

Minnesota Listing Rules

Listing is a popular game among birdwatchers, and anyone interested in participating may submit their Minnesota life, annual, yard, and other bird-related lists for publication by the MOU. For fair comparisons, it is important that all participants follow the same rules and count their birds in the same way. The following rules provide for a level playing field and ensure consistency. Rules are not intended to apply to lists kept for personal use, but are only for totals published by the MOU.

Lists submitted to the MOU should meet the following criteria:

- 1) The birder keeping the list must have seen or heard the bird.
- 2) The bird must have been in the state of Minnesota when encountered and, where applicable, also have been within the list's prescribed area (e.g., county, yard, etc.), though the observer need not be. For yard lists, the bird may be counted as long as either the bird or the birder is in the yard. Yard Life Lists are not a sum total of birds counted at different residences.
- 3) The bird species must be on the accepted Minnesota state list of birds. Subspecies, color morphs, and hybrids may not be included as additional entries (but see point 10).
- 4) The bird must be alive, wild, and unrestrained when observed. Feral, released, introduced, captive, and domesticated birds may not be counted. Birds descended from escapes or releases may be considered wild when they are part of a population that meets the definition of an established, introduced population.
- 5) Netted or trapped birds which are otherwise wild are not countable while in captivity or under the influence of captivity. A bird is considered to be still under the influence of captivity after its release until it regains the activities of a bird which had not been captured.
- 6) A bird that is injured, sick, or otherwise incapacitated but which retains a reasonable freedom of movement may be counted. Birds found dead may not be counted.
- 7) The bird must be observed under conditions that conform to the ABA Code of Ethics.
- 8) Individual birds whose species' status is Casual or Accidental must have passed the review of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (MOURC) before being countable.
- 9) Eggs, pellets, feathers, nests, or other indirect evidence of the presence of a bird may not be used to count an actual bird.
- 10) A bird may be included on a list when the observer knows only the genus. For example, if a record of a Tropical/Couch's Kingbird was accepted by MOURC, an observer may include that individual on their list(s) without the need to identify it to the species level provided that none of the possible species is already on their list. If any of the species involved is subsequently seen by the observer, the genus level entry must be deleted before the new species may be added.

All lists reported to the MOU should be of Minnesota birds only. Lists for other states or geographic designations, such as North America, should be reported to other organizations.

It should be noted the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee only involves itself with official records of birds occurring in Minnesota, not with listing rules or listing. All noteworthy sightings should be submitted to MOURC for inclusion in the historical record.

Comments on these rules may be sent to the MOU Listing Committee via the editor of *The Loon*, journal of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union.