

RARE BIRD REPORT GUIDELINES

Most of the records in Rhode Island's historical archive have been contributed by amateur birders who have discovered and reported rare birds. Committee members and future birders who did not see the bird and do not know the reporter will read these reports and evaluate them based on the information contained in the report. Thus birders need to take the time to accurately and thoroughly report the details of what was observed *at the time of the sighting*.

Birders may use this list a *guideline* for reporting. Some information on this list will not be relevant to some reports, and may be left out. The report may be submitted in this format, or it may be written in an order and format that suits the reporter. The ultimate purpose of this guideline is to assist birders in writing a thorough and detailed report that will become a permanent part of Rhode Island's avian historical record.

SPECIES AND GENERAL INFORMATION

- Species being reported including molt, plumage, age, and sex
- Date(s) observed
- Location and habitat
- Your name, and date report was written

CIRCUMSTANCES OF SIGHTING

- Brief narrative describing the circumstances of the sighting
- Name(s) of any persons with you at the time
- Previous sightings by others

DESCRIPTION BASED ON OBSERVATIONS MADE *AT THE TIME OF THE SIGHTING*

- Size and shape
- Plumage: patterns, colors, wear, and relative proportions
- Bare parts: shape, colors, and relative proportions
- Vocalization(s)
- Behavior
- Comparison to other nearby species

BASIS FOR IDENTIFICATION

- Other species considered along with reasons for eliminating them
- References used for identification, and when those references were consulted
- Comments and opinions of others present at the time of the observation

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Your experience with species
- Optics used
- Weather, time of day, light, distance from bird, length of time observed

CONTACT INFORMATION AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- Your name, address, telephone and/or email
- Photos, recordings, and/or field notes, and permission for the Records Committee to use them