



Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee

Documentation Guide

Species _____ Date(s) Observed _____

Location (county, jurisdiction, city, place, specifics, etc.):

Number of birds, sex, age, plumage, morph, etc.:

Description--Describe the entire bird, not just key field marks (use additional sheets, if needed):

Behavior:

Viewing conditions (weather conditions, time, and optics):

Submitted by (observer name, address, phone number, e-mail address and date of write-up):

Observer experience (with this species and general):

Other observers:

Additional Comments (including separation from other similar species):

*Note: It is best to take and record field notes before consulting field guides
Sketches & photos are encouraged * * * See other side for a documentation checklist*

Checklist of Points to Include in Reports

Not all these items will be seen or noted, nor are they all necessary to report or correctly identify a species, but not including something you did see may lessen the value of your documentation. Use this checklist as a reminder of items to include in your report.

Location:

- State, county, jurisdiction, city
- Place name, town, park, address, road intersection, etc.
- Habitat description (field, woods, water, plants, etc.)

Number of birds, sex, age, plumage, morph, etc.:

- Number of birds
- Sex by plumage or behavior
- Age by plumage or behavior
- Unusual plumages or morphs, etc.

Description (describe the entire bird, not just key field marks):

- Which bird family does this individual belong to? Why?
- Posture, size, shape, structure
- Head: shape, colors, pattern (e.g., stripes)
- Bill: length, shape, color
- Eye: color, eye ring, eye stripe, eyebrow
- Upper parts: nape, back, rump
- Tail: colors, shape, length
- Legs: color, length
- Underparts: throat, breast, belly, flanks, vent
- Wings: colors, wingbars, length, wing linings

Behavior:

- Feeding method
- Vocalization
- Flight pattern
- Preening or sleeping
- Other birds present? Comparisons?
- Interactions with other birds

Viewing Conditions:

- Weather conditions; sky/cloud cover
- Wind/speed and direction
- Temperature
- Precipitation (snow, rain)
- Water/ice, depth, waves
- Time of day
- Length of sighting
- Optics: binoculars/scope; model(s), power
- Camera, lens, film used
- Distance to bird
- Sun location in relation to you and bird
- Field guide(s) used
- What parts of the bird couldn't be seen

Observer Experience:

- Experience with this species and location; number of years birding

Additional Comments (include additional sheets, if necessary):

- What separates this bird from other similar species, including extralimitals?

Send Your Report to:

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