

Mississippi Kite

Rejected 1 vote For, 1 vote for Hypothetical, 5 Against

This report was discussed at length in the annual meeting. Ultimately, the majority of members decided that the burden of proof was just lacking. Lack of physical evidence, circumstances of the observation, and experience of the observer all held sway. This seems to be one of those cases where most would have believed or liked to believe the observer, but the evidence was simply not quite compelling enough to merit a record on the official state list.

Committee Member Comments:

CM1: With some hesitation, I must vote AGAINST this record. The observer has no previous experience with the species and provides no physical evidence. The description and discussion do not do an adequate job in eliminating a few key confounding species. The illustration does not show key field marks that would aid in eliminating confounding species. And the proportions of the bird in the drawing are not in line with the reported species. I certainly would not like to be judged on my artistic abilities if I was submitting, but the written description and drawing are all we have to base a vote on. Therefore, I don't feel a burden of proof has been met and given the circumstances of the observation there is a significant chance of misidentification.

CM2: Due to the observer's lack of experience with this species and lack of notation on key ID points leaves doubt about the identification. Therefore, I vote against this record.

CM3: 4th record, good description and drawings.

CM4: Experienced birder. Well written field notes and sketch.

CM5: Mississippi Kite does not have a forked tail at all, and it looks to me like the drawing shows something resembling forks of the tail. Maybe he/she is not a good drawer, but nevertheless it does not agree with the written text. The submitter has no previous experience with this species, and only saw the bird briefly (1 minute), no other collaborators present. He admits to poor viewing angle and near sunset conditions.

CM6: Lack of experience with the species and inconsistency of the description.

CM7: Rejected without comment.