



**Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee
2003 Annual Meeting
Saturday, February 22, 2003**

Meeting Minutes and Annual Business Report

The 2003 Annual Meeting of the Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee (MD/DCRC) was called to order at 10:10 am at the home of Phil Davis in Davidsonville, MD. Members present included Paul O'Brien (Chair), Phil Davis (Secretary), Jonathan Alderfer, Matt Hafner, Bonnie Ott, Paul Pisano, Fran Pope, and Bob Ringler. Absent were Barry Cooper and Marshall Iliff. MOS President, Paul Zucker, also attended.

1. Secretary's Report. The Secretary presented the following report:

a. Database Status Report.

- i. **Database Contents.** Figure 1 presents the glossary of the status and decision nomenclature used in the MD/DCRC database. Figure 2 summarizes the current contents of the MD/DCRC database and the changes ("deltas") from last year.
- ii. **Reports Received Per Year.** Figure 3 shows the number of reports the MD/DCRC receives per year. The figure separates "current" reports (documentation received within six months of the sighting) and historical reports. The committee emphasis in locating and obtaining old published "historical" reports during the period from 1995 through 1999 can be easily seen. In recent years, the number of current reports received has averaged in the 40s.

b. Review Package Status Report:

- i. **Completed Packages.** Figure 4 presents a summary of review package statistics by calendar year for completed packages. For each year, the table shows the total and average number of reports circulated, the total and average number of new reports, and the total and average number of decisions reached. Decisions include "Accepted", "Accepted-Group", "Not Accepted", and "ID OK/Questionable Origin" (which also includes "ID OK/Exotic Origin"). This year, due to the health and subsequent death of one of our members, Rick Blom, no packages were completed in 2002. All 2002 packages will be completed in 2003, since Paul Pisano is completing the review process in Rick's place.
 - ii. **Packages in Circulation.** Figure 5 indicates the contents of the packages that are currently in circulation.
 - iii. **Acceptance Rate.** The committee acceptance rate remains at 76 percent. The rate, shown in Figure 6, is determined by dividing the total number of accepted decisions (including Accepted, Accepted-Group, ID OK/?? Origin, and ID OK/Exotic Origin) by the total number of decisions (which includes the Not Accepted decisions).
- c. External Communications Report.** Figure 7 presents a summary of significant communications with people or organizations outside of the committee's business interfaces.

Figure 1. MD/DCRC Database Status and Decision Definitions

Decision / Status	Definition
S&R	Records from the committee's baseline document: Stewart & Robbins, The Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia, 1958.
Accepted	Reports accepted by the committee.
Accepted-Group	Reports accepted only as to a species group or genus--where all other species of this group are reviewable at the observed location.
ID OK/?? Origin	Reports accepted for the species/group reported, however, a majority of the committee questioned whether the bird was a "natural" vagrant or a "wild" bird.
ID OK/Exotic Origin	Reports accepted for the species/group reported, however, a majority of the committee felt the bird was of exotic (i.e., captive) origin.
Not Accepted	Reports not accepted by the committee.
Circulating	Reports currently in circulation and under review by the committee.
Recirculate	Reports where no committee decision was reached during the latest circulation. The report will be circulated again.
Ready	Reports ready for circulation. All relevant reports, or a sufficient number of reports, have been submitted.
Reviewable	Reports of a species/location that meets the committee's Review List criteria. Additional observer data is believed to be outstanding.
USNM	Reports of specimens in the US Museum of Natural History that have not otherwise been published. Specimens are to be verified and reviewed by the committee.
Hold	Reports where review of this species or genus/group has been suspended pending resolution of taxonomy or field identification issues.
Unreviewable	Reports with insufficient descriptive identification details to permit a review by the committee. Typical for many older published sight records.
Report	Reports submitted indirectly to the committee (e.g., via NA Birds, Voice of the Naturalist, etc.). Observer concurrence is required prior to committee review.
Non-Review Species	Reports submitted for a species/location that does not fall within the committee's Review List criteria.
Reopened	Reports reopened for consideration by the committee. Reopened reports are "removed" from the committee's database statistics and replaced by the reopened report
Withdrawn	Reports withdrawn by the original observer(s).

d. Internal Communications Report.

- i. **Acknowledgements.** Report acknowledgements will be sent to observers shortly after the meeting.
- ii. **Decision Reports.** Decision reports will be sent to observers after the current packages are summarized.

e. Internet Communications Report.

- i. **MOS MD/DCRC Web Site Updates.** The Secretary has continued to update and roll out MD/DCRC data products to the committee's web pages on the MOS web site. Thanks to Fran Saunders, the MOS Webmaster for maintaining these pages. The Secretary occasionally reminds the local birding community via e-mail messages on the local birding listserver (MD Osprey) that this data is available for their reference. The link to the committee's web pages is:

<http://www.mdbirds.org/mddcrc/rcindex.html>

Figure 2. MD/DCRC Database summary as of 02/18/2003 and changes from previous annual meetings

State	Category/Status	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Delta
MD	Accepted	258	333	365	380	387	387	0
	Stewart & Robbins	9	9	100	85	83	81	-2
	Accepted-Group	2	2	9	9	10	10	0
	ID OK/?? Origin	5	6	6	6	7	8	1
	Not Accepted	119	124	127	132	133	132	-1
	Circulating	45	28	9	15	49	78	29
	Recirculate	22	21	27	25	23	18	-5
	Ready	102	49	64	61	69	78	9
	Reviewable	35	45	36	35	42	44	2
	US Museum of Natural History	-	-	6	26	21	14	-7
	Hold	11	11	16	15	15	15	0
	Report	0	3	5	0	0	0	0
	Unreviewable	221	224	238	246	248	255	7
	Non-Review Species	109	112	119	136	139	140	1
	Reopened	-	-	5	5	6	7	1
Withdrawn	4	5	7	7	8	9	1	
	MD Totals	942	972	1139	1183	1240	1276	36
DC	Accepted	14	16	19	20	20	20	0
	Stewart & Robbins	-	-	25	8	8	8	0
	Accepted-Group	0	0	0	2	2	2	0
	Not Accepted	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Circulating	1	4	1	2	7	13	6
	Recirculate	1	2	4	4	5	2	-3
	Ready	6	2	3	7	14	21	7
	Reviewable	1	7	9	5	6	4	-2
	US Museum of Natural History	-	-	4	26	27	15	-12
	Report	0	10	10	2	2	2	0
	Unreviewable	8	13	17	16	28	30	2
	Non-Review Species	3	3	3	6	7	7	0
	Withdrawn					0	1	1
	DC Totals	34	57	95	98	126	125	-1
DE VA ??	US Museum of Natural History				2	3	5	2
	Unreviewable						1	1
	Withdrawn						2	2
	Grand Totals	976	1029	1235	1283	1366	1409	43

- ii. **Quantitative Status System.** The committee developed a “quick look” species status system based on report total categories, similar to a California system. At last year’s annual meeting, the committee decided to include “exotic” and “questionable origin” votes in a separate column within the status system nomenclature. A separate tally of the S&R records was also added. A copy of this report was provided for the members to review. The final version will be posted on the MD/DCRC web pages on the MOS web site.

f. **Database Projects:**

- i. **Projects Completed.** The following database projects were completed since the last Annual Meeting:
1. **Historical Growth of the MD/DC Lists.** This project produced a report that tabulates and displays the new species added each year to the official Maryland and DC lists. A draft was provided for the committee’s review. The final version will be rolled out to the committee’s web pages.

Figure 3. MD/DCRC Reports Received per Year

Year	Reports Received	"Current" Reports	Historical Reports
1966	1	0	1
1979	2	2	0
1980	1	1	0
1982	1	1	0
1983	2	1	1
1984	3	3	0
1985	5	5	0
1986	3	3	0
1988	2	0	2
1989	2	2	0
1990	3	3	0
1991	25	25	0
1992	13	12	1
1993	25	23	2
1994	58	48	10
1995	183	43	140
1996	104	48	56
1997	268	44	224
1998	43	30	13
1999	192	42	150
2000	52	48	4
2001	76	41	35
2002	34	21	13
2003	12	8	4
Totals	1110	454	656
Average		19	

Figure 4. Package Statistics Summary

Year	Pkgs	Weeks	# Items	# New	# Decisions	Dec %	Avg #Items	Avg #New	Avg #Decs
1985	3	72.0	40	40	17	49%	13	13	6
1986	6	24.4	60	35	34	57%	10	6	6
1987	5	21.1	54	27	43	80%	11	5	9
1988	3	20.0	30	25	17	57%	10	8	6
1989	4	26.6	35	20	18	57%	9	5	5
1990	3	35.1	30	15	12	40%	10	5	4
1991	7	18.9	65	35	39	64%	9	5	6
1992	8	20.6	73	43	37	55%	9	5	5
1993	4	13.3	41	22	26	69%	10	6	7
1994	4	25.6	39	20	28	77%	10	5	7
1995	4	25.8	63	50	33	52%	16	13	8
1996	4	25.2	51	37	33	65%	13	9	8
1997	5	21.1	68	47	50	74%	14	9	10
1998	7	19.3	107	84	83	78%	15	12	12
1999	6	17.8	84	61	48	63%	14	10	8
2000	2	22.7	26	15	17	66%	13	8	9
2001	3	25.8	44	30	26	60%	15	10	9
2002	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	78	25.6	910	606	561	64%	12	8	7

Figure 5. Status of Packages Currently in Circulation

Year	Pkg #		Start	# Items	# New
2001	78		09/01/2001	14	8
		Total	1	14	8
		Average		14	8
2002	81		01/24/2002	25	25
	82		02/22/2002	17	17
	83		03/26/2002	1	1
	84		09/13/2002	18	13
	85		10/03/2002	1	0
		Total	5		62
	Average			12	11
2003	84		01/10/2003	16	14
	85		02/21/2003	17	14
		Total	2	33	28
	Average		17	14	
Grand Totals				109	92
Grand Averages				14	12

Figure 6. MD/DCRC Acceptance Rate Report

Decision/Status	#Records
Accepted	407
Accepted-Group	12
ID OK/?? Origin	8
ID OK/Exotic Origin	1
Not Accepted	134
Grand Total	562
Acceptance Rate:	76%

- ii. **Projects In-Progress.** The following database projects are still in work:
1. **Decision Text from Old Records.** This project involves electronically “cutting” decision summaries from older “letter-to-observer” word processing files and “pasting” them into the “decision summary” database record field. More progress was made on this project this year but it is not yet complete.
 2. **Dissection of Early Package Ballots.** In the early days of the committee, members wrote their ballots sequentially on sheets of paper. This project will decollate these early ballots so that all ballots for any given record/report will be contained in the physical file jacket for that record/report. During the past year, the older ballots were duplicated; however, some paper manipulation remains to be completed on this project.
 3. **AOU Check-List 43rd Supplement Update.** The committee’s taxonomy database was updated to comply with the AOU 43rd supplement.
 4. **Stewart and Robbins Species.** The committee has not decided exactly how to treat some of the species included in the committee’s baseline document, Stewart and Robbins (1958). For example, which records should be added to the MD/DCRC database? These species include:

Figure 7. Summary of the Past Year's External Communications

Mon	Year	Contact	St	Topic
Jan	2002	Lang, Aaron	AK	Arctic Loon ID articles
Jan	2002	Whan, Bill	OH	Trumpeter Swan reintroduction issues - Ohio BRC
Feb	2002	Jarmillo, Alvaro	CA	Kelp Gull ID issues
Mar	2002	McCallister, Brian	NY	Whooper Swan background
Mar	2002	Hoag, Dave	VT	Whooper Swan background
Mar	2002	Sladen, William	VA	Whooper Swan status
Mar	2002	Gillevet, Patrick	VA	Whooper Swan status
Mar	2002	Lantz, Bruce	DE	MD Brown-headed Nuthatch records
Mar	2002	Voigt, Ed	DE	C&O Canal query on Northern Gannet record
Mar	2002	Wilson, Angus	NY	Kelp Gull review process
Apr	2002	Dykstra, Cheryl	MI	Kelp Gull Status - John Ball Zoological Gardens
Apr	2002	Ensor, Julie	FL	Sea World Kelp Gull status
Apr	2002	Laljer, Cyndi	TX	Kelp Gull status - San Antonio Sea World
Apr	2002	Reiss, Paula	KY	Kelp Gull status - Louisville Zoo
May	2002	Yee, David	CA	Demoiselle Crane records
Jun	2002	Delight, Buenafior	MD	Garrett County Environmental Report - windpower
Jul	2002	Smith, G.	DC	Conservation research guide
Aug	2002	Howe, Stan	U.K.	Sea Swallow database - MD pelagic records
Sep	2002	Dorsey, Chad	ME	Kelp Gull Query
Sep	2002	Beaton, Giff	NC	USGS Geographic Name Information Database
Oct	2002	Brazil, Mark	Japan	Slaty-backed Gull outside expert review
Oct	2002	King, Jon	CA	Slaty-backed Gull outside expert review
Oct	2002	Reid, Martin	TX	Slaty-backed Gull outside expert review
Nov	2002	Whan, Bill	OH	Trumpeter Swan reintroduction issues - Ohio BRC
Nov	2002	Rising, Gerry	??	Trumpeter Swan reintroduction issues
Dec	2002	Banks, Richard	DC	AOU Checklist - MD Silver Gull
Dec	2002	Floyd, Ted	CO	ABA Birding article on bird records committees
Jan	2003	Gorney, Don	IN	Indiana BRC Kelp Gull Issues
Feb	2003	Mlodinow, Steve	WA	MD Painted Bunting records

- i. **Bachman's Sparrow.** Since this species bred in Maryland into the 1970s even though it is not extirpated, the committee will not review historical records; except for significant records, such as first state records.
 - ii. **Bewick's Wren.** Likewise, the committee will not review historical records of this species, except for first state records.
 - iii. **Northern Shrike.** Review of records that predate the committee's removal of this species from the review list, will be handled as a low priority.
5. **Extinct Species Research.** This project involves researching historical species that are extinct or extirpated from Maryland. Examples include Eskimo Curlew, Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Greater Prairie Chicken, and Eskimo Curlew. The objective is to capture all historical documentation for the committee's files.
6. **Loss Prevention Plan/Permanent Storage Status.** This project deals with preservation of the committee data repository in case of fire or other disaster.

The committee's files currently fill the equivalent of approximately 22 document boxes; 11 hold the observation files and one holds the related audio/video recordings; two boxes hold identification and reference articles; six boxes hold miscellaneous correspondence, reports, and historical reference materials; and two hold supplies. Additional committee reference material is not boxed, but is on bookshelves. These items include a library of Maryland Birdlife and American Birds/Field Notes/North American Birds. Other non-boxed reference material includes baseline publications such as Stewart and Robbins (1958), the Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas, and historical publications such as Kirkwood (1895), and Coues and Prentiss (1863 and 1883).

The committee's electronic data files currently consume 3.17GBs of data storage. Currently, all electronic data is periodically duplicated and stored on-site (i.e., in the Secretary's home) in a fire-retardant safe and copies are sent off-site, typically to the Chair.

The bulk of the committee's files, however, consist of paper, slides, photos, and video tapes. The long term vision is to digitize original documentation, slides, images, and audio/video recordings. These digitized products can then be compactly stored at multiple locations and will also be available for publication on the MD/DCRC web pages.

The archival plan includes performing a formal quality check of each old record (see discussion below) and placement of the original paper and photographs into the MOS controlled storage facility in central Maryland. Duplicate photocopies already exist of most paper reports since copies are made before circulating the reports in a review package. Photographs are also photocopied (in black and white) before sending them out for review.

Last year, it was suggested that the Secretary investigate obtaining fireproof document boxes; however, the size and weight of these boxes is prohibitive for storage in the Secretary's home.

7. **Species Review Status Change History.** The Secretary is working on a chronology of the change in species review status—for example, when Clay-colored Sparrow was dropped from the review list; when the review range of Franklin's Gull was redefined, etc. This information is becoming lost and should be captured for posterity. All old review lists have been located and identified, but the data has not been compiled, yet.
- iii. **Future Projects.** The following database projects have not yet been started.
1. **Future Web-based Records Committee Vision.** The Secretary plans to implement the following functions:
 - i. **On-line Photo Gallery.** This project will publish, on-line, accepted record photographs, images, and other documentation. The plan is to begin with first state records.
 - ii. **On-line Database.** This project will provide MD/DCRC database access to interested parties on-line via the web.
 - iii. **Review Process via the Web.** This project will allow committee members to access an "intranet" (not accessible to the general public) to review records on-line.

The Secretary will coordinate these plans with the MOS Web Site Director.

2. **DC Reports.** The Secretary plans to review the defunct DC Records Committee files and merge or add any data items of relevance to the MD/DCRC database.
3. **Imprecise Date Capability:** This is a project to add separate database year, month, and day fields for record start dates. This requirement stems from historical records with incomplete start dates (e.g., year only, or year and month only). Currently, the Secretary estimates a day of month and annotates the records, but this can be misleading on many tabular reports. This capability will correct this condition.
4. **Data Dictionary and Standardization.** The Secretary plans to define a formal data dictionary and schema for all committee data fields and data tables. This project will

include a data normalization exercise to clean up the data structures (eliminate duplicate fields, etc.).

5. **Business Processes Definition and Documentation.** For posterity, and to share with other state/provincial records committees, the Secretary intends to document the MD/DCRC Level 2 and Level 3 business processes using process flow diagrams.
6. **Quality Review.** Once the committee data structure is fully stable, the Secretary plans to review each individual folder jacket to ensure that all fields in the database are fully populated, are correct, and that all photographic documentation is present, etc. Once this review is completed, record hardcopy files will be ready for digital and physical archiving.
- g. **Unsubmitted Reports and Outstanding Documentation Status.** Bob Ringler is reviewing the 17 year *Maryland Birdlife* Changing Seasons database against the MD/DCRC database for any possible reports that may be in his file and to identify any inconsistencies in the MD/DCRC data. The Secretary provided him with a list of all "Unreviewable" and "USNM" data records in case he has documentation that can be added to the files. Bob is noting the corrections and additions and will provide that information to the Secretary when he is done.

2. Subcommittee/Project Reports

- a. **Outreach Subcommittee.** Paul O'Brien reported that he gave the MD/DCRC outreach presentation to the Allegany Chapter in October 2002. To date, the program has been given to half of the local MOS Chapters.
- b. **DC Review List.** At an earlier meeting the committee discussed whether to develop a separate DC Review List, or keep MD and DC combined. Paul Pisano agreed to work with Ottavio Janni and Rob Hilton to develop a draft DC Review List for the committee to consider. The committee concurred with the latest version and it will be posted on the MD/DCRC web pages. Paul noted that the decision of which birds to include on the DC review list was based not only on the number of prior DC records, but also with consideration of the status of species from the contiguous MD and VA jurisdictions. For example, the subcommittee decided to not include Great Cormorant and decided to add Whimbrel.

Subspecies/Distinct Forms Subcommittee. Marshall Iliff has drafted a comprehensive *Annotated List of Bird Subspecies Known from the State of Maryland*. He is currently discussing alternatives for publishing this work with the MOS. After the list is published, the committee will use this work as the basis for the adoption of a list of subspecies/forms for which it would want to receive and review observer reports.

- c. **Specimens.** Last year, the committee located and photographed a number of USNM reviewable specimens. There are still a number of "reported" specimens on our target list. We will look for more of them at this year's Skins Workshop at the Smithsonian Institution.
 1. **Measurement of Specimens.** Jonathan Alderfer measured the photographed Leach's Storm-Petrel specimens in the USNM. These measurements will be provided to the members when these reports are recirculated.
 2. **Piney Run Swallow-tailed Kite.** Bob Ringler videotaped the Maryland Swallow-tailed Kite at the Piney Run Nature Center in Carroll County.
- d. **Third MD/DCRC Decision Report.** Michael O'Brien is the senior author of the next committee decision report. The preparation of this report has begun.

3. Action Item Review:

a. **Reopened Common Gull.** In the past, members petitioned to reopen the previously accepted Conowingo Common Gull record [MD/1995-033] due to recent, more fully understood variations in Ring-billed Gull plumages. In keeping with the new procedure, a narrative providing rationale for the reopening was provided; however, accompanying additional analysis has not yet been submitted to the committee. Jonathan Alderfer indicated that the status of identification issues between Common Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls is still not settled. He indicated that he will submit the second Conowingo bird as a Common Gull to the committee. [This bird was initially called a Common Gull, but was later thought to be an immature Ring-billed Gull and was never submitted]. The committee will then review both the first (the reopened record) and second bird together.

b. **Official Lists of the Birds of Maryland and DC.**

1. **Multipart Lists.** The Secretary presented a draft “multi-part” list, which organizes the species into various sections:

- i. Accepted Species
- ii. Accepted Genus/Complex
- iii. Accepted Subspecies/Recognizable Forms
- iv. Accepted ID, but Questionable Origin
- v. Accepted ID, but Exotic Origin

This report format will capture and present committee decision information on subspecies and questionable origins that would otherwise not be obvious to the birding public. The committee accepted the new format and these newly formatted lists for MD and DC will be published on the MD/DCRC web pages.

2. **Official List Beginning Dates.** At last year’s meeting it was suggested that the committee associate a beginning date with each of the official lists, similar to how the British annotate their “A” list. The lists would then be entitled “Official List of the Birds of Maryland since 1804” (where 1804 is the earliest start date in the database). The Secretary has incorporated this suggestion into the new “multipart” format lists.

c. **Goals Document Structure.** The current Goals and Procedures document is currently over nine pages in length. At last year’s meeting an idea was presented of dividing the document into two or more shorter and more focused documents. Suggestions included separating policies from procedures, or separating topics that the members need to know from items that apply primarily to just the Secretary and/or the Chair. A review of this idea showed that separating the document into parts was not straightforward as was envisioned. The Secretary did a major edit, reorganization and expansion of the committee Goals document to make it more consistent with how the committee does business. The committee concurred with the new version. After a few items are ironed out by the Chair and Secretary, the new version will be published to the MD/DCRC web pages. (The new version is actually much longer than the previous version!)

d. **Internet Policies.** Phil Davis is researching policies on digital documentation. This may turn into a published paper in the future. A tentative outline is:

1. Introduction
2. Written Documentation Guidelines
3. Sketches and Artwork Guidelines
4. Photographic Images Guidelines
5. Video Recordings Guidelines
6. Audio Recordings Guidelines
7. Taxonomy and Nomenclature Guidelines

8. Geospatial Information Guidelines
9. Software and Hardware Platform Guidelines
10. Data Transmission Guidelines
11. Data Processing and Data Management
12. Data Archiving
13. Intellectual Property Rights
14. Privacy
15. Security
16. Literature Cited

4. Committee Procedures:

a. Review Lists

1. **MD Review List.** With the adoption of the DC Review List, the current list will become the MD Review List.
2. **Banded Selasphorus Hummingbirds.** Mary Gustafson proposed that for banded Selasphorus hummingbirds plumage descriptions not be required. The committee decided that if a photograph is available, no other documentation is required. However, if no photograph exists, then, as with other banded birds, a plumage description would be necessary to support the measurements.
3. **Changes.** No changes were implemented to the MD MD/DCRC Review List.

b. Decision Issues:

1. **New Fourth Round Discussions.** There were no fourth round decisions to discuss.
2. **Record Reopenings.** No records were petitioned to be reopened.
3. **Circulation Issues.** The committee discussed the following:

c. Species Issues:

1. **Kelp Gull.** The Maryland Kelp Gull [MD/1999-035] first round review is virtually complete. The members discussed the issues. It was decided to recirculate the report to the “old term” committee members who are most familiar with the issues.
2. **Slaty-backed Gull.** The Conowingo Slaty-backed Gull [MD/1999-042] was discussed. A digital review package was provided to four outside experts on this species: Mark Brazil (Japan), Jon King (CA), Steve Mlodinow (WA), and Martin Reid (TX). When all of these reviews are completed, the report will be reviewed by the committee.
3. **Barnacle Goose.** At last year’s meeting, the committee decided to review the reports that are in the “ready” category. However, upon reflection, it was decided that the current literature and recent thinking be encapsulated into a position paper for the members and that this paper should be circulated with the reports. Marshall Iliff and Paul O’Brien have volunteered to prepare this paper.
4. **Western Wood-Pewee.** The committee was expecting a new paper to be published on Wood-Pewee identification but it seems to have not been forthcoming. The committee will look at this issue at the Skins Workshop in March. Jonathan Alderfer will measure the specimens that are in the USNM. The Secretary will also poll some sources to see if any new Wood-Pewee separation information has been published recently.

5. **Dark-eyed Junco.** Last year, the committee decided to proceed with review of the submitted Oregon/Pink-sided Juncos. However, there are some Junco taxonomy issues. The committee decided to prepare a position paper on the current status of Juncos and include this paper with the review package. Marshall Iliff volunteered to author this paper.
 6. **Mississippi Kite.** Last year, the committee discussed that this species does not have an accepted record with a photograph (or specimen) even though it has been taken off the Review List. Currently, there are at least third MD reports with photographs/video. The committee will review these reports. (See discussion below under New Business regarding "elevating the status of documentation").
 7. **Chukar.** Jonathan Alderfer pointed out that people are known to breed Rock Partridges and they are very similar to Chukars and hybrids are also known to exist. Even though these are clearly exotic species in MD and DC, the committee should pay close attention to the identification since people tend to generically call all of these birds "Chukars."
- d. **Records Splits.** The Worcester County Harris's Sparrow [MD/2000-001] report was not split into two records as someone suggested. Details were only submitted for an immature bird.
- e. **Skins Meeting.** The scheduling of a Skins Workshop is still being worked. Tentative information includes:
1. **Date.** March 29, 2003
 2. **Species List.** The following is a list of candidate species/skins to review:
 - i. Leach's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*) and Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*) [USNM specimens and measurements]
 - ii. "Sennett's" Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor sennetti*) [USNM specimen MD/2002-027]
 - iii. "Common" Mew Gull (*Larus canus canus*) and "Short-billed" Mew Gull (*L. c. brachyrhynchus*) / Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*) [immatures]
 - iv. Chukar (*Alectoris chukar*) / Rock Partridge (*Alectoris graeca*)
 - v. Western Wood-Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*) [USNM specimens] and Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*) [measurements]
 - vi. Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*) [both Texas and West Indian races]
 - vii. "Gambel's" White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*)

5. Old Business:

- b. **"Elevating the status of photos.** Last year, Marshall Iliff raised the idea of "promoting" the status of the evidence used to substantiate the presence of a species in MD or DC. For example, if a "state first" species was accepted based on a written report, but subsequently a photograph became available with a later sighting of the same species, then somehow the committee should indicate that the species on the state list now is documented by a photo, in addition to the original written report upon which the original acceptance was based.

The Secretary extended the example by supposing that for this same species a specimen later becomes available, and then the same upgrade process should be applied to reflect a change in the type of the baseline documentation. When the committee discussed this at last year's meeting, some members felt strongly that we should not imply that there's a priority of documentation types.

This matter ties into the committee's Official Lists of the Birds of MD and DC, where the last column of the list is labeled "P/S" and is used to indicate when "no photo or specimen exists" for the species in question. Instead of using a column or field to show a negative, in that last column area, we can include columns to indicate the available documentation types for each species and we can fill-in these columns where we have the appropriate documentation type, without a mention of priorities.

The checklist columns would conceptually look like this...

<u>Species</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Documentation</u>		
		<u>S</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>W</u>
Red-throated Loon	S&R	S		
Pacific Loon	1999-201		P	
Common Loon	S&R	S		

Where ...

S = specimen

P = physical evidence (photo, video, audio)

W = written report, sketch, artwork

The Secretary will begin to work on changes to the database and capture of the data.

- b. **Multiple/Single Records.** The committee's policy of dealing with returning species was discussed. Language was added at last year's meeting to clarify how the committee decided to deal with this issue. This year, it was suggested that perhaps the records numbers could use suffixes (e.g., 1996-030A, 1996-030B, etc.) in cases where a bird has been shown (such as through banding) to be a returnee. The Secretary agreed to look at the feasibility of this. Besides the Ellicott City Harris's Sparrow, the only other records where this currently could be a factor are potentially E.A. Vaughn WMA Le Conte's Sparrow(s) and the Sandgates Kelp Gull (which is has basically been present for multiple years with brief interruptions).

6. New Business:

- a. **Long-range Planning.** MOS committees are currently preparing long-range plans. The MD/DCRC prepared a first draft and distributed it to the committee members before the Annual Meeting. MOS President Paul Zucker would like the committee to try to complete its second draft before the June MOS Board Meeting.
- b. **Digital Image Enhancement.** Occasionally the secretary has cropped and enlarged digital images and in some cases, image brightness and/or contrast were adjusted. (In all cases, it was clearly noted which enhancements were applied and the original images were also provided). Examples include the reopened Greater Flamingo [MD/2001-088] and the Salisbury American White Pelican [MD/2001-010]. After some discussion, the consensus was that on first rounds, images should generally not be enhanced.

7. Elections:

- a. **New members.** Members completing their terms are Marshall Iliff, Paul Pisano and Fran Pope. The committee thanks them for all their efforts over the past three years. The new members elected were: Don Broderick, John ("J.B.") Churchill, and Patty Craig.
- b. **Secretary.** Phil Davis was reelected as the Secretary.
- c. **Chair.** Paul O'Brien was reelected as the Chair.

8. Next Year's Meetings Dates:

- a. **Annual Meeting:** Saturday, February 23, 2004
- b. **Skins Workshop:** Saturday, March 29, 2004 (tentative)

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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