

European Goldfinch – Preston County

Unanimously Accepted to the Exotics List (7-0)

Committee Member Comments:

CM1: The attached photo clearly shows a European Goldfinch

CM2: This reviewer votes for inclusion of the European Goldfinch on the WV Bird List as an exotic species. The observation report provides excellent photo documentation to identify the species. Photos with American Goldfinch provides a size reference. This brightly colored finch with fine pointed bill is a European Goldfinch. This male has forehead and forecrown (to just behind eye), cheek and chin to upper throat deep red, lores black; sides of crown down to side of neck and throat broadly white, bordered by band of black on crown, upper nape and side of nape; tail black, feathers broadly tipped white, upperwing black, greater coverts (except for black outermost feather) broadly tipped golden-yellow, central feathers largely yellow; flight-feathers tipped white, broadly on secondaries (but white can be lost through wear in summer), lower throat and side of breast to flanks warm sandy or buffish cinnamon-brown; iris dark; bill whitish-horn; legs pale brown to pinkish-brown. Photographs confirm identification a European Goldfinch. Note: This bird has eBird report from Washington DC, Cleveland and Cincinnati. Bruceton basically a central point to these sightings. Another observer had submitted a report of this bird seen on May 13, 2017 about 15 miles from this observation.

CM3: I am in favor of adding this record to the Exotics List. The submitted record provides clear photographic evidence that the bird in question is a European Goldfinch. I am familiar with this species, having seen several of them in Scotland a few years ago. However, the European Goldfinch is not an accepted ABA species at this time. Populations that are increasing around the Chicago area may eventually become accepted, but they are not currently accepted as an established, stable population, which precludes the record from being accepted to the State List. Thus, identify is clearly correct, but the bird is not currently an accepted ABA species, making it most appropriate for the Exotics List.

CM4: Definitive photograph. Presumed escaped cagebird rather than an established population.

CM5: Clearly a European Goldfinch. Escaped from somewhere. Should be placed in the "Exotics" section of the state list.

CM6: Not recognized by ABA. This may have to be revisited eventually, since some states such as Wisconsin and Illinois have had breeding populations for around 20 years. Once they are recognized, it is likely the ABA will address the question of their ABA status.

CM7: The bird in the pictures is clearly a European Goldfinch based on the red face and black markings around the eyes. The position of the bird on a tube feeder with American Goldfinches in the background also provide excellent comparison for size and general coloration. The only hesitation for accepting this record is the potential progeny of the bird as an accidental release of a pet. However, the species has been established in the Great Lakes region so it is possible that it migrated to this area during the winter, especially given the relatively mild winter we had 2020-21. This Great Lakes population is not yet recognized as "wild," though. Goldfinches are known for moving around quite a bit and it is likely this bird just joined up with a flock of American Goldfinches to spend the winter. Since the species does not

yet have a recognized wild population in North America, the only logical location for this species is in the Exotics List, and that is what I voted for.