TEESMOUTH BIRD CLUB, RECORDS SUB - COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting at RSPB Saltholme visitor centre on 13/01/2019.

1. **Present**

Alan Crossley (AC), Geoff Iceton (GI), Mark Rowbottom (MDR), Ian Kendall (IK), Chris Bell (CB), Mark Askew (MRKA), Ian Foster (IF), Ian Boustead (WIB), Graham Megson [minutes] (GM).

2. **In attendance**

Barbara Crinson (BC) [TBC Chair]

3. **Apologies**

Chris Brown (CBr).

4. **The Committee**

County Recorder: Alan Crossley
Bird Report Editor: Chris Brown
Compilers: Geoff Iceton, Mark Rowbottom, Ian Kendall, Chris Bell
Ordinary Members: Mark Askew, Ian Foster, Ian Boustead, Graham Megson
Ringing Officer: Chris Brown

4.1 AC was welcomed as the new County Recorder by BC. The British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) has been informed of the change. Tom Francis has been thanked for his time as County Recorder.

4.2 There was discussion on the make-up of the sub-committee. With Graham Joynt retiring (with thanks for his 30 years on the sub-committee as compiler, Report Editor and County Recorder), the number of compilers has dropped from five in 2018 to four in 2019. We could have eight compilers each doing a smaller section, however, this might create more work for the Editor, as different writing styles would have to be amalgamated. Also, it would mean that there would be no Ordinary Members and so no turn over (Ordinary Members serve three years, compilers are permanent). MDR and CB noted that they are considering standing down from compiling after 2019. Agreed to discuss the matter further with the Editor.

4.3 The current Ordinary Members are part way through their service. MRKA was due to finish at the end of 2018 but agreed to serve an additional year due to changes in the County Recorder and Editor. IF is due to finish at the end of 2019 and GM is due to finish in 2020. Membership details are given in the front of the Cleveland Bird Report. It was agreed to start looking for replacement Ordinary Members ASAP, as the sub-committee will lose two at the end of 2019. **Action**: All to start asking around.

4.4 The TBC Excel records spreadsheet template needs Tom Francis email details replacing with AC's. **Action**: AC.

4.5 Some people are experiencing errors when using the spreadsheet, likely to be due to different Excel versions effecting macros. **Action**: AC to check if Neil Lay, who designed the spreadsheet, can make changes. NB: Tom Francis has put a functioning copy on the TBC website (16/01/2019).

4.6 Venues for meetings was discussed and several people offered the use of their homes.

5. BBRC decisions

5.1 Outstanding at BBRC.

SPECIES	DATE	LOCATION
Hooded Merganser	08/05/2018	Seaton Common
Macaronesian Shearwater	07/08/2005	Hartlepool Headland
Little Bittern	26 & 29/11/2018	RSPB Saltholme
Spotted Sandpiper	12-14/10/2018	Marske
Marsh Sandpiper	25/07/2018	Scaling Dam
Franklin's Gull	21/07/2018 - 08/08/2018 & 09/08/2018	Scaling Dam + Pinchinthorpe
Pallid Swift	11/11/2018	Hartlepool Headland
Pallid Swift	11/11/2018	Seaton Carew
Little Swift	11/11/2018	Hartlepool Headland
Western Bonelli's Warbler	17-19/08/2018	North Gare Bushes
Eastern Subalpine Warbler	31/05/2018	South Gare
Desert Lesser Whitethroat	09/11/2000	South Gare

5.2 Accepted by BBRC

SPECIES	DATE	LOCATION

5.3 Not Accepted by BBRC

SPECIES	DATE	LOCATION

6. Assessment of Cleveland records

6.1 It was agreed to streamline the record acceptance process. The County Recorder now has delegated powers to accept straight forward record submissions (e.g. widely observed and well photographed birds) without the need to circulate around the sub-committee. More difficult records will be circulated by email for assessment and discussion. Difficult and pended records requiring a fuller discussion will be dealt with at meetings.

6.2 It was noted that BBRC no longer appear to require to know whether national records are supported by the records sub-committee. In the past BBRC records were assessed, but most are now submitted directly to BBRC. BBRC no longer appear to ask about observers.

6.3 A single day, June 2017 record of a slate-coloured junco at a bird feeding station in Hutton Gate, Guisborough has come to light via Twitter. The photographs show an obvious bird of this species. **Action:** MRKA to seek further information and submit to BBRC.

6.4 Changes to records requiring a description was discussed. The following changes were agreed and come into effect from 01/01/2019:

- Western sub-alpine warbler – removed.

- Great white egret – removed.
- Black-throated diver – added.

6.5 All sub-alpine warbler species are now assessed by BBRC. It was felt that great white egret is becoming more regular and birds are mostly photographed. It was felt that red-throated divers are being mistaken for black-throated divers, which is a scarcer bird in the county than some people realise. The sub-committee can ask the observer of any record to submit a description.

6.6 The list of description species in the Cleveland Bird Report 2017 is different to the (older) one on the TBC website. **Action:** GM to liaise with Jamie Duffy re: putting the new list on the website.

6.7 Records assessed.

2018 & earlier	**Date**	**Site**	**Vote**	**Decision**
Night heron	18 & 21/11/2018	Locke Park, Redcar	10-0 but pended #	-
Richard's pipit	28/11/2018 & 07/12/2018	Cowpen Marsh	10-0	A
White-tailed eagle	31/12/2018	Sleddale	10-0	A
Slate-coloured junco	1 day in June 2017	Guisborough	Pended	-
2019				
Rough-legged buzzard (2 Imm)	12 & 15/01/2019	Skelderskew Moor/ High Moor (north of Commondale)	10-0	A
#=Accepted on ID but pended awaiting further info on provenance.				
A=Accept. NP=Not Proven.				

7. 2018 Cleveland Bird Report

7.1 Former County Recorder Tom Francis is compiling 2018 spread sheet of records and will send to the four compilers in due course.

7.2 The 2017 report has been very well received and is a credit to the hard work of this sub-committee.

7.3 It was noted that the Club's constitution refers to an annual report being produced which reports on the status of Cleveland's birds.

7.4 There was discussion regarding how much effort to be put into each species. Some species such as Mediterranean gull are becoming regular, widespread and difficult to summarise. While many common species are under recorded (e.g. blue tit) some attract massive interest (e.g. short-eared owl). IK considered who our audience is and what they want from the Report. It was agreed that many are seeking information on good places to see certain species so, for example, giving the spread of sites attracting yellow-browed warbler is useful.

7.5 While the estuary could be said to be the core birding area in Cleveland, it was agreed that it is essential to cover the full spread of sites and birding opportunities. The Report is a useful tool for new birders to the area to explore more widely.

7.6 There has been an increase in the number of colour-ringed birds reported. It was agreed to include any of particular interest in the main text and review all others in the ringing report section.

7.7 The sub-committee is minded to retain the monthly summaries (written by Martin Blick) and the environment/ conservation/ planning issues (prepared by Ali McLee). There was a discussion on which special reports for particularly rare birds would be needed in the 2018 Report and the following were suggested:

- Hooded merganser (if accepted by BBRC will be first county record)
- Little swift (if accepted by BBRC will be second county record)
- Little bittern (if accepted by BBRC will be first modern county record)
- White-tailed eagle (second record in 30 years).

8. Date of next meeting

8.1 To be arranged.

End