

New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee Report Spring 2016 through Winter 2016-17 and Selected Historical Records

Hector Galbraith, Chair

Michael Resch, Secretary

This report from the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee (NHRBC) contains the decisions for records voted on by the Committee for Spring 2016, Summer 2016, Fall 2016, and Winter 2016-17. Additionally, the Committee reviewed and voted on several historical records that were not previously voted on or required further evaluation prior to making final decisions.

The NHRBC reviews unusual sightings in an effort to maintain accuracy and scientific integrity of rare bird records in New Hampshire. It is independent of New Hampshire Bird Records (NHBR) and NH Audubon. All sightings are evaluated based on details submitted by the observer(s). The Committee requires a vote with not more than one dissension for acceptance of a record except for potential first state records which require a unanimous vote.

A rejection is not necessarily an indication that the identification was incorrect, but that the information received was not sufficient to allow its acceptance as a state record. Adequate documentation is key to whether a report is accepted or not. For information on the Committee and its decision-making process, see the articles in the Summer 1996 and Winter 2005-06 issues of NHBR.

These four 2016 seasons included a remarkable five first New Hampshire state records that were accepted by the Committee:

- Tufted Duck – a long-awaited first state record appearing at Captain Pond in Salem, NH during the period of March 4-8, 2016.
- Redwing – seen March 13-16, 2016 in Hollis, NH in and around the Hollis High School fields.
- Mountain Bluebird – seen April 4-15, 2016 at the Pease International Tradeport south end, Portsmouth, NH.
- Eurasian Collared-Dove – seen on May 25, 2016 in East Kingston, NH.
- White Wagtail, *yarrellii* race – an amazing sighting starting on 11/2/16 at Rye Harbor State Park and then making its way south to Great Boars Head in Hampton, NH through 11/4/16. This is the first North American sighting of this race, also known as Pied Wagtail in Europe.

The sightings of the Tufted Duck, Redwing, Mountain Bluebird and Eurasian Collared-Dove were detailed in the Spring 2016 edition of New Hampshire Bird Records. The White Wagtail record was detailed in the Fall 2016 edition. With these additions as of February 2017, the official New Hampshire state list totals 414.

The NHRBC also revisited the list of species for which documentation and review are required. Based on an analysis of the frequency of past sightings, especially over the last 10 years, several species were removed from the state's review list, including Cackling Goose, Red-headed Woodpecker, Varied Thrush and Hoary Redpoll. The complete review list can be found at: <https://nhbirdrecords.org/rare-bird-committee-species-list/>.

A reminder that the best way to ensure your sighting is accepted by the NHRBC is to prepare and submit adequate documentation of the sighting using the “New Hampshire Bird Sighting Documentation” form, available at:

<https://nhbirdrecords.org/documentation-forms-for-rarities/>

Even if you have a photo, a supplemental documentation form can be invaluable in gaining acceptance of the record, especially with poor quality photos. If you don’t have a photograph it doesn’t mean it won’t be accepted by the Committee.

The members of the Committee voting on the Spring, Summer and Fall 2016 records were: David Donsker, Kurk Dorsey, Iain MacLeod, Eric Masterson, Mike Resch and Hector Galbraith (Chair). Two additional members were added to the Committee for Winter 2016-17 and Historical Records, Jason Lambert and Jeanne-Marie Maher. Mike Resch served as the Committee Secretary.

Spring 2016

Records Accepted by the Committee

SPECIES	DATE	TOWN/LOCATION
Pacific Loon	5/22/16	North Hampton
Pacific Loon	5/30/16	North Hampton
Western Grebe	4/14/16	Hampton Beach
Tufted Duck	3/4/16	Salem
Red-necked Phalarope	5/7/16	Newfound Lake
White-winged Dove	5/20/16	Star Island
Eurasian Collared-Dove	5/25/16	East Kingston
Chuck-will’s-widow	5/21/16	Star Island
Red-headed Woodpecker	5/10/16	Merrimack
Red-headed Woodpecker	5/19/16	Chocorua
Red-headed Woodpecker	5/23/16	Londonderry
Red-headed Woodpecker	5/24/16	Alton Bay
Acadian Flycatcher	5/21/16	Weare
Mountain Bluebird	4/9/16	Pease International Tradeport
Redwing	3/13/16	Hollis
Varied Thrush	3/4/16	Merrimack
Cerulean Warbler	5/27/16	Durham
Blue Grosbeak	5/8/16	Manchester

Records Not Accepted by the Committee – None

Summer 2016

Records Accepted by the Committee

SPECIES	DATE	TOWN/LOCATION
Royal Tern	7/9/16	North Hampton
Rufous Hummingbird	7/16/16	Dunbarton
Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird	7/29/16	Greenland
Gray-cheeked Thrush	6/16/16	Pondicherry NWR
Golden-winged Warbler	6/3/16	Peterborough
Leach's Storm-Petrel	7/6/16	Jeffrey's Ledge

Records Not Accepted by the Committee

SPECIES	DATE	TOWN/LOCATION
Worm-eating Warbler	6/26/16	Colebrook
This bird was only seen briefly with few fieldmarks noted and, although the bird was singing, the song was not described.		

Fall 2016

Records Accepted by the Committee

SPECIES	DATE	TOWN/LOCATION
Western Grebe	11/3/16	Rye
Cackling Goose	10/5/16	Franklin
Common Eider	11/23/16	Hollis
Common Eider	11/24/16	Sandwich
Red-necked Phalarope	10/2/16	Exeter WTP
Long-eared Owl	11/2/16	Hampton
Red-headed Woodpecker	9/16/16	Contoocook
Western Kingbird	10/22/16	Rye
Fork-tailed Flycatcher	9/20/16	Lebanon
White Wagtail, <i>yarellii</i> race	11/2/16	Rye
White-eyed Vireo	10/8/16	Odiorne Point
White-eyed Vireo	10/22/16	Henniker
Prothonotary Warbler	11/8/16	North Hampton
Western Tanager	9/26/16	Freedom Town

Records Not Accepted by the Committee

SPECIES	DATE	TOWN/LOCATION
Red-necked Phalarope (3 birds)	10/2/16	Concord
Red Phalarope could not be eliminated. The sighting was accepted as 3 Red/Red-necked Phalaropes		
Great Gray Owl	11/25/16	Lyman
Description could not eliminate Barred or Great Horned Owl.		
Cave Swallow	11/12/16	Rye
Photos were of insufficient quality to eliminate Cliff Swallow and observer did not see the bird well enough to definitively identify the bird as a Cave Swallow.		

Winter 2016/2017

Records Accepted by the Committee

SPECIES	DATE	TOWN/LOCATION
Thayer's Gull *	12/11/16	Jeffrey's Ledge
Thayer's Gull	12/29/16	Rye
Common Murre *	12/11/16	Jeffrey's Ledge
Common Murre *	12/14/16	Off-shore
Great Gray Owl	2/25/17	Newport
Red-headed Woodpecker	2/4/17	Sanbornton
Red-headed Woodpecker	2/14/17	Epping
Townsend's Solitaire	2/23/17	Orford
Varied Thrush	12/12/16	Swanzey
Varied Thrush	12/28/16	Swanzey
Varied Thrush	2/12/17	New Ipswich
*Note, these offshore records did not include GPS coordinates, therefore the Committee cannot verify that the sightings occurred in New Hampshire waters.		

Records Not Accepted by the Committee – None

Historical Records

Records Accepted by the Committee

SPECIES	DATE	TOWN/LOCATION
Red-necked Phalarope	5/13/06	Mount Sunapee
Red Phalarope	5/15/06	Mount Sunapee
Eared Grebe	8/12/11	Rochester
Wilson's Phalarope	9/13/11	Exeter WTP
Curlew Sandpiper	9/17, 23/11	Plaice Cove, Hampton
Black Vulture	5/23/11	Mirror Lake, White Mtns.
Mississippi Kite	4/16/82	Bristol
Northern (Red-shafted) Flicker	12/17/94	Manchester
Leach's Storm-Petrel *	7/6/16	Jeffrey's Ledge
Royal Tern	7/2/15	Hampton Harbor
Louisiana Waterthrush	8/5/12	Westmoreland
*Note, this offshore record did not include GPS coordinates, therefore the Committee cannot verify that the sighting occurred in New Hampshire waters.		

Records Not Accepted by the Committee

SPECIES	DATE	TOWN/LOCATION
Red-necked Phalarope	8/26/11	Jaffrey
Since Red Phalarope could not be eliminated, the bird was accepted as a Red/Red-necked Phalarope.		
Mississippi Kite	5/9/82	Durham
The description was insufficient to accept this species which was exceedingly rare in New Hampshire at the time.		
Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco	3/14/95	Chester
Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco	12/15/96	Rochester
Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco	4/14/97	Chester
The Committee felt that female or immature "Slate-colored" Juncos could not be eliminated.		