

Appendix A: Origin Questionable Species in British Columbia.

By: Rick Toochin, Jamie Fenneman, and Don Cecile.

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Introduction:

The following species were identified correctly and often have photographs or a specimen accompanying the record however, how the species arrived in British Columbia is in question. For example, some of the following species are known to be kept in captivity and as a result, may have been inadvertently released and thus does not constitute a wild bird. In other instances, the museum specimen may have been mis-labelled, or perhaps the individual was shipped by accident or on purpose and released and as such did not arrive in British Columbia naturally. Records contained in this appendix can be moved to the species account section should more information come to light or should future patterns of occurrence suggest natural origin. Some instances involve birds that may have been correctly identified but lacking sufficient details for a first confirmed record for the province (ie: photo or specimen)

Species List:

Intermediate Egret (*Mesophoyx intermedia*):

This record involves a specimen that was reported to have been taken in Burrard Inlet, Vancouver on May 25, 1879 (Macoun and Macoun 1909). The validity of the specimen was questioned by Munro and Cowan (1947) and the manner it was acquired was claimed on entirely hypothetical grounds. Brooks (1923c) suggested that the record involved a substitution in the form of a dried skin, which was subsequently mounted. Kermode (1923a, 1923b) states that the specimen had “every appearance of having been mounted from a bird in the flesh”. This species occurs across Africa south of the Sahara, as well as in South and Southeast Asia, to China, Japan, New Guinea and Australia (del Hoyo *et al.* 1992). The only record for North America is a specimen record of an adult male in breeding plumage found at Buldir Alaska on May 30, 2006 (Lorenz and Gibson 2007).

Demoiselle Crane (*Anthropoides virgo*):

This record involved a bird found in the previous winter in California (Hamilton *et al.* 2007). The bird was with a flock of Sandhill Cranes, but the record was not accepted by the California Bird Records Committee due to origin concerns as they are kept in private collections and zoos (Hamilton *et al.* 2007). The bird was found by Dave Evans and was photographed at Telkwa High Road near Smithers on May 2, 2002 (Bain 2002c, Cecile 2002c, Toochin *et al.* 2014). A record from Gustavus, on the Panhandle of Alaska might well also pertain to this bird and does

not appear on the Checklist of Alaska Birds (Gibson *et al.* 2017). This species is found in central Eurasia, ranging from the Black Sea to Mongolia and North Eastern China (del Hoyo *et al.* 1996). There is also a small breeding population in Turkey (del Hoyo *et al.* 1996). These cranes are migratory birds with birds from western Eurasia migrating to spend the winter in Africa whilst the birds from Asia, Mongolia and China will spend the winter in India (del Hoyo *et al.* 1996).

Humboldt Penguin (*Spheniscus humboldti*):

Records of Humboldt Penguin from the waters of British Columbia have been widely published in the past (Campbell *et al.* 1990a). It is not likely that Humboldt Penguins found off the coast were caged birds escaped from zoos or dispersed 10,000 km by swimming here from their range off Peru or Chile (Van Buren and Boersma 2002). The upper limit of a Humboldt Penguin's thermo-neutral zone is approximately 30 C (Drent and Stonehouse 1971) This species has a natural thermal barrier of 25-30 C where they will overheat and die making unaided and natural trips across the equator into the Northern Hemisphere very unlikely (Van Buren and Boersma 2002). Humboldt Penguins would experience water and air temperatures in excess of 30 C, and active swimming would further increase the heat load by generating metabolic heat (Van Buren and Boersma 2002). A penguin in warm water would be restricted to panting to eliminate excess heat, which would prevent the bird from either foraging or transiting (Van Buren and Boersma 2002). Thus, while a Humboldt Penguin traveling from Peru or Chile to Alaska might be able to find food, it would probably not survive the high tropical temperatures (Van Buren and Boersma 2002). Their occurrence is more likely the result of transport and release by fishermen (Anonymous 1978b, Campbell *et al.* 1990a). None have been accepted by the AOU (now called the AOS) (Chesser *et al.* 2017).

Humboldt Penguin (*Spheniscus humboldti*) Records in British Columbia:

- 1.(1) adult Summer 1944: J. Bourling: on the beach at Rose Spit (Campbell *et al.* 1990a)
- 2.(1) adult September 1, 1975: Long Beach, PRNP (Campbell *et al.* 1990a)
- 3.(2) adults June 9-25, 1978: Egg Island, Quatsino Sound (Campbell *et al.* 1990a)
- 4.(1) adult June 14, 1978: Quasino Sound (Campbell *et al.* 1990a)
- 5.(1) adult June 20, 1978: Mitlenach Island (Campbell *et al.* 1990a)

American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*):

There is a single sight record of an adult with good accompanying field notes that was found by the late Glen R. Ryder in good habitat in North Surrey on March 5, 1960 (G. Ryder Pers. Comm.). Unfortunately, there was no photograph accompanying the record at it was not accepted by Campbell *et al.* (1990b). This species breeds in eastern North America southern Canada south to the Gulf Coast states (Dunn and Alderfer 2011). The American Woodcock breeding has expanded slightly westward since the 1980's and now includes parts of the eastern Great Plains

(Hamilton *et al.* 2007). Most of the 30 vagrancy records in North and Middle America have been at or very near the continental divide (Hamilton *et al.* 2007). There are accepted records for western Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico (Patten *et al.* 1999). There is one record for California that was accepted by the California Bird Records Committee and involves a single bird that was found and photographed at the Iron Mountain Pumping Station in San Bernardino Country from November 3-9, 1998 (Patten *et al.* 1999, Hamilton *et al.* 2007). An incredible record was of a bird, shot in France, in late October 2006 (Ferrand *et al.* 2007). Eventually a confirmed vagrant migrant found in British Columbia is highly possible.

Wedge-tailed Shearwater (*Ardenna pacifica*):

There is a specimen record that was inadvertently left out of the E-Fauna BC species account by Toochin and Haviland (2016d). Jewett (1929) obtained a specimen of this species from a taxidermist in Ontario. The only information about the specimen comes from the label which reads "Vancouver, B.C." (Jewett 1929). Neither Munro and Cowan (1947) nor Godfrey (1986) were able to obtain any additional information that the specimen was secured in the waters off British Columbia.

Nazca Booby (*Sula granti*):

Apparently an adult was photographed by Mike Bentley aboard a research vessel off the west coast of Vancouver Island (J. Fenneman Pers. Comm.). Despite numerous enquires there is no information available at this time about this record and only excluded here due to lack of information.

House Swift (*Apus nipalensis*):

There is no doubt that a dead House Swift was found by Derek Tan near the Delta port container terminal on May 18, 2012 (Szabo *et al.* 2017). University of British Columbia Beaty Biodiversity Museum Cowan Tetrapod Collection catalogue number B017056 (Szabo *et al.* 2017). The issue is how the bird likely made it to this location (D. Cecile Pers. Comm.). This species is distributed in Nepal, northeast India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, south and southeast China, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan and south-east Asia (Clements *et al.* 2017). Container ships that come to the Delta port facility come from China and other areas of Southeast Asia which are located in areas of this species range and the bird could have become trapped inside the cargo hold and made it to Delta Port before escaping the ship and dying nearby (J. Fenneman Pers. Comm.). This species is migratory, but more a short distance migrant and making a huge prolonged flight across the Pacific Ocean on its own to where the specimen was found highly unlikely (Brazil 2009).

Blue Rock-Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*):

An adult male was found and photographed by Ian McDonald at Goldpan Provincial Park, near Spences Bridge, along the Thompson River, on June 6, 1997 (McDonald 1997, Bowling 1997c, Davidson 1999, Tootin *et al.* 2014). This record was published with full colour photographs in Birder's Journal by McDonald (1997). There are currently no accepted North American Records for this species by the American Ornithological Society's Fifty-eighth supplement to the A.O.S *Check-list of North American Birds* (Chesser *et al.* 2017). It should be noted that this bird was dismissed by many as an escaped species (J. Fenneman Pers. Comm.). The Blue Rock- Thrush in question was of the subspecies (*Monticola solitarius philippensis*) which is migratory in East Asia, breeding from southeastern Siberia to China, Japan and Lan-yü Island and winters south to Indonesia (Brazil 2009, Clements *et al.* 2017). It should be noted that both the location and the subspecies that was photographed are correct for a potential vagrant (J. Fenneman Pers. Comm.). It might be worth a re-examination of this record by the AOS as it might be a true vagrant to North America.

White-cheeked Starling (*Spodiopsar cineraceus*):

An adult bird was found and photographed by Adrian Dorst, and subsequently seen by many observers at the Tofino Airport from April 27-29, 2016 (A. Dorst Pers. Comm.). The breeding range covers central and north-east India, China, Korea, Japan and south-east Siberia (Feare and Craig 1998, Brazil 2009). In winter, birds from colder regions migrate south to southern and eastern China, South Korea, southern Japan, Taiwan and northern Vietnam with vagrants reaching the Philippines, Thailand and Myanmar (Robson 2002). There is a sight record (no photograph) from Homer, Alaska that probably got there by riding aboard a ship and was observed from May 1-6, 1998 (West 2002). This record does not appear on the Alaska Checklist of birds (Gibson *et al.* 2017). Though it has a large breeding range, it is a short distance migrant in Asia (Brazil 2009). The identification of the bird is correct, but it is hard to know the exact origin as it might have originated from a ship, either as a passenger that rode on board across the Pacific Ocean naturally with no human assistance or was in a cage as a pet that accidentally escaped captivity (J. Fenneman Pers. Comm.).

Yellow Grosbeak (*Pheucticus chrysopheplus*):

An adult female was found and by Peter Hoodspith and seen by a few observers at 303-266 Jensen Avenue, in Parksville on July 22, 2011 (P. Hoodspith Pers. Comm.). This species was reported with full field notes, but unfortunately no photographs. The Yellow Grosbeak is a popular cage bird and records anywhere in the United States and Canada are often treated as escapees (Hamilton *et al.* 2007). This includes birds found anywhere along the United States and Mexican border (Hamilton *et al.* 2007). This species has a limited range along the Pacific slope of Mexico and Guatemala (Howell and Webb 2010).

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