

## Alberta Bird Record Committee

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# *Rules of Code Assignment for The Provincial List*

Records of rare birds for the province of Alberta are to be categorised by the *Alberta Bird Record Committee* into the following categories (which will determine inclusion in the Provincial Bird List or not).

1. Records supported by physical evidence, i.e., specimens, identifiable body parts, identifiable photographs or sound recordings (whose origin from within the borders of the province of Alberta are not in doubt), that are accompanied by written reports of the circumstances of the observations, should be classified as *Accepted, Code 1*.

2. Sight records (without supporting material evidence) by **multiple independent observers** that are supported by written descriptions which leave no doubt as to species identity should be classified as *Accepted, Code 2*.

3. Sight records by single observers that are supported by written descriptions which leave no doubt as to species identity will be classified in different categories depending on the result of the vote.

i) If the vote is unanimous the record should be classified as *Accepted, Code 3*. When voting, members will be asked to explain their decision and the explanations will be kept on file. A *Code 3* is the minimum necessary for inclusion on The Provincial List.

ii) If a record gets four favourable votes and no more than one dissenting vote, it can be classified as *Accepted, Code 4*. For record adjudication purposes such a record is acceptable, but it does not pass the more stringent requirements for inclusion on the Official Provincial List.

A *Code 3* species can be easily upgraded to *Code 2* or *Code 1* when (or if) additional observations are made of that species.

4. Records supported by written descriptions that are not detailed enough to eliminate other possibilities, even reasonably remote ones, or to support conclusively the identification of the species as presented, should be classified as *Insufficiently Documented*. (This is preferable to rejected, because of the negative connotation associated with this wording, and there is a good possibility that the reported species was in fact seen).

5. Records submitted for adjudication that are not supported by the documentation or that describe a species other than that suggested should be rejected and the grounds for rejection clearly stated: *Error in Identification*.

6. Reported occurrences that have only been heard about, in one way or another, and for which there is no documentation, should be eliminated from any provincial listing scheme. They have no place on a Provincial List, not even as part of a hypothetical list. However, every effort should be made to solicit some form of documentation from the sources if they are at all known.

7. Records submitted to the *Committee* that concern species which are of questionable origin (possible escapees) that have established vagrancy patterns and whose **wild status** cannot be determined accurately should be evaluated on the basis of the probability of natural vagrancy. If the identification is sound and obvious sources of the bird have been ruled out, it should be coded as *Accepted, Questionable Origin*. These species may be included under a separate heading on The Provincial List.

Only species with *Codes 1, 2 or 3* should be included on The Provincial List. Species with *Code 4* may be included in an appendix to the list.

For a species to be considered for the “Code 4 List” there must be an acceptable, written documentation of the record.

Placement of a species on the “Code 4 List” should in no way be interpreted as an insult to the documentation or the observer submitting the report, but should be looked upon as an encouragement to substantiate occurrence of the species in the province. Photographic or tape recorded evidence are strongly recommended wherever possible. Some species, however, will always be difficult to document adequately. That is why there will always be some species at the “Code 4” level.