

Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the Vermont Bird Records Committee

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The Vermont Bird Records Committee (hereafter VBRC or the committee) held its annual meeting on November 12, 2016 at the Vermont Center for Ecostudies. The 36th annual report of the VBRC covers the evaluation of 48 records involving 31 species and 2 subspecies. Forty records were accepted (83%) with the majority (n=35 records) decided unanimously. There were no first state records for any species during this period. The first fully documented subspecies record for Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*) observed in Windsor, Vermont was accepted. Previously, one record from 2012 was deemed as a 'hypothetical' first state record because the report was submitted as a written description by a single observer only.

With no additions or subtractions this year, the official Vermont State Bird Checklist remains at 388 species, representing 22 orders and 61 families of birds. There have been 202 species found breeding in the state. The checklist can be viewed and downloaded at <http://vtecostudies.org/wildlife/wildlife-watching/vbrc/bird-checklists/>. Species taxonomy and nomenclature follow the seventh edition of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) Checklist of North American Birds and supplements (see <http://www.americanornithology.org/content/aou-checklist-north-and-middle-american-birds-7th-edition-and-supplements>). Subspecies group nomenclature follows taxonomy of The eBird/Clements Checklist of Birds of the World (Version 6.9), available at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/clementschecklist/download/>.

The 2016 roster of VBRC voting members included: George Clark, Ken Cox, Sue Elliott, Hector Galbraith (co-chair), Spencer Hardy, Kent McFarland (co-chair), Craig Provost, Chris Rimmer, Ruth Stewart, Allan Strong, John Sutton (co-chair), and Sue Wetmore. After many years of service, Galbraith has retired from the VBRC. We thank him for his considerable expertise and service, as well as being a valuable champion of VBRC and serving the greater Vermont birding community. The committee elected Taj Schottland to fill the committee vacancy. McFarland and Sutton will continue as co-chairs.

The Vermont State Bird Checklist is based on more than a century of documented observations. Reports that will expand this knowledge base are encouraged and appreciated. Consult our checklist to see the species and time periods for which the committee requests detailed documentation. A form for documenting rare species, out-of-season encounters, and rare

nesting species can be found on the Vermont Bird Records Committee web site (see <http://vtcostudies.org/wildlife/wildlife-watching/vbrc/>).

For each record we present basic statistics: count of individuals, age and sex when known, where (locality and township), when the bird was seen, and who submitted the report. We also indicate whether the evidence provided was photographic, video, audio, or only a written submission, indicating which author when known. As always, the committee strongly encourages written submissions even if other media exist. When available, a link to the record in Vermont eBird is included. All records accepted by VBRC, past and present, are stored in Vermont eBird either by the VBRC, if the observer did not enter it, or via the observer(s) directly entering the record. The VBRC strongly encourages observers to enter all bird observations, rare or common, in Vermont eBird (<http://ebird.org/content/vt/>).

Accepted Records

Notable State Reports (second through tenth records)

Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)

- One juvenile in Missisquoi Bay, Lake Champlain, ~500 meters NNW of the mouth of the Rock River (43.993, -73.090), Highgate, VT. 20 August 2016. Richard Lavallee, Dorothy Lavallee, Theodore G. Murin. Photos (RL) and written. Ninth Vermont record.

Franklin's Gull (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*)

- One, 1st winter bird, near Long Point on Lake Champlain (44.2499, -73.2857), North Ferrisburgh, Vermont. 15 November 2015. Theodore G. Murin, Steve Antell, Larry Haugh, Qing Ren, Jim Mead, Deb Mead. Photos (TGM) and written. Third Vermont record. <http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S25845002>

Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*)

- One adult at Herrick's Cove, Bellows Falls, VT. 2 May 2016. JoAnne Russo and Don Clark. Photos (JR, DC) and written (JR). Eighth Vermont record. <http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S29353041>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S29355461>
- One juvenile at Dead Creek Outlet, Highgate, VT. 22 September 2016. Craig Provost, Eddy Edwards, Theodore Murin, Richard Lavallee. Photos (EE) and written (CP). Ninth Vermont record. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S31707408>

American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*)

- One found in Hardwick, VT. 9 July 2016. Miranda Hunt. Photos and written. Ninth Vermont record.
- One observed at Mill Pond, Windsor, VT. 15 September 2016. Tim Biebel. Photos and written. Tenth Vermont record. <http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S31765758>

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*)

- One observed in a backyard near the Gilbrook Natural Area, Winooski, VT. 6 March 2016. John Minh Truong. Photo and written. Fourth Vermont record. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S27978926>

- One found at Union Village Dam - Mystery Trail, Thetford Center, VT. 18 April 2016. Susan Tiholiz and Kathy Thompson. Written. Fifth Vermont record.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S29047964>
- One observed at a residence on Purple Mountain Road, Dummerston, VT. 1 December 2015. Cathryn Abbott and Mick Baisley. Photos (CA) and written. Sixth Vermont record.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S26102411>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S26172814>

Hooded Warbler (*Setophaga citrina*)

- One male in breeding plumage at Whipstock Hill WMA, Bennington, VT. 14 May 2015. Kenneth Cox, Don Clark, JoAnne Russo. Photos (KC) and written. Later in season, two males found singing. Site occupied since at least 2014. Fifth Vermont record.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S23446082>

Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*)

- One male at Helen Buckner Memorial Preserve, Galick Road, West Haven, VT. 14 May 2016. Cathryn Abbott and Mick Baisley. Photos (CA) and written. Observed and photographed by many through May. Eighth Vermont record.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S29649366>
- One first year individual found along Black Creek Trail, Mississquoi NWR, Swanton, VT. 17 September 2016. Craig Provost. Photos and written. Ninth Vermont record.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S31628937>

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)

- One male found at a bird feeder near the Fire Station in Pittsfield, VT. 16 March 2016. : Initially reported by Judith Hawley at her feeder. Observed the following days by many observers. An image of the bird was featured in newspapers around the world (see <http://vtcostudies.org/blog/painted-bunting-delights-vermont-bird-watchers/>). Taj Schottland, Remy Lary, Emma Schoenberg, Theodore G. Murin, Qing Ren. Photos (TS, TGM) and written (TS, TGM). Fifth Vermont record.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S28378677>

Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)

- One male found on Parker Hill Road, Grafton, VT. Homeowners first reported it at bird feeders. 25 March 2016. JoAnne Russo and Don Clark. Photos (JR, DC) and written (JR). Seventh Vermont record. <http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S28538103>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S28540547>

First State Subspecies Report

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

- One found at Lake Runnemedede Park, Windsor, VT. 31 October 2015. Dylan Jackson and Michael Foster. Photos (DJ, MF) and written (DJ, MF). First fully documented Vermont record. Previously, on 4-5 December 2012 a sighting of a first year male was verbally described by a single observer and accepted as a 'hypothetical' first state record in Burlington, VT.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S25640585>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S25648037>

Notable State Subspecies Reports (second through tenth records)

Green-winged Teal (Eurasian) (*Anas crecca crecca/nimia*)

- One drake at Creek Road (43.918184, -73.169025), Middlebury, VT. 8 April 2015. Don Jones, also present Zac Cota, Isis Erb. Written. Fourth Vermont record.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S22758528>
- One drake in farm field ~70 meters west of Dead Creek and 200 meters north of Panton Road (44.1523, -73.3235), Panton, VT. 13 March 2016. Aaron Yappert, Theodore G. Murin. Photos (AY, TGM) and written (AY, TGM). Fifth Vermont record.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S28161133>
- One drake at Cayman's Marsh area west of Church Road, Swanton, VT. 19 March 2016. Craig Provost. Photos and written. Sixth Vermont record.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S28428908>

Out-of-Season Reports

Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*)

- One adult male on Moore Reservoir, Waterford, VT. 2 October 2016. Laura Tobin. Photos and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S31854923>

Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*)

- One found on Lake Bomoseen (upper western side), Castleton, VT. 11 January 2016. C. J. Frankiewicz and Kathleen Pellegrino Guinness. Written.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S26850606>

Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*)

- One adult observed on the Old Missisquoi Bay causeway (44.9744595,-73.223899), Lake Champlain, Alburgh, VT. 21 May 2006. Ron Haskell. Photos and written.

Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*)

- 1 seen along route 4 near Wheelerville Road, Mendon, VT. 12 January 2016. Sarah Carline. Photos and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S26864696>

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)

- One seen on Blueberry Lane, Rutland Town, VT. 10 February 2016. Sarah Carline. Photo and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S27412718>
- One male observed on Post Road, Rutland Town, VT. 15 February 2016. Susan Elliott. Photo and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S27590123>

Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*)

- One seen along railroad tracks off Depot Street near Waits River bridge, Bradford, VT. 6 March 2016. Craig Provost. Written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S28016735>

Orange-crowned Warbler (*Oreothlypis celata*)

- One observed at Lake Runnemedede Park, Windsor, VT. 3 May 2016. Nicole Hazlett. Written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S29374947>

Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)

- One male observed at a beaver pond off Rt 23, Middlebury, VT. 17 January 2016. Spencer Hardy. Photos and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S26947467>

- One found ~1/4 mile upstream on La Platte River from Leavensworth Road bridge, Hinesburg, VT. 24 January 2016. Paul Wiczorek. Written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S27148021>

Northern Parula (*Setophaga americana*)

- One at a suet feeder on York St., Poultney, VT. 10 December 2015. Last observed on 21 December 2015. Michael Blust. Photos and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S26231851>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S26349695>

Black-throated Green Warbler (*Setophaga virens*)

- One at Huntington Place, Rochester, VT. 2 January 2016. Zacheriah T. Cota-Weaver, Remy Lary, Graham Bates. Photos (ZTCW) and written. Originally found by Bates on 30 December. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S26606493>

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*)

- Two found at Bigelow Farm - Fox Stand, Royalton, VT. 15 January 2016. Kyle Jones. Photos and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S26907594>

Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*)

- One observed in Biscayne Heights, Colchester, VT. 20 December 2015. First seen at bird feeders 11 November and last reported on 30 December. Allan Strong and Trish O'Kane. Photos and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S26536013>

Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*)

- Approximately 30 individuals found on Depot Hill Road, Pittsford, VT. 17 December 2015. Sarah Carline. Photos, recording, and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S26338843>
- Eleven males and one female observed at Colchester Point, Colchester, VT. 20 December 2015. Allan Strong and Trish O'Kane. Photos and written.
- Ten individuals found on Depot Hill Road, Pittsford, VT. 20 January 2016. Sarah Carline. Photos and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S27018041>
- Flock of eight on Depot Hill Road, Pittsford, VT. 23 January 2016. Zacheriah T. Cota Weaver. Photos, recording, and written.
- One found on Depot Hill Road, Pittsford, VT. 9 February 2016. Sarah Carline. Photos, recording, and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S27398158>

Rare Nesting Reports

Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)

- Female with at least four young observed along Route 7 near Raymond Road, Danby, VT. 18 July 2012. Nancy Brown. Photos and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S11176754>

Other Reports Accepted

Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)

- Female observed on Old Route 7 North near fire station, Danby, VT. 8 January 2011. Nancy Brown. Photos and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S7394276>
- Female with four immature found at Old Otis Road - Danby Pond, Danby, VT. 29 September 2012. Nancy Brown. Photos and written. <http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S11683492>

Long-Billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*)

- One juvenile at Whitney Creek WMA, Addison, VT. 4-5 October 2015. Don Hof, Don Jones, Taj Schottland. Photos (DH, DJ) and written.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S25300587>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S25311372>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S25300478>
- Two at Whitney Creek WMA, Addison, VT. 14 October 2015. Jim Mead. Written.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S25444012>
- One at Dead Creek WMA - Stone Creek Dam, Addison, VT. 27 October 2015. Cathryn Abbott, Don Clark, Jo Anne Russo. Photos (DC) and written.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S25568044>
- One juvenile at Dead Creek outlet (44.9749387,-73.1288624), Highgate Springs, VT. 17 and 22 September 2016. J. Eddy Edwards, Judy Edwards, Ted Murin, Craig Provost, Dick Lavalley. Photos (JEE) and written.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S31632866>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S31707408>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S31706227>
- Two juveniles at Goose Bay, Highgate Springs, VT. 9 October 2016. Jim Mead. Written.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S31957496>

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*)

- One in winter plumage on Lake Champlain NW of Champlain Bridge at Chimney Point, Addison, VT. 24 November 2015. Taj Schottland. Written.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S25986437>

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)

- One immature at Mill Pond, Windsor, VT. 21 September 2016. Still present through mid November. Kyle Jones. Photos and written.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S31687264>

American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*)

- One male on Mount Monadnock at ~3,000 feet elevation, Lemington, VT. 6 September 2016. Thomas Berriman. Photos and written.
<http://ebird.org/ebird/vt/view/checklist/S31452693>

Reports Not Accepted

A number of factors may contribute to a record being denied acceptance by the VBRC. It is uncommon for a record to not be accepted due to a bird being obviously misidentified. More commonly, a record is not accepted because the material submitted was incomplete, insufficient, superficial, or too vague to properly document the reported occurrence while eliminating all other similar species. It is important that the simple act of not accepting a particular record should by no means indicate that the VBRC or any of its members feel the record did not occur as reported. The non-acceptance of any record simply reflects the opinion of the VBRC that the documentation, as submitted, did not meet the rigorous standards appropriate for adding data to the formal historical record. The VBRC makes every effort to be

as fair and objective as possible regarding each record. All records, whether accepted or not, remain on file and can be re-submitted to the committee if additional substantive material is presented and are available for scientific research.

Eurasian Dotterel (*Charadrius morinellus*)

- One individual at Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area - Brilyea Access, Addison, VT. 6 September 2007. Photos and written.

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*)

- One observed on Lake Champlain at Champlain Bridge, Addison, VT. 27 November 2015. Photos and written.

Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*)

- One observed in Danby, VT. 27 May 2016. Photos and written.

Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*)

- One seen at Campbell Flats Road, Norwich, VT. 24 October 2015. Written.

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*)

- One observed in Stowe, VT. 3 April 2016. Written.
- One seen in Williston, VT. 24 June 2016. Written.

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

- One fleetingly observed in Brandon, VT. 11 October 2015. Written.

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)

- One found at a feeder in Brattleboro, VT. 25 July 2016. Written.