

# 2004 ABA List and Big Day Reports

## A Lister's Guide to ABA List and Big Day Reporting

Welcome to the 2004 Annual ABA List Report! The following synopsis is a result of the competitiveness of birding. We all want and derive different things from birding. Some folks are really competitive while others are just out there to have a fun time. For those who thrill to the chase, birding can be an event with individual birders or teams of birders pitting their skills against each other to identify the most birds in a single day, year, or lifetime. The most avid lister will pursue birds across states, provinces, or continents in search of adding new species to their lists. At its most basic is the Life List, which can provide a tool that can be used to help each of us become a better birder. Those hard-won entries on our Life Lists give immense satisfaction. Each new bird evokes remembrances of travel to enchanting locations, and is nothing less than a trophy testifying to bird identification successes. To some, however, just seeing and listing a specific bird that has been found and identified by someone else is glory enough. Unless you are truly at the advent of your birding life, new birds call for increased travel to new areas and various habitats at the proper time and season. There are no guarantees, but time invested usually has its reward in seeing new species. Some people aim to win, others aim to have an enjoyable day birding their favorite sites. But there are no prizes for success, especially when excellence is established through the honor system. The only true "prize" we get is the satisfaction of having pleasurable experiences and enjoying our avian friends and accolades from ourselves and others as to what each of our birding goals actually may be. ABA supports competitive birding by encouraging members to submit the numbers of species they have observed in their lifetime, during the past year, in one day, for various regions, etc. and publishes birders' proud achievements annually. Herein we present those 2004 achievements.

## Big Day and List Reports for Members Only

In the fall of 2004, the ABA Board of Directors discussed and voted to reinstate the policy that submissions to the ABA Big Day and List Reports be limited to ABA members, only. In the case of Big Day submissions, it was decided that ONLY the person submitting the report must be an ABA member; a Big Day team may include people who are not ABA members. In order to implement this policy, spaces for your ABA membership number and a statement of membership have been added to the 2005 reporting form included in this report. The policy of excluding non-member lists was put in effect immediately and submissions by non-members have not be included in this 2004 report.



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## Clements List to Remain as ABA Standard

At the same 2004 fall meeting of the ABA Board of Directors, the Recording, Ethics, and Standards Committee reviewed various world checklists and once again recommended that the fifth edition of Jim Clements's *Birds of the World: A Checklist* continue to be the standard for the ABA members. The decision was based largely on the frequency with which the Clements list is updated and its availability in digital format, factors that make it especially suitable for ABA purposes. This decision does not reflect criticism of other world checklists, nor does it "take sides" on differences between lists. The board directed the committee to conduct similar reviews whenever a new world checklist is published or at least once every five years.

## Counting Hybrids

Another change that was passed by the ABA Board of Directors pertained to hybrid species. The Recording Standards and Ethics Committee members agreed that hybrids are not countable and that the criteria for determining what a hybrid is should be as simple and common-sense as possible. Several members pointed out that some vocalizations are learned behavior and should not be used as an indicator of hybridization. As a result, the following has been added to the ABA Recording Rules and Interpretations listed on page 92: "Hybrids are not countable. Any bird with physical characteristics outside the natural range of variation for the species and clearly suggesting that it is a hybrid should be treated as a hybrid under ABA Rules. Songs in passerines are learned behavior and should not be used as evidence of hybridization."

## NEW! Millennium Lists

This 2004 List Report includes the new category called the Millennium List (ML). This list includes all species seen in the ABA Area beginning on 1 January 2001. The threshold is 500 species, and all the other rules concerning ABA Area lists apply.

## Electronic vs. Printing Publishing

The ABA will continue to look at innovative means of producing the Big Day Report and the List Report. At present time, the ABA plans to continue to produce this report in hardcopy format but will seek out new technologies and hopes to unveil an interactive Big Day and List Report in 2006. Visit our website at [www.americanbirding.org](http://www.americanbirding.org) to keep informed of any new developments!

## Deadline for Submission of 2005 List and Big Day Reports —31 January 2006—

The 2005 Big Day and List report forms can be found in the center of this booklet; they will NOT be reprinted in *Winging It*. PDF versions of the forms will be available for downloading from the ABA website at <http://americanbirding.org/bigday/>

Please send your 2005 Big Day Reports (preferably on disk or electronically) and your 2005 List Report forms, by 31 January 2006, to:

**ABA Big Day and List Report Editor**  
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## ON THE COVER

*Rarities are always of great interest to birders, whether we get to see them or not. The Green-breasted Mango (inside the "t"), Golden-crowned Warbler (inside the "4"), male Rose-throated Becard (inside the "L"), and Western Spindalis (inside the "B") were all photographed by Jeff Bouton. When Jeff is not photographing birds, and sometimes when he is, Jeff works as a Sales Representative for Leica Sport Optics.*

*The highlight of the year had to have been a Red-footed Falcon that found its way to Martha's Vineyard, a species that, if accepted by various records' committees, will be added to the A.O.U. and ABA checklist. The image of a Red-footed Falcon in flight (inside the "y") was captured by Glen Tepke! Check out Glen's other photographic accomplishments at [www.pbase.com/gtepk](http://www.pbase.com/gtepk)*

Cover design by Ed Rother