

Checklist for preparing a Rare Bird Report

Modified from Massachusetts Avian Records Committee

There are no fixed rules for writing a rare bird report, however if you have never done one before, the following checklist may be helpful. Ignore what is not applicable or relevant; just use the parts that help you prepare your report. This is *not* a report form, but only a checklist to aid in completing your report.

- ___ Species, Date, Locality of sighting Also the date that the report was prepared
- ___ Sex, Age, Plumage
- ___ Brief narrative describing discovery of bird, including names of any persons with you at the time
- ___ Previous sightings by others, including name of person originally finding bird
- ___ Complete description. Include only what *was observed at the time of the sighting*, not what you think you *should* have observed.
 - Comparison to nearby species if applicable
 - Size, shape, posture
 - Head and face: pattern and colors
 - Bill: color, shape, length
 - Eye: color, size, eye ring, orbital ring
 - Upper and lower parts: colors, patterns, feather wear
 - Wings and tail: length, colors, patterns, feather wear
 - Legs and feet: length, shape, color
 - Vocalizations
 - Habitat and behavior
- ___ Other species you considered when making your identification along with your reasons for eliminating them.
- ___ Your experience with species
- ___ Comments and opinions of other observers present at the sighting
- ___ References consulted and when: while you were watching bird, after watching bird, while writing report
- ___ Optics used
- ___ Weather, light, distance from bird, length of time observed
- ___ Your name, address, telephone and/or email

Include a copy of your field notes and sketches, as well as any photos, video, or recordings available, or tell the Committee where these can be obtained.