were accepted. One (above, leftmost; 2015-006) was near Fort Jackson on 2 January 2015 (photo by Phillip A. Wallace); the second (above right, middle; 2015-024) was documented at Port Sulphur on 29 March 2015 by Cameron Rutt; and a third (above, far right; 2015-026) was at the Chalmette Battlefield from 26 December 2015-27 January 2016 (here 3 January by J. V. Remsen).



2013-056

Three of five accepted records of Great Kiskadee were documented with photographs: one (left; 2013-056) at Nunez Woods by Walker Wilson on 31 January 2013; a well-documented pair (2015-035), which nested and produced young at Sulphur, here photographed by Cameron Rutt (lower left - adult at nest) on 5 May 2015; and one (2015-072) photographed by Phillip A. Wallace S of Pine Island Rd. on 14 December 2015 during the White Lake CBC. Members discussed whether to remove this species from the Review List at the Annual Meeting but decided to keep it on to accumulate additional records (see pgs. 3-4).



2015-035



2015-072

Showcase 8: Kingbirds

Couch's Kingbird

There were three accepted records of Couch's Kingbird, all well-documented by photographs and voice descriptions: one (2014-096) at Shreveport, photographed by Emily Holcomb (below, far left) on 4 November 2014; a wintering returnee (2015-008) 7.1 mi. SSW Kaplan, photographed by Michael J. Musumeche (left) on 13 January 2015; and one of two (2016-012) at 10.1 mi. SSW Bell City, photographed by Erik I. Johnson on 16 February 2016 (also watch and listen to his video here: <https://vimeo.com/155770434>.) Seven records (wrapping



Tropical/Couch's kingbird

around from opposite left to below far right) of silent "T-C kingbirds" were accepted only as "Tropical-Couch's complex": one (2000-019) at Port Fourchon, photographed by Robert D. Purrington on 9 April 2000; one (2012-158) along Hwy. 82 near Sabine Pass, photographed by Rebecca L. Crofton on 22 October 2012; one (2014-086) near Johnsons Bayou, photographed by Billy Jones on 22 April 2014; one (2015-032) ca 3 mi. E Cameron, photographed by Dave Patton on 26 April 2015, and another (2015-033) nearby at Willow Island on 1 May 2015, also photographed by Dave Patton; one (2015-062) across from Jefferson Park, photographed by Erik I. Johnson on 26 November 2015; and one (2016-010) along Rossignol Road, photographed by Danny Dobbs on 11 January 2016.



Gray Kingbird



Seven Gray Kingbirds were accepted. All were supported by photographs (from above left to below right): one (1998-048) offshore at Ewing Bank 826 oil platform photographed by Richard L. (Rick) Knight on 3 May 1998; three different individuals at Grand Isle, one 15 May 2014 (2014-090) by John C. Mittermeier, one 2 May 2015 (2015-034) by Erik I. Johnson, and one 16 May 2015 (2015-037) by Jay V. Huner; one (2014-091) on Trinity Island photographed by Robert C. Dobbs on 5 June 2014; and, finally, two photographed by Dan O'Malley, one (2015-029) at Pass a Loutre WMA on 20 April 2015 and one (2015-030) at Diamond on 21 April 2015.

Showcase 9: Vireos



2014-046

An amazing four Yellow-green Vireos were found and accepted from 2014-2016. One (upper left; 2014-046) at Peveto Woods Sanctuary, photographed by Paul E. Conover on 11 October 2014, was only the second accepted occurrence of a fall migrant. More typical late spring birds included SE Louisiana's first (lower left; 2015-042) at Grand Isle SP, here photographed by Dan O'Malley on 11 June 2015 (note missing feathers causing dark line along lower edge of throat), and singles at Peveto Woods Sanctuary, one (upper right; 2015-045) photographed by John Whittle on 13 June 2015, and the other photographed by Paul E. Conover on 15 May 2016 (opposite right; 2016-015).



2015-045



2015-042

Spring-summer of 2015 was an exceptional period for rare vireos, including the two Yellow-greens and four Black-whiskered (see below).



2016-015



2014-112



2015-043



2015-044

Six Black-whiskered Vireo occurrences were accepted (refer to LBRC numbers on photos), all supported by photographs. One (2014-112) slightly inland at New Orleans, was photographed by Jody Shugart on 4 July 2014; one of two (2015-043) present at Pass a Loutre WMA was photographed by Dan O'Malley on 8 June 2015; one (2015-044) discovered by Janine Robin during review of her photos of the Grand Isle Yellow-green Vireo (record above) was at Grand Isle SP on 8 June 2015; one (2015-046) at Peveto Woods Sanctuary was photographed by Matt Pontiff on 12



2015-027



2015-046

June 2015; one (2015-025) at Grand Isle's Landry-LeBlanc Tract was photographed by Erik Enbody on 5 April 2015; and another (2015-027) at Peveto Woods Sanctuary was photographed by Tom Finnie (two photos far right) on 19 April 2015.



2015-025



Showcase 10: Lesser Goldfinch through orioles



2016-005

This immature male Lesser Goldfinch (2016-005), just Louisiana's fifth accepted occurrence, was present at Alexandria in early 2016, here (two above) photographed by Michael J. Musumeche on 16 February 2016.



A species always challenging to photograph is Smith's Longspur. This species usually remains hidden in grass until catapulting into the air at close range and then disappearing into the distance. Here are two rare photos of the species documenting five (2015-015) at the Shreveport Regional Airport, photographed by Dan O'Malley on 7 February 2015.



2015-015



2015-059

Left, adult female Black-throated Gray Warbler (2015-059) at New Orleans, photographed by Joan Garvey on 5 December 2015. This male Audubon's Warbler (2010-138) was photographed (inset left) by Dave Patton (left) on 27 April 2010 at Peveto Woods Sanctuary. And, right, an adult male Western Tanager (2005-056) photographed in his Abita Springs yard by Walter Clifton on 31 December 2005.



2005-056

2010-138



2016-007

Left, immature male Black-headed Grosbeak (2016-007) photographed in her Baton Rouge yard by Bridget H. Mayo, here on 31 March 2016.



2014-087

Right, a male Shiny Cowbird (2014-087) at Grand Isle, photographed by Robert C. Dobbs on 29 April 2014.



2007-013

Five accepted Bullock's Orioles supported by photo documentation included a couple of somewhat older reports- one (2007-013) at her yard in Gueydan photographed by Elizabeth Guidry



2010-121



2014-103

during its stay 15-24 February 2007, and a very rare spring migrant (2010-121) at Peveto Woods Sanctuary photographed by Paul E. Conover on 24 April 2010. More recent records of presumed wintering birds included a female (2014-103) here photographed taking a bath in her Harahan yard by Lizette Wroten on 15 December 2014, an adult male (2015-060; likely a returnee, see 2015-004 in the 18th Report) in his New Orleans yard photographed by Steve Picou on 23 December 2015; and an immature male (2015-061) at a feeder in Stonewall, here photographed by Jay V. Huner on 22 March 2016.



2015-060



2015-061

Yes, identification of big gulls really is a headache

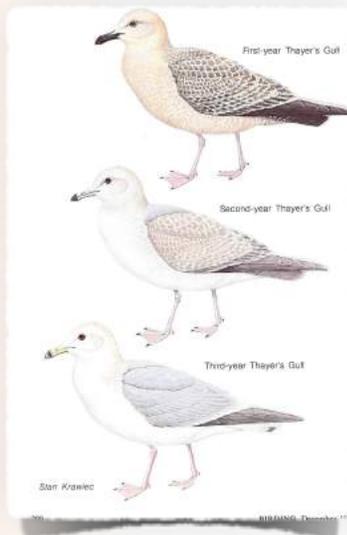
Donna L. Dittmann & Steven W. Cardiff

Thayer's Gull versus Kumlien's (or Iceland) gulls. Great Black-backed Gull. Slaty-backed Gull. Glaucous Gull. Is it or isn't it? LBRC Members have to wrestle with how to objectively resolve records of these "species." Large gull identification is notoriously difficult to begin with, but contrary to the logic that we should be improving and refining the process of gull identification, the level of difficulty seems to be increasing. How could this be? Well, one increasingly acknowledged problem is that hybridization is rampant among large white-headed gull species. Another factor is a continuing lack of studies of appearance/plumage progression of *known-identification*, *known-age* individuals. This hampers our understanding of the extent of individual variation and variation within and between age classes. There are a few such studies currently underway (see: <http://gull-research.org/glaucoides/rings.html> or <https://gullsofappledore.wordpress.com/blog/>), but, in the meantime, what is a bird records committee to do?

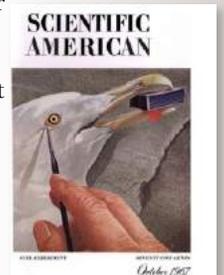
Two events in particular drove home to these writers the potential magnitude of gull hybridization issues that confront us: 1) that an adult LSUMNS specimen of a North Carolina-collected fourth year (presumed and identified as a) Great Black-backed Gull possessed Herring Gull mitochondrial DNA, and 2) the existence of "Chandeleur Gulls," an example of how easily isolating barriers can break down between two species, even when the two species (Herring and Kelp gulls) are about as different from each other as big gulls can be.

Unfortunately, at least some of the accepted gull identification dogma is based on supposition, assumptions, and circular reasoning. Without exhaustive corroboration, a hypothesis driven only by positive feedback will become self-fulfilling: "It is, because it is." Consider Thayer's Gull, for example. According to current standards describing what defines a gull as a Thayer's, the species is a rare visitor to Louisiana and is on the LBRC Review List. Thayer's Gull was described as a species in 1915 by W. S. Brooks (Bull. M. C. Z. LIX no. 5, Sep 1915, pp. 373-375). The taxon lasted less than two years as a species before being downgraded (in a one and a half page note, not counting the illustration of primary patterns) to a subspecies of Herring Gull by gull authority Jonathan Dwight (1, to read background information identified by boldfaced numbers, see link to Dropbox with pdfs at end of this article). Dwight's conclusion was based on review of an arguably less-than-extensive series of 25 specimens, which he interpreted as exhibiting complete intergradation with Herring Gull. In that same note, Dwight also congratulated W. S. Brooks for suggesting that Kumlien's Gull (then an accepted species) may actually represent a hybrid population between Thayer's and Iceland gulls, and that was the fate of Kumlien's Gull in Dwight's *Gulls of the World* treatise in 1925 (2). The AOU Checklist (1931) followed Dwight's lead. However, there was dissension in the ranks. P. A. Taverner, after visiting pure colonies, bucked the system in 1933 and resurrected Kumlien's as a species (in *Birds of Canada*) - regardless of its wide range of variation or potential origin via hybridization. The genie was out of the bottle. Subsequently, various authors differed on whether or not to accept Thayer's and Kumlien's gulls as separate species. The AOU maintained the status quo in their 1957 Checklist: Thayer's as a subspecies of Herring, and Kumlien's as a subspecies of Iceland.

Around this same time, over a three year period Hustace C. Poor banded Herring Gull chicks (a lot of them - 21,561 individuals!) with bands that identified colony and hatch year. He then enlisted birders to report observations (3) of banded individuals, and many banded birds were also collected in this remarkably comprehensive study of plumage and age (4). Up to this point, all studies of gull specimens *inferred age from plumage*. Using Poor's plumage-age study as a foundation, David W. Johnston followed with a study investigating reproductive cycle and plumage of California Gull in 1956 (5). In 1962, George M. Sutton and David F. Parmalee began their investigation of plumage maturation of four captive Thayer's Gull chicks (6).



But back to Thayer's Gull. In 1962, A.H. Macpherson published a study (Observations on Canadian Arctic *Larus* gulls, and on the taxonomy of *L. thayeri* Brooks. *Arctic Institute of North America Technical Paper* 7:1-40) supporting species status of Thayer's from Herring but recommended Kumlien's as subspecies of Iceland. Enter Neil G. Smith - his amazing study published in 1966 (Ornith. Monographs, no. 4, AOU pp. 1-99) indicated that iris and orbital ring color were strong isolating mechanisms between species and that Thayer's and Kumlien's gulls on Baffin Island were reproductively isolated. He showed that he could *induce mixed pairings by changing individual's soft part colors!* - even making the cover of *Scientific American* (see right). Although there were ornithological grumblings about his methodology and results, beginning with Sutton in 1968 (7), the AOU nonetheless elevated Thayer's Gull to species rank in 1973 (based on Macpherson's study). Voila, a species resurrected. Birders embraced their new species and identification treatises followed. Paul E. Lehman's article in *Birding* magazine in 1980 included a field guide plate (left, permission PEL/*Birding*); before new field guide editions were released, and if you were so inclined, you could cut this plate out and add it to your field guide to fill the Thayer's Gull void.



continues next page

Unfortunately, researchers did not continue Poor's grand banding experiment with other North American species. Admittedly, this would have been logistically difficult for Canadian arctic breeding species such as Thayer's and Kumlien's. But the bottom line is that without being able to track the changing appearance of known age individuals *from known breeding sites*, then identification characters must be largely based on speculation and assumptions about the appearance of individuals being observed *on the wintering grounds*. Truth is, unless a bird is banded as a chick on the breeding grounds, you can't be sure where a particular individual was hatched, or even be certain about an individual's age. Sutton's study of four captive Thayer's provided some insights (6), but currently it's almost impossible to really know for sure what is the true range of individual variation in immature age classes from a particular population. But that doesn't stop us from defining what we believe a species "should" look like in terms of sets of "tends to have" characters.

After the AOU's acceptance of Thayer's as a full species, not all experts were convinced. Perhaps most dramatically, after R. R. Snell visited some of the same study sites and witnessed no apparent reproductive isolation between Thayer's and Kumlien's, he disputed Smith's conclusions, even challenging the authenticity of Smith's research based on the improbable logistics (8). Snell considers Thayer's-Kumlien's-Iceland gulls as one species with phenotypic variation from darkest to lightest and disjunct from Herring Gull in his 2002 *Birds of North America* (see Snell 2002 BNA account for more in-depth review: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/699b/articles/introduction>). A more complete review of the Thayer's Gull publication history can be found here: <http://www.ofo.ca/site/page/view/articles.thayer>. D. N. Weir and colleagues (9) describe recent introgressive hybridization by western *thayeri* into eastern *glaucoides* and, just to muck-up matters a bit more, M. Muusse and colleagues (10) report *thayeri* primary patterns in Dutch Herring Gulls.

Enter DNA. Could genetic analyses be the *end all* to define not only the Thayer's Gull question but resolve the taxonomy of all the white-headed gull species - to provide a 'species baseline' necessary to create identification parameters? Early protein allozyme studies revealed few genetic differences. Beginning around 2000, the white-headed gulls have been variously analyzed using mitochondrial DNA, nuclear DNA, micro satellites, and all of the those combined in a multilocus approach. One of the first studies by Pierre-Andre Crochet et al. (2000, 2002; 11) genetically confirmed the identity of the above mentioned LSUMNS Great Black-backed X Herring Gull hybrid (p. 36). After being "tipped-off" by the DNA, we could actually notice the slight deviances in plumage from a 'classic' Great Black-backed Gull, which we previously dismissed as being within the range of variation for the species (but which actually better supported a hybrid conclusion). LSUMNS Section of Genetic Resources provided some of the tissue samples for most of these gull studies. In fact, Crochet took flack for using a Louisiana-collected sample of an extralimital first year individual (identified as) Thayer's Gull, rather than obtaining definitive adults from the breeding grounds. The Louisiana sample was later replaced (perhaps just as ill-advisedly) with non-breeding samples from California (12; by the way, it is this paper which is primarily responsible for recognizing multiple gull genera). Sarah Sonsthagen and coauthors analyzed (13) a larger sample of Arctic white-headed gulls, and at the same time (as

a courtesy for samples received from LSUMNS) also analyzed a number of samples from LSUMNS "mystery gulls." Some genetic results were helpful (see LBRC Newsletter 2013), others were not: unfortunately, gulls cannot simply be barcoded to determine species (see 14). Finally, the title of their most recent paper (Sonsthagen et al. 2016) says it all: *Recurrent hybridization and recent origin obscure phylogenetic relationships within the 'white-headed' gull (Larus sp.) complex* (15). Of course, it tells us what we already presumed to know. Needless to say, sampling of arctic gull populations to date (recall the remote breeding areas of northern gull species) has been less than complete for a truly thorough genetic analysis. Perhaps genetics can someday provide *the answer*.

So, the question remains: how does the LBRC handle identification of Review List *big white-headed gull* species?

The LBRC Bylaws allows each Member to vote his/her conscience. Of course, each Member must frame their analysis within the current taxonomic status and "accepted" diagnosis of a species' identification characters. Members should also make review decisions based on a

Thayer's Gull versus Iceland Gull (= *L. g. kumlienii*)
Proposed character chart for use by LBRC Members

	Thayer's Gull	Kumlien's Gull
GIZZ:	more delicate than Herring	more delicate than Thayer's
Bill:	longer than Kumlien's	shorter, more petite
Wingtips:	more pointed than Kumlien's	less pointed than Thayer's
DEFINITIVE/THIRD YEAR		
Primaries:		
Folded:	with black/dark gray	with medium gray to white
P10:	dark <u>subterminal</u> marks	dark <u>subterminal</u> marks absent
P5:	marked	unmarked
Iris color:	brown	pale to light brown with speckles
NON-DEFINITIVE JUVENAL/FIRST YEAR		
Primaries:		
Folded:	dark brown (to tan)	white to beige
P6-P10	strong inner to outer web contrast with paler edges	strong inner to outer web contrast with paler edges
Underside:	uniform	delicate interior markings
Secondaries:	same color as coverts/darker	silvery to white
Tertials:	mostly solid dark band	with delicate markings, chevrons
Tail:	dark with paler, marked tips	background similar to coverts
Back:	coarsely patterned (like Herring)	internal markings on pale feather
Bill:	barely paler base	paler with internal markings
		more 2-toned, paler base
SECOND YEAR		
P6-P10	distinct dark outer webs	dark webs on P7-P10
P5	dark distal mark	lacks dark distal mark

reasonable effort to refer to a published basis of identification (e.g., 16) — or by grabbing their favorite gull guide. A range of characters have been proposed for Thayer's versus Iceland/Kumlien's gulls, and even a scoring system has been proposed (<http://www.tertia.us/gulls/tkg.htm>). Hampered by unresolved parameters of individual variation compounded by introgression/hybridization, we have chosen to use a set of characters to *more narrowly* define these species. The key (above) provides a simple synopsis of a complicated problem. Using those characters is why, for example, Thayer's Gull LBRC 2015-019 (see p. 20, photos right by Robert C. Dobbs) was not accepted as that species, and Thayer's Gull LBRC 2013-021 (photo left by Paul E. Conover) was accepted.





juvenile Great Black-backed Gull but some characters were perceived by Members as 'not classic,' including overall size (judged by some as on the small size), heavily marked head (and especially around eye) in mid-January, and bold pattern (instead of more marbled look) of the mantle more reminiscent of a Lesser Black-backed Gull. That combined with the bird not being *observed in flight* (thus, critical wing/tail characters not observed) resulted in that record not being accepted.

And then there's Great Black-backed Gull (e.g., **18**). For adults, we generally interpret atypical variation (e.g., paler mantle, head streaking, etc.) as indicative of a hybrid. Most frequently encountered hybrid based on individuals with intermediate characters of those two species is Great Black-backed X Herring. Identification of immatures is problematic: if the individual's description departs from 'the norm', documentation does not include critical discussion of Great Black-backed characters, or lacks corroborating photographs, then the documentation is considered not adequate for identification as a pure individual of this species. Photo at left (by Dittmann) is a presumed Great Black-backed X Herring hybrid (second year, Grand Isle, 19 April 2009). Although it was the size of a Glaucous Gull (direct comparison) the mantle was an atypical medium gray (not 'blackish') and the general plumage was more Herring-like. The first year bird at right (LBRC



2015-011, photo by Oscar Johnson) is suggestive of a

Glaucous Gulls also hybridize, especially with Herring Gull (based on individuals observed with intermediate characters). The LBRC evaluates a gull's relative size and takes into consideration any characters (especially duskiness in primaries) that may be inconsistent with a pure individual. Now generally considered incorrect, R. R. Snell actually disputed that increased melanin in plumage of Glaucous Gulls was not a hybrid characteristic (**19**). In addition, leucism occurs in gulls, so that possibility must also be considered for identification of Glaucous or other 'white-winged' gull species.



Let's not forget the Chantrelle Gull (**20**). Mantle color of hybrids range from nearly as dark as Kelp (photos left of Kelp Gull by Gwen B. Smalley) to as pale as Herring Gull. As of 2015, a few individuals still breed on the Chantrelle Islands. This is likely a local identification problem = except for one individual photographed offshore in the company of a Kelp Gull, hybrids have not been confirmed away from the Chantrelles (or nearby Alabama islands where birds temporarily relocated after breeding site losses from 2004-2005 hurricane seasons). Regardless, this hybridization event opens one's eyes to the wide potential range of variation that hybrids and backcross hybrids can present. Hybrids (first generation) can mimic pure individuals of other species, notably Lesser Black-backed Gull, and subsequent crosses can likely mimic other species. The possibility that any individual

gull may be a hybrid has to be considered by the LBRC when evaluating "atypical" examples of Review List Species. Recent submitted records include potential first state records: see Slaty-backed Gull (see LBRC Newsletter 2013) or Yellow-legged Gull (see LBRC Pending page 6).

The LBRC eagerly awaits to see how the AOU will handle *large white-headed gull* species in their next supplement and hopes future researchers will be able to resolve species boundaries. Meanwhile, we can track various commentaries by birders (e.g., blog links below) and consider latest opinions. As noted by Gosselin and David (1975) "...one must check all the field marks to build a case for positive identification..." rings true today as it did in their article describing marks to identify the (recently elevated) species of Thayer's Gull (**21**). The most important thing for observers to remember is that gull identification is fluid, and that any record (accepted or not) can be reevaluated when more information is available. For that reason, a good series of photographs provide a critically important component of rare gull record documentation. List (right) shows large white-headed gull species currently on the LBRC Review List. **Bold** font indicates species produce hybrids with some frequency and **bold italicized** highlights those species for which hybrids are documented from Louisiana.

Western Gull

California Gull

Thayer's Gull

Iceland Gull

Glaucous Gull

Great Black-backed Gull

Kelp Gull

Dropbox folder like with number referenced papers in this article:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/veozvik9qvlope8/AAD5rpX4bMyad4MIB2AGsXyua?dl=0>

Overview of gull hybrids here:

<http://www.bird-hybrids.com/engine.php?search=laridae&nomenclature=ALL&searchby=family&family=cinfolameng>

Internet blogs that may be of interest to larophiles:

<http://seagullsteve.blogspot.com/2014/02/often-sought-often-misidentified.html>

<http://www.anythinglarus.com>

<http://gull-research.org/thayers/thayerspdf.html>

<http://gull-research.org/thayers/5cymay.html>

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ALWAYS SEEM TO
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IF YOU SPOT ANY
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THANK YOU!