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Ninth Report of the Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee: 1991

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RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Fla. Field Nat. 21(3): 86-91, 1993.

Ninth Report of the Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee: 1991.—The Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee (FOSRC) critically reviews all written sight reports and specimen and/or photographic records (including audio recordings) submitted to it to determine the validity of these reports. The Committee's findings are published annually in the *Florida Field Naturalist*. Details for 36 reports were received in 1991; six were not evaluated because the Committee deemed the species of too regular occurrence for consideration, and two remained in "still under consideration" status awaiting additional documentation and/or discussion (Cuban Emerald, *Chlorostilbon ricordii*, catalog no. 91-228; Brown-chested Martin, *Phaeoprogne tapera*, catalog no. 91-248). Of the remaining 28 reports, 19 (68%) were accepted and 9 (32%) were not. The Variegated Flycatcher was added to the official list of verified species in Florida bringing the total to 461 (see Robertson and Woolfenden 1992).

The Committee members and the expiration date of their terms were as follows: Jocelyn L. Baker (Secretary, 1993), Wally George (1992), Larry Hopkins (1991), William B. Robertson, Jr. (1994), and Henry M. Stevenson (1992); Lyn S. Atherton (1994) replaced Larry Hopkins whose term expired in October 1991, and Bruce H. Anderson (1992) was appointed in April 1992, to complete Dr. Stevenson's term following his death.

The Committee will publish a list of rare and unusual species and subspecies at a later date. Any species or race on this list should be documented by the observer when reported. All observers are encouraged to submit these reports to the FOSRC, including those intended for publication in the *Florida Field Naturalist*, *American Birds*, or another publication.

While in the field the observer should write a detailed description of all body parts, including bill, legs, and feet, noting sizes, shapes and colors. Although a specimen or photograph and vocal recording are optimal, a drawing/sketch of the bird and vocal descriptions are beneficial. Behavioral traits and the habitat should be detailed. All observations should be submitted on the standard report form that is available from the Secretary. In addition to uniformity, the report form provides the Committee and the observer with a guideline to those factors used by the FOSRC for its evaluation. Completed forms, with any other supporting materials, should be submitted to the Secretary.

An accepted report required the unanimous vote of the five Committee members. When a report is accepted, it gains status on the official Florida state list (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992). A species or race new to the state is given full status only when its natural occurrence is probable, and there is a supporting specimen or photograph (and for some species, audio recording); otherwise, it is given hypothetical status. When a report is not accepted, it does not necessarily mean that the species or form was not correctly identified. Sometimes a sighting is too brief or the written account lacks sufficient details to eliminate all possibilities. The Committee will reconsider a report if additional information is submitted that the Committee believes could alter a previous decision. All documentation is deposited in the FOS Archives at the Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville.

The FOSRC was established in 1981. Published reports of unusual sightings that have not been submitted to the Committee (either before or since 1981) have been given varying degrees of scrutiny by the various editors. Recently, Robertson and Woolfenden (1992) and Stevenson and Anderson (in press) have evaluated many of the more unusual sightings not evaluated by the Committee. At this time the FOSRC has not made any commitment to review reports that have not been submitted to it.

Each species that appears in this report is listed according to the AOU (1983) check-list and its supplements through 1991. The number of published reports (including verifiable records) through 1991, for each species or race is given after the species name; these numbers follow Robertson and Woolfenden (1992) unless otherwise stated. Each account includes the initials of the contributor(s) for accepted reports only, the FOSRC catalog number for the report, and abbreviations for any supporting materials. Following the account of each species for which other reports have been considered previously by the FOSRC is a listing of catalog numbers for those reports.

Contributors to this report are Jocelyn L. Baker, Robert C. Bradbury, Clifford H. Cole, Bernardine B. English, Martin J. Folk, Mary E. Gustafson, Wayne Hoffman, C. Koundakjian, T. Koundakjian, Stephen A. Nesbitt, Joseph A. Ondrejko, Bill Pranty, C. Ted Robinson, P. William Smith, Allan M. Strong, Bob Wallace, Adrian Wander, and James R. Ware.

The following are abbreviations used in this report: *AB* (*American Birds*); *AFN* (*Audubon Field Notes*); ENP (Everglades National Park); *FFN* (*Florida Field Naturalist*); FLMNH (Florida Museum of Natural History); N (nest collected); NWR (national wildlife refuge); P (photo); R&W (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992); S (specimen); SP (state park); SRA (state recreation area); S&A (Stevenson & Anderson in press); TTRS (Tall Timbers Research Station); UCF (Univ. of Central Florida).

The Committee wishes to express its gratitude to David S. Lee for his evaluation of the photographs of the Leach's Storm-Petrel and of the Long-tailed Jaeger specimen, to Walter Kingsley Taylor for his helpful suggestions on earlier drafts of this manuscript, and to Tom Webber who maintains and provides access to the FOS Archives at the Florida Museum of Natural History.

ACCEPTED REPORTS

LEACH'S STORM-PETREL, *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*: about 35 reports through 1990; not all have been evaluated. This recent report, accompanied by photographs, was of an individual observed in Florida Bay (Monroe Co.), 11 May 1991 (AMS, 91-247, P). A spring storm brought several sightings of *O. leucorhoa* close to shore along the northeastern Florida coast (*FFN* 19:127, *AB* 45:437); 11 specimens were salvaged in Nassau, Duval, and St. Johns cos. between 23-26 May 1991 (UCF, FLMNH). These records could cause one to question two reports, published without details, of Band-rumped Storm-Petrels (*O. castro*, 12 published reports, not all have been evaluated), 24 Apr and 12 May 1991 (*ibid.*), since these birds were viewed not far from Florida Bay.

MISSISSIPPI KITE, *Ictinia mississippiensis*: This species is a rare migrant and only occasionally winters in the Peninsula. One observed on Big Pine Key (Monroe Co.) on the late date of 26 Oct 1989 (MJF, 91-220, P) was at the same locale where 2 wintered in 1986-87 (*AB* 41:273). This individual was most likely a migrant since it was not reported again. The latest published fall date of a non-wintering kite was 1 Nov (1990), in Gulf Co. (*FFN* 19:60). There are only 2 other published reports for the Keys through 1991, both at Key West in May 1990 (*AB* 44:415; previously accepted, 90-212).

LESSER SANDHILL CRANE, *Grus canadensis canadensis*: 3 reports (S&A). This race, formerly known as the Little Brown Crane, breeds from Siberia, east to western Canada, and winters from central California, east to southeastern Texas and northeastern Mexico. In direct comparison with other races it is noticeably smaller than either our resident *G.c. pratensis* or the wintering *G.c. tabida* from the Great Lakes region. One was studied on the Kanapaha Prairie (Alachua Co.), from 7-18 Mar 1991 (SAN, 91-237, Nesbitt 1992). Two previous Florida reports include a mounted specimen at the Milwaukee Public Museum (#5670) with a label reading "Little Brown Crane . . . Florida" and with no other data, and a bird seen in Brevard Co., during the winter of 1966-67 (Cruickshank 1967).

- LONG-TAILED JAEGER, *Stercorarius longicaudus*: 29 reports (S&A). A first-year male was found moribund at the UCF campus at Orlando (Orange Co.), on 11 Sep 1991 (BP; 91-244; P,S). The bird died 14 Sep (UCF 2061). This was the first verified inland occurrence for any jaeger species in Florida. The only other published inland sighting of the Long-tailed for the state was an account of 3 birds in Alachua Co., in Sep 1939 (Hull 1940), a report that was rejected by S&A (previously not accepted, 83-053).
- LITTLE GULL, *Larus minutus*: 15 reports (S&A). Florida's first inland record was of a first-winter bird photographed on Lake Jessup (Seminole Co.), on 29 Dec 1990 (CTR, 91-218, P). The gull remained in the area through mid-Jan 1991 (FFN 19:92).
- COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULL, *Larus ridibundus*: 18 reports; however, 4 reports may refer to only 2 individuals (S&A). One first-winter bird was seen on the Gulf in Naples (Collier Co.), on 17 Nov and 17 Dec 1990 (JRW, 91-217, P). This record was the farthest south that this species has been reported in the state (AB 45:266, P), and was the seventh report for the Florida Gulf coast (S&A; previously accepted, 82-021).
- ARCTIC TERN, *Sterna paradisaea*: 20 reports, not all have been evaluated. One in alternate plumage was photographed off Whale Harbor Bridge at Islamorada, Upper Matecumbe Key (Monroe Co.), on 13 May 1991 (WH, 91-229, P). There were 3 previous observations for the Keys: Islamorada, on 8 May 1977 (AB 31:990) and 9 May 1979 (AB 33:763), and the Dry Tortugas, on 5 May 1989 (90-211, P). Most spring reports occur within a very brief period from late Apr to early May.
- KEY WEST QUAIL-DOVE, *Geotrygon chrysis*: 12 reports since extirpated as a resident at Key West during the mid-to-late 1800s. First reported on 18 Oct 1991, a single bird was last observed and described the next day at Bill Baggs Cape Florida SRA, Key Biscayne (Dade Co.), the first for that location (PWS, 91-246, feather). Other Dade Co. reports include a specimen in the Bailey-Law collection (#4936; currently housed at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State Univ., Blacksburg) from Miami, dated 9 Feb 1933; this may actually have been an aviary bird as were some other specimens in that collection. The only other report possibly from Dade Co. was of one *chrysis* seen at ENP in the vicinity of the border of that county and Monroe Co. from Jan to Jul 1979 (numerous photos at TTRS and ENP). Seven of the last 12 reports were from the Keys (Monroe Co.; S&A; previously accepted, 87-114, 90-207).
- VARIEGATED FLYCATCHER, *Empidonomus varius*: 1 report. One was extensively photographed on Garden Key, Dry Tortugas (Monroe Co.), on 15 Mar 1991 (RB, 91-222, P). This was the first record for Florida, and the third for the U.S. (others in Maine and Tennessee; for a detailed account with photo see Bradbury 1992; also, AB 45:512, P).
- LASAGRA'S FLYCATCHER, *Myiarchus sagrae*: 10 reports (S&A), all since 1982. A convincing description was provided of one seen at Islamorada, Upper Matecumbe Key (Monroe Co.), on 7 Apr 1991 (PWS, 91-223). This bird was last observed in early May (AB 45:438, FFN 19:129). A first for that island, this was the fifth LaSagra's reported for Monroe Co. (S&A; previously accepted, 83-028, 83-033, 85-078, 87-129, 88-134, 88-157).
- BAHAMA MOCKINGBIRD, *Mimus gundlachi*: 17 reports, all since 1973 (S&A); annual since 1987. Three reports, all of single birds, were received: Key Largo (Monroe Co.), on 25 May 1991 (PWS, 91-230); Key West (Monroe Co.), an unmated male found defending a territory and building a nest on 9 Jun 1991 (JAO; 91-236; P, N [FLMNH 93016]), was last observed on 21 Aug (FFN 20:27); and Bill Baggs Cape Florida SRA, Key Biscayne (Dade Co.), on 14 Apr 1991 (BBE, 91-239), where one remained through 11 May 1991 (AB 45:438). One other report was published for 1991, but not submitted to the FOSRC: a bird seen on Hypoluxo Is. (Palm Beach Co.), 11 May (FFN 19:130). With so many reports in one year including the building of a nest, it seems likely that *gundlachi* will eventually successfully breed in Florida (previously accepted, 86-090, 86-094, 88-142, 88-148, 89-180, 90-203, 90-204; not accepted, 84-061).

- THICK-BILLED VIREO, *Vireo crassirostris*: 9 accepted reports since 1961 (S&A); annual since 1988. One seen at Islamorada, Upper Matecumbe Key (Monroe Co.), on 11 Mar 1991, and thoroughly described (AW, CK, TK; 91-226), remained into late April (AB 45:438, P; FFN 19:130). This record provided the second report of a Thick-billed for the Keys; the first was one at the Dry Tortugas, spring 1964 (AFN 18:28). A published report for 1991, not submitted to the FOSRC, was of a bird at Bill Baggs Cape Florida SRA, Key Biscayne (Dade Co.), on 31 Aug (FFN 20:27); it was the third report for that location in as many years (S&A; previously accepted, 89-179, 90-202; not accepted, 88-151.)
- BANANAQUIT, *Coereba flaveola*: 29 reports (S&A). One observed at "The Jungle," near Pompano Beach (Broward Co.), on 22 Jan 1991 (JLB, 91-219), was the fifth published report for that county (S&A; previously accepted, 88-153, 89-174).
- STRIPE-HEADED TANAGER, *Spindalis zena*: 36 reports (S&A). A female-plumaged tanager, photographed at Snake Bight Trail, ENP (Dade/Monroe cos.), on 14 Dec 1990 (MEG, 91-221, P), was the first published report for the park. This tanager remained through 25 Dec (AB 45:267; previously accepted, 83-043, 83-058, 88-149).
- LAZULI BUNTING, *Passerina amoena*: 4 reports, however, 2 reports may refer to the same individual. 1991 was an outstanding year for this species with 3 reports. A male at Ponte Vedra Beach (St. Johns Co.), from 19-22 Mar (CHC, 91-231, P) may have been the same individual reported about 130 km to the southwest, near Alachua (6.5 km south, Alachua Co.), from 25-26 Mar (BW, 91-227). The third report was of a female-plumaged bunting at Belle Glade (Palm Beach Co.), on 23 Dec (PWS, 91-250). The first record for the state was a male at Sharpes (Brevard Co.), from 7 Mar to 6 Apr 1977 (Cruickshank 1978; TTRS P121, 142-143).

REPORTS NOT ACCEPTED

- WESTERN GREBE, *Aechmophorus occidentalis*: 5 of 16 reports are considered credible (S&A). A report of one observed for about 5 seconds at St. Marks NWR (Wakulla Co.), on 25 Nov 1990, was not accepted due to the brevity of the sighting and the lack of direct comparison of its size with any other identified species; the bird dove and was not seen again (91-242). As might be expected, 3 of the 5 credible reports of this Western species have been on the Gulf (S&A).
- REDDISH EGRET, *Egretta rufescens*: A heron reported to be an immature of this species, was observed for about 30 seconds while it briefly circled a pond before disappearing from view at the Killlearn Country Club, Tallahassee (Leon Co.), on 22 Jun 1991. The details given for this brief observation did not convince the Committee that the Little Blue Heron, *E. caerulea*, could be excluded as a possibility (91-240). *E. rufescens* is a rare to casual visitor along the coast of the Panhandle, and has occurred inland only occasionally; the farthest north in the state was one reported in southern Leon Co. on 12 Sep 1987 (AB 42:60).
- COMMON MERGANSER, *Mergus merganser*: about 60 reports; there is only 1 known, extant specimen for the state, and 3 others have been photographed (S&A). Because so few published reports have included details and the species can be confused with the Red-breasted Merganser, *M. serrator*, the exact status of the Common Merganser is uncertain. Two birds were observed in flight for about 8 seconds, on 3 Apr 1991, in Tallahassee (Leon Co.); at least one was believed to be a male Common Merganser due to the apparent lack of color on the breast. The report was not accepted because of the brevity of the observation and the lack of other diagnostic field marks (91-241). The only other report for Leon Co. is the specimen salvaged near Tallahassee on 26 Dec 1953 (TTRS 3216). There are about 25 published observations for the nearby coasts of Franklin and Wakulla cos. (S&A).

- ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, *Buteo lagopus*: about 60 reports; although at least 24 probably involved correct identifications by some very experienced birders in Florida (S&A), the Rough-legged remains hypothetical until a specimen or photograph is obtained. On 29 Aug 1991, a melanistic hawk was seen in pine flatwoods at Wekiva Springs SP (Orange Co.), and identified as this species. The date, habitat, description, and drawing provided did not entirely eliminate the possibility of a Short-tailed Hawk, *B. brachyurus*, or a Red-tailed Hawk, *B. jamaicensis*, both summer residents in that area (91-245). The earliest fall date for the state for a probable report of a Rough-legged is 15 Oct (1963, *AFN* 18:25); the nearest to Orange Co. was an observation made at Merritt Island, in Dec 1976 (*AB* 23:607; previously not accepted, 82-026, 88-139, 89-165).
- CURLEW SANDPIPER, *Calidris ferruginea*: 12 reports (S&A). A sandpiper apparently in alternate plumage was observed at Honeymoon Island SRA (Pinellas Co.), on 26 Jun 1985. The bird was observed for about 15-20 seconds among a flock of Red Knots (*C. canutus*) in basic plumage. The Committee did not believe that all similar species, including the Red Knot, could be excluded with the description provided (91-243). An alternate-plumaged *ferruginea* was photographed that year at Zellwood (Orange Co., 86-098, P), where it remained from 17-19 Aug. There is one other published report for Pinellas Co., that of an individual seen 10 Oct 1973 (*AB* 20:42). During the summers of 1976 and 1977, birds in alternate plumage were photographed at nearby Tampa (Hillsborough Co.; TTRS P98 and 134; previously accepted, 84-065, 87-125; not accepted, 87-113).
- BLACK-CAPPED VIREO, *Vireo atricapillus*: Two independent reports were made in the Niceville area (Okaloosa Co.), 20 Dec 1990 (91-224) and 9 Jan 1991 (91-216). Brief observations and the lack of complete descriptions could not absolutely eliminate all similar species. A migrant that winters south of the U.S., this species could conceivably stray to Florida although it would be unlikely to overwinter as does the larger and similarly marked Solitary Vireo, *V. solitarius*. A sight report for the Black-capped exists for Louisiana (AOU 1983), but these were the first for Florida.
- OLIVE-CAPPED WARBLER, *Dendroica pityophila*: This resident of the northern Bahamas and Cuba was reported from Mahogany Hammock, ENP (Dade Co.), on 8 Mar 1991, by 3 observers. It is the first claimed for the U.S. (AOU 1983 and supplements through 1991). This sighting was not accepted since the Committee believed that a species of this rarity should be supported by a specimen, photo, and/or vocal recording (91-225).
- BLACK-FACED GRASSQUIT, *Tiaris bicolor*: 8 reports; however, 2 reports may refer to the same individual (S&A). A small black bird was described from an observation made at Eco Pond, ENP (Monroe Co.), on 5 Dec 1991. The report was not accepted because the Committee did not find that the descriptions of the back color, tail shape, and behavior were those typical of this species (91-251). There were two previously published sight reports and a specimen of this species from ENP: 29 Oct 1960 (*AFN* 15:26-35); 27 Jul 1963 (Cunningham 1964); 19 May 1968 (ENP 4898; previously accepted, 87-126; not accepted, 88-145, 89-161).

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