

B.C. FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 1996-1997

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Abstract -- Twenty 1996-1997 records of 17 species were accepted as authentic by the B.C.F.O. Bird Records Committee. Eight records were considered insufficiently documented or incorrect. In addition, one record was placed into a new **UNDECIDED** category. Of six previously unreviewed 1994-1995 records of six species, four were considered authentic, and two were not.

Key words: British Columbia, rare bird reports.

The following is a summary of those records submitted to the B.C.F.O. Bird Records Committee in 1996 and 1997. Where there were only a small number of observers, all observers' names are listed. When numerous observers identified the bird, only the first observer and those who submitted field notes (*) are listed. (ph) indicates that photographs were taken. No names have been listed for those records which were not accepted as sufficiently well documented to rule out the possibility of other species. Records are considered "accepted" if fewer than two committee members reject the record, and "not accepted" if more than two reject it. If exactly two members rejected a record, then the record was re-circulated with copies of members' comments from the first round of voting. In some cases, all the evidence was sent to appropriate experts for their adjudication.

The committee would like to take this opportunity to thank observers who took the time to document and submit their sightings.

Members of the committee during this period included Barbara Begg, Jack Bowling, Dick Cannings, Gary Davidson, Rick Howie, Alvaro Jaramillo, Derek Marven and Michael Price.

ACCEPTED RECORDS

SHORT-TAILED ALBATROSS (*Phoebastria albatrus*) (96-3)

One, 48°41' N., 126°41' W: WSW of Amphritite Point [70 km. west of Tofino according to Bain and Holder 1996a], 23 February 1996, John Anderson (*).

SHORT-TAILED ALBATROSS (*Phoebastria albatrus*) (96-19)

One immature, off north coast of Queen Charlotte Islands, 22 October 1996, Tracee Geernaert (*), Russell Cameron (ph).

BLACK-VENTED SHEARWATER (*Puffinus opisthomelas*) (96-4)

One, Georgia Straight, between Active Pass and Tsawwassen, 26 May 1996, Jo Ann MacKenzie (*), believed by Bowling (1996a) to be the same bird observed by Rick Toochin and Mitch Meredith about 10 km. farther north on 8 May 1996 (described in detail in Toochin 1998).

BAIKAL TEAL (*Anas formosa*) (96-13)

One male in alternate plumage, Sandspit Queen Charlotte Islands, 2 May 1996, Peter Hamel (*), Margo Hearn.

COMMON EIDER (*Somateria molissima*) (96-10)

One first winter male, waters between Vancouver and West Vancouver, 15 November 1996 until at least 6 April 1998, Derrick Marven (*, ph), Michael Price (*) plus many others (Figure 1). Details of the initial observation were described by Wright (1997) and of several subsequent observations by Toochin (1997) and Wright (1997). A drawing by Mark Wynja of the bird appears in Wright (1997), while additional photographs were included in Bain and Holder (1997a), Toochin (1997) and Wright (1997).

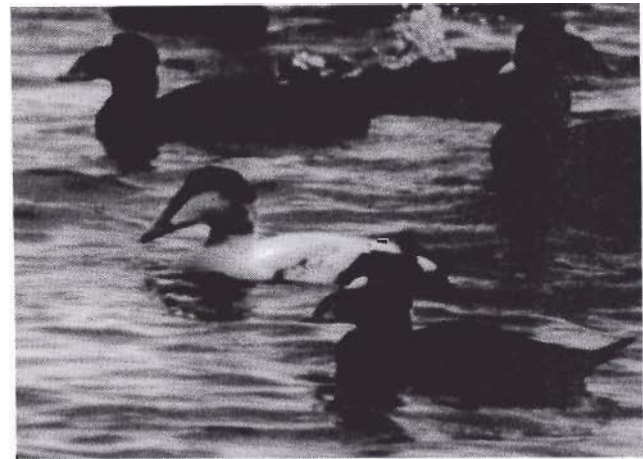


Figure 1. Adult male Common Eider in raft of Surf Scoters, West Vancouver, B.C. October 1997. Photo by W. Eric MacBeane. Note maturation of this bird since the January 1997 photograph by Jo Ann MacKenzie in Wright (1997:14). [A copy of Jo Ann's photo is included in this issue at the end of Gary Davidson's supplementary report]

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) (96-7A).

One light morph adult, Eaglet Lake, Prince George, 13 June 1996, Mark Phinney (*), Stan Phippen. Bowling (1996b) regarded this as the likely mate of a dark morph bird observed at the same site on 20 June 1996.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) (96-7B)

One dark morph, south of Eaglet Lake, Prince George, 12 September 1996, Mark Phinney (*), the latest fall Prince George area record by about six weeks (Bowling 1997a).

YELLOW RAIL (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*) (97-4)

One, Chetwynd, 3 June 1977, Michael Settingington (*). One to three were encountered there up to 13 July in "typical wet grass habitat" (Bowling 1997b).

SNOWY PLOVER (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) (96-5)

One adult male, Robert's Bank, 18 June 1996, Barbara Begg (*), Allen and Helen Poynter and many others. This bird was seen as early as 15 June (Bain and Holder 1996b).

BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*) (96-18)

One "probable adult female" in alternate plumage, Sandspit, Queen Charlotte Islands, 7 May 1996, Peter Hamel (*), Margo Hearne.

SLATY-BACKED GULL (*Larus schistisagus*) (96-11)

One, Delta, 21 January 1996, Steve Mlodoniw (*).

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) (97-9)

One adult, Tofino, 1 December 1997, Bryan Gates (*, ph), Marie O'Shaughnessy (ph) and Adrian Dorst. A photo of this bird appears in O'Shaughnessy (1998).

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) (96-8)

One, Maple Ridge, 16 June 1996, Daniel Bastaja (*), Glen and Helen Carelse, Richard Kenzie and Amy Newman. This bird was also present on 15 June and reportedly photographed (Bain and Holder 1996b; Bastaja 1996; Bowling 1996b; Kenzie 1996).

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*) (97-2)

One, Iona Island Waste Water Treatment Plant, Richmond, 10 July 1997, Michael Price (*). It was seen by many others and photographed on 11 July (Bain and Holder 1997b; Bowling 1997b).

BLUE ROCK-THRUSH (*Monticola solitarius*) (97-5)

One, Gold Pan Provincial Park, 10 km. southwest of Spences Bridge, 6 June 1997, Ian McDonald (*, ph). Full details and colour photos appear in McDonald (1997).

NORTHERN PARULA (*Parula americana*) (96-9)

One first winter male, Port Alberni, 9-10 November 1996, Sandy McRuer (*), Derrick Marven (*) and others. This bird was last seen on 14 November (Bowling 1997a).

SAGE SPARROW (*Amphispiza belli*) (96-2)

One adult in alternate plumage, Grey Canal Road, Vernon, 2 March 1996, Chris Siddle (*).

HOODED ORIOLE (*Icterus cucullatus*) (96-1)

One male, North Saanich, Victoria, 6 and 7 May 1996, Robert Wallis (*), Audrey Wallis (ph), Bryan Gates (*), Barbara Begg (*). A full description and drawing were published by Wallis (1996).

HOODED ORIOLE (*Icterus cucullatus*) (97-10)

One adult male, Terrace, 19 November 1997 - 11 January 1998, Cheryl and Garnett Thomas (ph), D. V. George (*). The bird was present until at least 28 February 1998 (Bowling 1998b). Photos of this bird were published in the Editor's note to Wallis (1996), Bowling (1998a) and Thomas and Thomas (1998).

BRAMBLING (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

One adult male in basic plumage, Masset, Queen Charlotte Islands, 10 December 1996 until ?, Peter Hamel (*), Oakley Dyer, Margo Hearne and Betsy Williams.

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED**RED-FACED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax urile*) (97-3)

One, Massett, Queen Charlotte Islands, 7 May 1997.

WHOOPEE SWAN (*Cygnus cygnus*) (96-6)

One, Comox, 27 July 1996. This bird was observed at Seal Bay, Comox 25-27 July 1996 (Innes 1997). The description and photographs submitted left very little doubt that the identification was correct, but the possibility of an escape caused the committee to reject the record (Davidson 1997).

COMMON EIDER (*Somateria mollissima*) 96-14)

One female, Skidegate, Queen Charlotte Islands, 13 May 1996. This record was listed as one of four B.C. records by Mlodoniw (1999).

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) (96-12)

One, Blackwater Valley, 20 km. north of Donald, 17 May 1996.

LONG-TOED STINT (*Calidris subminuta*) (97-6)

One, Sandspit, Queen Charlotte Islands, 1 July 1997.

SLATY-BACKED GULL (*Larus schistisagus*) (97-7)

One, Rose Spit, Queen Charlotte Islands, 1 August 1997.

EYE-BROWED THRUSH (*Turdus obscurus*) (96-15)

One, Mayer Lake, Queen Charlotte Islands, 5 November 1996.

RED-THROATED PIPIT (*Anthus cervinus*) (96-17)

One, Sandspit, Queen Charlotte Islands, 4-5 November 1996.

STATUS UNDECIDED

This is a category that we have not had to use before. Our procedures and guidelines require a second circulation of all records that receive exactly two negative votes during the first round of voting. Along with the re-circulation, all committee members are provided with copies of each others' comments from the first round of voting. Members then vote again. We had one record in 1997 that, despite being circulated twice as described, still yielded two negative votes on the second round of voting! The problem with this record was clearly not one of identification, but rather of origin.

XANTUS'S HUMMINGBIRD (*Hylocharis xantusii*) (97-8)

One female, Gibson's, 16 November 1977 until at least 18 July 1998 (Tyson 1998). This species was unknown outside Baja California until appearing in California in 1986 and 1988 (Hainebach 1992). Details of the Gibson's occurrence appeared in Toochin (1997-1998) and Tyson (1998) and photographs were published in Toochin (1997-1998), Anonymous (1998), Bowling (1998b) and Tyson (1998).

**B.C. FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS BIRD
RECORDS COMMITTEE
SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT FOR 1994-1995**

The following report covers records for the 1994-1995 that were received by the committee long after the original report (Davidson 1995) was submitted for publication.

ACCEPTED RECORDS**BLACK-VENTED SHEARWATER (*Puffinus opisthomelas*) (94-26)**

One, west of Weah Point in Dixon Entrance, Queen Charlotte Islands, 20 September 1994, Peter Hamel (*), Charlie Bellis.

WOOD SANDPIPER (*Tringa glareola*) (94-28)

One, Delkatla Wildlife Sanctuary, Queen Charlotte Islands, 3-9 November 1994, Peter Hamel (*), Margo Hearne, Oakley Dyer, Betsy Williams. Hamel and Hearne (1994) published details of this record, including photos, and another photo appeared in Bowling (1995).

KITTLITZ'S MURRELET (*Brachyrhamphus brevirostris*) (95-22)

One, Skidegat Inlet, 8-9 November 1995, Peter Hamel (*), Charlotte Husband. A photograph of British Columbia's first record appears in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Kittlitz's Murrelet in outer harbour, Victoria, B.C. March 1986 (approximately one decade before the record documented in this report). Photo by W. Eric MacBean.

**WESTERN SCRUB-JAY (*Aphelocoma californica*) (95-17)**

One, Vancouver, 18 May 1995, Joan Anderson (*) [listed as 22 May 1995 in Bain and Holder 1995 and Elliott and Gardner 1997]. This bird was last seen on 25 July 1995 (Elliott and Gardner 1997).

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED**RUSTIC BUNTING (*Emberiza rustica*) (94-27)**

One, Skonun Point, Queen Charlotte Islands, 30 August 1994.

BRAMBLING (*Fringilla montifringilla*) (95-23)

One, Graham Island (location not specific), Queen Charlotte Islands, 20 November 1995.

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Reprint of: First winter male Common Eider among Surf Scoters, Kitsilano Beach, Vancouver 24 January 1997. Photo by Jo Ann MacKenzie published in *B.C. Birds* 7:14, 1997.