

Oregon Birding Association
OREGON BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE
Rules of Operation

Section 1. The Oregon Bird Records Committee

1.10 Name

The Oregon Bird Records Committee (Committee or OBRC) is a committee of Oregon Birding Association (OBA), an Oregon not-for-profit corporation.

1.20 Address

The OBRC maintains a mailing address. The present address is: P.O. Box 675, Lincoln City, Oregon 97367-0675.

Section 2. Main Purposes of OBRC

2.10 Maintenance of the Official Checklist of Oregon Birds (hereafter referred to as “Checklist”), a current list of bird species known to have occurred in Oregon.

2.20 Maintenance of the Permanent Archive of Records of Rare Birds in Oregon, the archive of evidence that supports the Checklist.

Section 3. The Secretary of the Oregon Bird Records Committee

3.10 Eligibility

The Secretary must be a member of OBA.

3.20 Appointment

The Secretary of the Committee shall be appointed for a 1-year term by majority vote of the Committee.

3.30 Duties of the Secretary

The Secretary or Secretary’s designate shall:

- a) Schedule an Annual Meeting and provide notice of meeting to Members and Alternates
- b) Schedule a special meeting at the request of a majority of Members
- c) Chair meetings of the Committee
- d) Conduct the annual election of Members as described in Section 5
- e) Manage Committee correspondence
- f) Keep the Official Checklist up-to-date as described in Section 6.10
- g) Keep the files of the Committee and arrange for the safe keeping of backup copies of files
- h) Process the reports of birds that have been submitted to the Committee and arrange for voting on these reports
- i) Notify the Committee of the results of voting on first- and second-round records
- j) Notify those who submitted reports of the Committee’s decisions
- k) Perform other duties to facilitate the operation of the Committee.

3.40 Removal

The Secretary may be removed for cause by a majority vote of the Committee at a meeting.

Section 4. The Secretary Emeritus of the Oregon Bird Records Committee

4.10 Appointment

The Committee may bestow the title of Secretary Emeritus upon a past Secretary of the Committee at the sole discretion of the majority of the Committee.

4.20 Duties of the Secretary Emeritus

The Secretary Emeritus position shall carry no necessary duties or responsibilities but shall entitle the holder of the position to engage in such activities as may be approved by the Committee.

Section 5. Members and Alternates of the Oregon Bird Records Committee

5.10 Eligibility

Any member of OBA may be a member of, or Alternate to, the OBRC.

5.20 Number and Terms of Members and Alternates

(a) Members. The OBRC shall consist of nine Members: three to be elected each year to fulfill a three-year term. Terms will end on December 31 of the year of expiration. Members may serve two consecutive three-year terms, after which they must retire for one year.

If a former OBRC Member would like to return as a voting Member of the Committee after his or her year off, he/she needs to be nominated the same as a new candidate.

OBRC Members whose first term is about to expire are automatically nominated for a second term unless that Member indicates to the Secretary by November 30 that he/she does not wish to be nominated for another term.

Members appointed to fill vacant positions shall serve until the end of the three-year term.

(b) Alternates. The three Committee Members whose terms are expiring on December 31 automatically become Alternates for the following year. The OBRC may appoint up to two more Alternates, for a maximum number of five. Vacant Alternate positions shall not necessarily be filled unless there are fewer than three Alternates. The Alternate receiving the most votes during the prior election is the highest ranking Alternate.

5.30 Nomination and Voting

(a) The OBRC solicits nominations each year for membership. Nominations may be made by any member of OBA and by organizations that support the OBRC. The nominator must demonstrate the consent of the nominee for the nomination. Nominations must be received by the Secretary of the Committee by November 30.

(b) The Secretary shall prepare a ballot in early December for election of Members for the upcoming three-year term. Nominees shall be placed on the ballot in alphabetical order. The election may be conducted by electronic means, mail, or at a meeting, at the Secretary's discretion.

(c) Voting. Each Committee Member may cast up to three votes. Cumulative voting is not permitted. No Committee Member may vote for him or herself. In the case of a tie, an additional ballot with only the tied candidates shall be prepared by the Secretary and voted on. Alternates do not vote in an election.

(d) Nominees for Committee membership who receive at least 2 votes but are not elected shall automatically become Alternates, with their consent, until all the Alternate positions are filled.

(e) Voting must be completed by December 30. The Secretary shall communicate the results of the voting to the Committee and to each person who had been nominated, by December 31.

5.40 Duties of Members and Alternates

(a) Members shall:

(1) Attend meetings, either in person or via electronic media.

(2) Vote in a timely manner on records. (Members must vote on a batch of records within 60 days of its posting and notification by the Secretary.)

(3) Respond to requests regarding OBRC business;

(4) Apprise the Secretary of anticipated meeting absences or unavailability for review and voting of records.

(b) Alternates shall vote on records the same as members. Alternates may not vote on Committee business.

5.50 Absence of Members

(a) Short-term absences. In the event a Member is unable to attend a meeting of the OBRC or will not be able to discharge the duties of a Member for a period of time exceeding one month, the Member shall notify the Secretary. The Secretary will arrange Alternates to substitute for an absent Member.

(b) Long-term absences. Long-term absences will be considered by the Committee on a case-by-case basis. A Member is not considered absent if he/she is able to perform the duties of a Member.

5.60 Resignation and Removal of Members; Replacement

(a) Removal. Any Committee member may be removed for cause by majority vote of the Committee at a meeting.

(b) Filling vacancies. In the event of removal or resignation before a member's term is expired, the Committee shall appoint the highest-ranking Alternate as a replacement to fill the remainder of the member's three-year term. The Committee may also appoint someone to fill the vacated Alternate position.

Section 6. The Operations of the Oregon Bird Records Committee

6.10 Maintaining the Checklist

- (a) The Oregon Birds Records Committee shall follow the official list of bird names as published and updated by the American Ornithological Society.
- (b) The Checklist shall be revised by the Committee as needed to account for changes arising from the Committee's review of bird records and incorporating the American Ornithological Society's annual taxonomic changes.
- (c) When a record of a bird species never before known to have occurred in Oregon is accepted by the Committee, that species is added to the Checklist. The Committee designates rare bird species on the Official Checklist for which it will accept reports.
- (d) The Checklist may include additional information deemed by the Committee to be helpful in understanding the status and distribution of bird species in Oregon.
- (e) Species whose presence on the Oregon Checklist lacks tangible documentation, i.e. is documented only by one or more convincing descriptions (sight records), will be designated "Provisional" in the records and on the Checklist. Tangible documentation may include photographs, videos, sound recordings, specimens, feather specimens, genetically tested tissue samples, and other evidence as agreed to by the Committee.

6.20 Meetings

- (a) Annual and Special Meetings. The Committee shall meet at least once a year. Additional meetings may be held as necessary. A meeting may be called at any time by a request of the majority of members or by the Secretary.
- (b) Notice. Written notice of meetings shall be given to all Members and Alternates at least 21 days in advance.
- (c) Meetings open. Meetings shall be open to the public, except that, for cause, a meeting may be closed by request of a majority of members.
- (d) Quorum.
 - (1) For Committee business: A quorum for purposes of Committee business shall be six members present at a meeting, either in person or via electronic media.
 - (2) For bird records, the quorum shall be eight members—or eight Members and Alternates, at least six of whom are members.
- (e) Conducting Business by Email
Committee business may be conducted by email. However, if one or more members request that a particular item be addressed in person at an annual or special meeting, a vote will be held to determine whether to proceed by email or to place an item on a meeting agenda.
- (f) A simple majority shall be required to pass motions concerning Committee business, whether at a meeting or by email.

6.30 Records to be Considered

(a) Records of rare birds in Oregon submitted to the Committee shall be considered by the OBRC. "Rare birds" are those:

(1) heretofore unknown in Oregon, or

(2) listed by the Committee on the Review List

(b) The OBRC shall consider records of a rare species or subspecies until such time as the OBRC votes, at a meeting on a case-by-case basis, to cease accepting records of that species.

(c) Members shall vote on records of rare species in the current AOS Checklist, regardless of an expected future status change.

(d) If a report of a bird the Committee is interested in reviewing has not been submitted to the Committee, a Member or the Secretary may make efforts to contact the observer to acquire additional, clarifying information and to encourage a formal submission to the Committee. However, the Committee may review the report using available evidence. If an observer has posted observation details to a public forum, then the observer is presumed to have implicitly granted the OBRC permission to use that documentation for the purposes of a record review and has granted permission to add that documentation to the Archives. At a minimum, the date, specific location, and observer's identity will be required for a report and documentation to be considered.

(e) "Oregon" is defined as the area within the political boundary of the state and adjacent waters to a distance of 200 nautical miles from land. Adjacent waters include all waters within 200 nautical miles of land where the closest point of land is Oregon.

(f) Terminology used by the Committee will be in accordance with the definitions and rules of the American Birding Association.

6.40 Definitions of Decisions

(a) Not Accepted. There are three classes of records that are "Not Accepted:"

(1) "Not Accepted, Without Qualification" means a Committee member believes that (a) the evidence does not adequately support the species identification, or (b) the evidence is accurate for two or more species, one or more of which is a non-review species and the species cannot be separated on the basis of the evidence.

(2) "Not Accepted, Origin Questionable" means a Committee member believes that the evidence supports the identification of the species and rules out all other species, but that the bird may have been a captive individual that had been released or had escaped.

(3) "Not Accepted, Exotic Bird Not Established" means a Committee member believes that the evidence adequately describes the species and rules out all other species, but that the population of the species has not been established.

(b) Accepted. There are three classes of records that are "Accepted:"

(1) "Accepted, verified" means a Committee member believes that the evidence adequately describes the species and rules out all others, and that the record is supported by a specimen, photograph, or video or sound recording.

(2) “Accepted, sight record” means a Committee member believes that the evidence adequately supports the species identification and rules out all other species, but that there is no other verification for the record.

There are two sub-classes of “sight records:” (a) “Single-report sight record” means that only one observer’s evidence was accepted; and (b) “Multiple report sight record” means that more than one observer’s evidence was accepted.

(3) “Accepted, museum or published record” means a Committee member believes that the record is adequately supported by accession into a museum or by publication in a professional journal.

(c) Species Unresolved

(1) “Species unresolved” means a Committee member believes that the evidence supports the identification of two or more closely related species, both or all of which are review species. Members shall specify candidate species in their remarks written on the ballot.

(d) Splitting or combining records

(1) When to split: the Committee member believes that the evidence supports a separate record that should be placed under a different record number.

(2) When to combine: the Committee member believes that the evidence indicates a record should be combined with another record or records under a single record number.

6.50 Voting

(a) Voting is done electronically via online forms and documents. A copy of a ballot that may be used for voting is attached to these Rules of Operation.

(b) Role of the Secretary

(1) All evidence of rare birds in Oregon submitted to the OBRC shall be referred to the Secretary.

(2) Evidence of rare birds may be submitted in the form of a report, or the Secretary may gather the evidence into a report.

(3) The Secretary shall assign a record number to each report. The first 4 letters indicate the official Institute for Bird Population (IBP) banding code for that species, followed by 4 digits for the year in which the record was obtained, and the last 2 digits indicating the number of reports for that species that have been received by the Committee. Each written description, specimen, photograph, or recording making up the report shall be given a unique letter after the record number (i.e. BBWD-2017-01a, BBWD-2017-01b, BBWD-2017-01c, etc.). Once a report has been voted on, the record will have the same assigned name (4-letter IBP code-year-report#) followed by “A” if accepted, followed by the number of accepted records (e.g. BBWD-2017-01-A1), or “N” if not accepted (e.g. BBWD-2017-02-N1).

(4) The Secretary shall organize and share records electronically in a manner deemed most economical, efficient, and consistent with the purposes of the Committee.

(c) If there is a record which is supported entirely or in part by evidence that cannot be uploaded, the Secretary shall arrange for voting at a meeting.

(d) If a Member has submitted the only report of a sighting, that Member shall not vote on the record.

(e) First Round of Voting

(1) Independent voting on first round.

The members of the Committee shall not discuss any record under consideration on the first round with other members of the Committee, although members may discuss it with anyone outside the Committee. This allows each member of the Committee to review the record without being influenced by other Committee members.

(2) Acceptance or rejection on first round.

- If a record receives no “Not Accepted” votes, it is accepted.
- If a record receives nine “Not Accepted” votes, it is rejected.
- If a record receives one to eight “Not Accepted” votes, the Secretary prepares the record for a second round of voting.
- If a record receives one to eight “Species Unresolved” votes, it is prepared for a second round of voting.

Reasons should be stated. Committee members may state their reasons for Not Accepting a record in their comments sent to the Secretary. Stating reasons for accepting a record is optional. These reasons may be reviewed by other Committee members if there is second-round voting, or voting at a meeting, and the ballots from each round will become part of the permanent record in the OBRC files.

(f) Second Round of Voting

(1) In cases where a record receives one to eight “Not Accepted” or “Species Unresolved” votes on the first round, the Secretary initiates a second round of voting.

(2) The Secretary includes copies of the members’ first-round comments in the second-round files; thus at this point, Committee members may read the comments of other Committee members and may draw a new conclusion in light of these comments.

(3)

- If the record receives not more than one “Not Accepted” vote on the second round, it is accepted.
- If the record receives eight or nine “Not Accepted” votes on the second round, it is rejected.
- If the record receives two to seven “Not Accepted” votes on the second round, it goes to a third round of voting.
- If the record receives any combination of votes containing “Species Unresolved,” “Not Accepted,” and “Accepted,” then the record goes to the third round.

- If a record receives two to seven “Species Unresolved” votes on the second round, the record goes to the third round. If a record receives eight or more “Species Unresolved” votes, the record is accepted as a rare, but unresolved species.

(4) Reasons for not accepting should be stated. Members may state their reasons for not accepting a record in their comments sent to the Secretary. Stating reasons for accepting a record is optional. These reasons may be reviewed by other Committee members if there is third-round voting or voting at a meeting, and the ballots from each round will become part of the permanent record of the OBRC files.

(5) Candidate species for an unresolved record must be stated and reasons given. The ballots from each round will become part of the permanent record of the OBRC files.

(g) Third Round of Voting. Voting at a Meeting.

(1) Limitation. Only the following records shall be voted on at a meeting:

- Third-round records
- Records under reconsideration

(2) Information. For third-round records, the Secretary includes copies of the Members’ first and second-round comments in the notice for voting at a meeting. For records being reconsidered, the Secretary includes all documents that had been considered earlier, additional information that may have become available, and the statement(s) requesting reconsideration.

(3) Written reasons need not be stated. When voting at a meeting, written ballots need not be prepared. The Secretary shall record the results of the voting on each record and why the record was either accepted or rejected.

(4) Acceptance and rejection. When voting at a meeting, a record is accepted if it receives at least six “Accepted” votes. Otherwise, it is rejected.

(h) Voting by Alternates

(1) Alternates shall vote on records the same as Committee members.

(2) The Secretary shall remind all Members who have not voted that the deadline is approaching; if a member is ineligible or unable to vote on a particular record, or after being reminded, still does not vote within the 60-day time period, the Secretary shall substitute an Alternate’s vote for the Member’s.

(3) The Secretary shall choose which Alternate’s vote to use in a simple rotating manner (Alternate #1, Alternate #2, etc.)

(4) At a meeting. When a quorum of the Committee is present at a meeting for voting on bird records, but the full Committee is not present, the Secretary shall designate Alternates to substitute for Committee members. Of the Alternates who are present at a meeting, the Secretary shall designate a different Alternate for each record.

(i) Reconsideration of Records

(1) Any record may be reconsidered and voted on again at the request of (A) any member of the Committee, for reasons stated by the Committee member in writing; or (B) the

Secretary, if additional information has been received or the Secretary is aware that new circumstances have arisen since the record was voted on.

(2) Reconsiderations will be voted in the same manner as a new record, including second and third rounds as indicated.

(3) A completed record may not be reconsidered for a period of 7 years absent new and compelling information.

6.60 Notice to Persons Submitting Reports

The Secretary shall notify persons who have submitted reports to the Committee of the Committee's disposition of the record and may include copies of Members' comments on the report.

6.70 Archiving Records

(a) The OBRC shall maintain permanent files of the records it receives. This is accomplished by placing all record material in the custody of the Secretary of the Committee.

(b) The Secretary shall ensure that a minimum of two backup safety copies, at least one of which shall be in the cloud, are maintained apart from one another in separate locations.

6.80 Other Committee Business

(a) The OBRC shall prepare and maintain a Review List, a list of those species (and subspecies) for which the Committee desires reports. The Review List will indicate which species have been verified and for which the Committee has accepted only sight records. The Review List may be incorporated into the official List of Oregon Birds.

(b) Published records. Records considered by the Committee will be made available to any sponsoring group for publication. Records shall also appear in *Oregon Birds*, the official publication of OBA. Accepted records published in *Oregon Birds* shall include the species name, record number, the name(s) of observer(s) with indication of the person(s) first finding the bird (if known), where and when the bird was found, and the Committee's disposition of the record. Records not accepted shall include the same information without the name(s) of observer(s). Published photographs shall include the photographer's name.

6.90 Member Conduct

(a) Members are expected to abide by the ABA Code of Ethics. Members of the Committee are viewed as representatives of the birding community, and when in the field should lead by example.

(b) During Committee meetings, Members should be respectful of each other and considerate of other's opinions. Every person should be given a chance to participate. Avoid dominating the discussion, interrupting or conversing separately when another person has the floor. There is no place for name calling, harassment, or derogatory comments.

(c) If inappropriate behavior is observed during a meeting, other members should respectfully intervene.

(d) Failure to abide by the Conduct guidelines may be cause for termination from the Committee.