

## Ontario Bird Records Committee 2016 AGM

Royal Ontario Museum  
Sunday 2 April 2017

Members present: Don Sutherland, Bill Crins, Ken Burrell, Josh Vandermeulen, Ross Wood, Tim Lucas, Barb Charlton (Asst. Secretary), Mike Burrell (Secretary)

Absent: Paul Pratt

Agenda:

1. Call to order – Ken called meeting to order at 9:15
2. Minutes of the 2015 AGM review. No comments/changes. Ken: motion to approve. Unanimously accepted.
3. Changes to agenda: Mike changed order of south review list removals to ECDO, WWDO, NECO, TOSO, MIKI, HESP, GLIB, KIWA. Mike removed item 10.
4. Business arising from 2015 AGM:
  - a. Barb/Mike: Motion to provide a “Bird of the year” discussion within the Annual Report. The committee discussed the proposal that was circulated ahead of the meeting. Don suggested changing finder to finder(s). Mike: motion to accept. Don seconded. All in favour. (Mike will put info in separate heading in introduction).

To be inserted as a new item 4.1.1

“At the AGM, the Chair will produce a candidate list of the “top five” birds of the year out of the records accepted by the current year's committee. The Committee will discuss these records and add any they believe were overlooked by the chair. Each member and the Secretary will then score each record as follows: up to 30 points each for North American and Ontario rarity (higher points for increasing rarity) and up to 40 points for how widely seen the bird was (higher points for a widely seen bird). The Secretary will then tally the results and the bird of the year will be the record with the highest average total score. The Bird of the year and its finder(s) will be acknowledged in the annual report.”

- b. Tim: Common Eider subspecies determination for record 2015-131. Tim sent record to Declan Troy and Kevin McLaughlin and a couple other people, some of whom did not respond. Cameron Cox did. Most felt it probably was *v-nigra*; Declan felt not. Most COEI records from Lake Michigan are reported to be western taxa. The Committee opted for a conservative approach, deciding that because external expert opinion was not conclusive the subspecies should be left as undetermined. Will add comment to record.
- c. Ken: Motion to add special provision for policy surrounding Cave Swallow on the Southern review list effective 1 January 2016. Ken presented motion for how Cave Swallow could be dealt with. Discussion. Good idea...should apply to all irruptive species. 6.2.4.6 special provision for irruptive species: replace third paragraph with generic statement that the committee can decide by consensus to remove any species at an AGM. Replace “Cave Swallows (*Petrochelidon fulva*)” with “irruptive species (as decided by the committee)”. Remove “Due to their irruptive nature,”. Ken: motion to accept the provision as amended. Seconded by Josh. All in favour.

To be inserted as new item 6.2.4.6

“Special provision for irruptive species. Occurrences of irruptive species (as decided by the current OBRC) in Ontario, should be dealt with annually, as required on a case-by-case basis. In the event of an

irruption/incursion, a species may be removed from the review list by consensus of the committee for a calendar year during which period the requirement for documentation would be waived. Until such time as the species is formerly removed from the province's review list(s), however, it should be assumed that observations of the species require documentation.

During invasion years, arbitrarily defined as when 10 or more occurrences are observed in the province, the OBRC will not require documentation for the species and will notify the Ontario birding community via the OntBirds Listserv."

5. Third round voting: discussion, specimen examinations:
  - a. 2016-044 – Eurasian Collared-Dove. Bill: photo looks good for ECDO. Dark base colour seems too dark for ringed, more likely given location. Josh: most likely an ECDO, but can we say for sure without seeing tail. Tim: should stick to our standards with OBRC. Bill: probably should err on conservative side. Don: record should stand on its own, regardless of probability.
  - b. 2016-070 – Manx Shearwater. Bob probably saw it better than everyone else, but the consensus on site at the time was that people weren't sure. Manx is high probability but there are so many similar small shearwaters. Distance/circumstances were just too difficult. Tim: Bob's report really just describes a small black and white shearwater. Bill: the group is tough even with good conditions. Everyone agreed it should be accepted as a shearwater, but can't go even to genus level.
  - c. 2016-114 – Lesser Black-backed Gull. All: pictures aren't great. Are they conclusive? Josh/Ross: hybrid should be lighter mantle, but lots of variation. Don: could depend on lighting. Ken: not definitive, could be but not sure if a hybrid could be ruled out. Ross: doesn't strike him as a hybrid: looks long-winged, not a huge bill. Only thing that is negative is that you can't see the legs.
  - d. 2016-160 – Western Sandpiper. Josh: probably not good enough detail due to circumstances. Tim: WESA probably does pass through but we don't know.
6. Member motion to re-review records:
  - a. Members to add any records to re-review. Tim: suggested Rufous Hummingbird. Mike suggested we should request data from banding lab and then if need be record can be re-submitted. Tim did not propose motion for re-review.
7. Motions to add/remove species from Southern review list. Ken presented figure to show OBRC is increasingly reviewing more records over the last several years.
  - a. Mike: motion to remove Eurasian Collared-Dove effective 1 January 2017. 12 records. Committee: premature. Vote: 1-6 (Secretary: Yes; retained).
  - b. Mike: motion to remove White-winged Dove effective 1 January 2017. 12 records. Most records since year 2000. Vote: 1-6 (Secretary: Yes; retained).
  - c. Mike: motion to remove Neotropic Cormorant effective 1 January 2017. 14 records. Ross: some are likely the same bird? Vote: 1-6 (Secretary: Yes; retained).
  - d. Mike: motion to remove Townsend's Solitaire effective 1 January 2017. 92 records total, 19 in last five years. Ken: records have remained consistent over long-term, with >70 records accepted by OBRC. Vote: 7-0 (removed).
  - e. Mike: motion to remove Mississippi Kite effective 1 January 2017. 20 records for past five years. They are now breeding closer and closer (in Winnipeg!). Mike:

most records in last three years. Should we wait another year or two to make sure the trend continues? Vote: 0-7 (retained)

- f. Mike: motion to remove Henslow's Sparrow effective 1 January 2017. 20 records in past five years. All: most records from Pelee. Don: increase in records may reflect increased habitat in the states from habitat creation programs. With those programs ending, it may decrease. Ken: similar to MIKI, most records in last three years. Tim: because it is a sensitive species people might not report to eBird or other places so OBRC is a good place to have to send those records. Josh: are there unknown breeding populations? Don: no. Vote: 0-7 (retained).
  - g. Mike: motion to remove Glossy Ibis effective 1 January 2017. 75 total, 19 in last five years. Mike: big workload (50 records when consider all of the unidentified *Plegadis* records), we won't lose many (any?) WFIB records. Most records get scrutinized on eBird regardless. Vote: 7-0 (removed)
  - h. Mike: motion to remove Kirtland's Warbler effective 1 January 2017. 35+ records in last five years. Ken: new paper shows that most pass through Ontario in fall migration. Mike: plenty of records, geographically dispersed, more so now. Tim: lots of people tracking records. Ross: motus-tagged birds this winter; will see where they go. Vote: 5-2. (Sutherland and Crins: No; removed).
  - i. Ken: motion to add Western Kingbird effective 1 January 2017. 17 records. Vote: 6-1 (Secretary: No; added).
  - j. Ken: motion to add Western Sandpiper effective 1 January 2017. 10 records. Last year was a good year with two records (widely seen). Vote: 7-0 (added)
8. Motions to remove species from the Central review list.
- a. Mike: motion to remove Lesser Black-backed Gull effective 1 January 2017. Josh/Ross: where are they breeding? Mike: nine records, despite relatively little birding effort. Vote: 5-2 (Sutherland and Crins: No; removed).
9. Motion to remove species from the Lowlands review list
- a. Mike: motion to remove Lesser Black-backed Gull effective 1 January 2017. Don: if remove from central, most probably come from lowlands. Mike: very little survey effort. Ross: even with the shorebird crews there, most don't identify gulls well. Josh: is there enough data? Bill: is there a pattern? Three records in two years. Josh: several trips without that species. Vote: 1-6 (Ken: Yes; retained).
10. Lunch Break (not needed)
11. Ageing and sexing of select records from 2016 for the Annual Report
12. Updates/changes to the Operating Guidelines
- a. Bill/Mike: discuss eBird submission protocol (i.e. sharing of checklists with OBRC account, require/encourage submission of photos to Macauley Library). Bill: presented protocol used by Virginia Avian Records Committee for expedited review to speed things up. Mike: explained how that committee works. Mike: explained OBRC checklist sharing idea. Committee liked the idea. Ross: would we lose data by just using eBird? Would need detailed instructions. Committee vote 7-0 in favour of having an OBRC eBird account and preparing instructions (explaining what information must be included) for OFO website and email list-serves. Mike to prepare this information. Secretary would run eBird account.
  - b. Mike: Update to molt terminology. Currently, the plumage of a bird is published in the annual report. "Plumage terminology follows that of Humphrey and Parkes (1959). For a detailed explanation of plumage and molt terminology, see Pittaway (2000)." Suggest changing to the modified Humphrey and Parkes terminology, a

detailed account of which can be found in Howell's 2010 *Molt in North American Birds* Suggest we include this in the operating guidelines as follows: 6.8.2. *insert on first line after species so it reads:* "...species, plumage (if known), date(s)..." Ken suggest edit to "Plumage terminology uses the modified Humphrey and Parkes (1959) as described by Howell (2010)." – vote: 7-0.

Insert as 6.8.2.1:

"plumage terminology uses the modified Humphrey and Parkes (1959) following Howell (2010)."

- c. Mike: Policy on what locations are published, e.g., township vs. nearest town/nearest landmark. What landmarks qualify? Source? Rationale: we don't have a standardized strategy for the published locality. Mike suggested adding sentence at end: "Exceptions will be made when there is a non-gazetted name that is widely used and recognized within the birding community. For example, "Long Point (Tip)". Vote: 7-0.

"Published locality will come from the Geographical Names Board of Canada. The name of the locality will be the nearest named settlement. In the event no such named settlement exists within five kilometres of the observation, the nearest gazetted feature will be used. Exceptions will be made when there is a non-gazetted name that is widely used/recognized within the birding community. For example, "Long Point (Tip)".

- d. Mike: Policy to define the finder of a record? Specific attention to cross-border rarities (e.g., Elegant Tern). Group discussed scenarios where someone could find a bird but not recognize it. Who should be credited? Vote: 7-0 on first proposal.

New item 6.8.2.3:

"A *finder(s)* is defined as the first person(s) who first discovered the individual bird. In the event a bird is found by one person/people but only subsequently identified by someone else, the identifier(s) will also be recognized in the report. "

Second proposal. Don: add provision to identify who first saw it in Ontario. Need to specify dates it was in and outside of Ontario. Committee to use judgement on when to apply this (e.g Ivory Gull example). Josh: how to deal with large groups of people all being finders? Mike: rare situation, we can list as many names as we want.

New item 6.8.2.4:

"In the event a bird is first found outside of Ontario and later is documented in Ontario, the finder(s) will be listed as the person(s) who first found the bird outside of Ontario since they are the true finders of this particular record. The dates of occurrence will be listed as the total dates the bird(s) was known to be in the area, with the dates the bird(s) was known to be in Ontario also listed."

- e. Mike: Policy on OFO checklist:

- i. Where do family names come from? What constitutes a breeding record?  
Breeding record: Don: should be anything that has produced eggs or dependent young. Vote: 7-0 to accept all additions:

Add a whole new section at the end of the document:

“7. Ontario Checklist”

And the following sub-items:

7.1. Maintenance. After each AGM, the Secretary will update the Ontario Checklist and all review lists and provide a copy of the updated file to the OFO webmaster.

7.2. Printed edition. The Chair will work with OFO on all updates to the print version of the checklist. They may appoint other committee members to help as needed.

7.3. Content.

7.3.1. Overall list: only species which are either not on any of the review lists or which have at least one OBRC-accepted record will be included on the list.

7.3.2. Review list: the printed list will include indications of which species are on which review lists.

7.3.3. Breeding species: the list will include a list of which species have bred in the province. Only species which have at least a single documented breeding record will be included. A breeding record for the province shall be constituted if breeding is confirmed by a nest containing eggs and/or young (including identifiable egg shell fragments and/or nestling remains) is found or recently fledged, largely dependent young incapable of sustained flight. Nests under construction, adult birds carrying nesting material or constructing nests which are later abandoned, or adults observed simply carrying food will not constitute confirmed breeding records.

7.3.4. Nomenclature:

7.3.4.1. Species names and order. Species names will follow the latest checklist and supplement from the American Ornithological Society.

7.3.4.2. Families. Common names of families will be listed to separate the species. Family names will come from the same source as species, if available. If the latest AOU list does not have family common names, those on the latest Clements checklist will be used.

13. Division of letters of review for not accepted records among members. Mike to provide list of not accepted records. Each member will sign up for five records. Ken will send out template and examples. Each member will send back their letters to Ken by the end of April.

14. Timeline review for Annual Report to meet August issue deadline for *Ontario Birds*. Mike will send out first draft by end of April.

15. Election of 2017 committee:

- a. New members (3). Received 10 nominations. Mike circulated nomination letters of all ten. The following were the top candidates after voting by the Committee:
  - i. Don Sutherland (accepted)

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- ii. Mark Jennings (declined)
  - iii. Blake Mann (accepted)
  - iv. Bill Lamond (accepted)
  - b. Secretary. Ken nominated Mike Burrell: accepted, all in favour
  - c. Assistant to the Secretary: Mike appointed Barb Charlton
  - d. Chair. Ken: nominated Josh Vandermeulen. All in favour
16. Photo
17. Adjourned at 12:26. Seconded by Don. All in favour.