

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or a similar format when submitting records for review to assure that all pertinent information is accounted for. Attach additional pages or files as necessary. Please print or type for hard copy. For electronic copy, be sure to save this file to your computer before entering text. Attach field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed (if hard copy), mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216, or e-mail electronic copy as an attachment to Paul Edward Conover at <zoiseaux@lusfiber.net> .

1. English and Scientific names: [Burrowing owl \(*Athene cunicularia*\)](#)

2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
[I saw one adult individual of unknown sex.](#)

3. Parish: [Terrebonne Parish](#)

Specific Locality: [USDA sugarcane farm on Bull Run Road in Schriever.](#)

4. Date(s) when observed:

[9 NOV 2022](#)

5. Time(s) of day when observed:

[10:20am](#)

6. Reporting observer and city/state address

Reporting observer: Patrick Ellsworth
City: Houma
State: LA

7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s):

[No other observers were present.](#)

8. Other observers who *independently identified* the bird(s):

[No other observers were present.](#)

9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): [It was a sunny day.](#)

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition):

[I did not use any optical equipment. The burrowing owl flew up from a culvert about 25 feet away and landed about 150 feet away on a row of recently cut sugarcane.](#)

11. Distance to bird(s):

[25 feet when it first flew and I got a good look at while it flew to about 150 feet away](#)

where it perched for a few minutes.

12. Duration of observation: about 3 minutes

13. Habitat: It was in a recently harvested sugarcane field. It was first spooked from the edge of culvert in a weedy drainage ditch. The fields were a few hundred yards from a swamp on one side and ½ mile on the other side. However, the owl was in the field maybe looking for mice and rats or just preferring more open areas.

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation):

The burrowing owl spooked when I drove by on a field road, and I immediately stopped to look at it. It flew off about 150 feet and landed on the ground as they most frequently do. It bobbed several times as it looked at me as is typical of the species.

15. Description (include only what was actually seen, *not what "should" have been seen*; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species; body bulk, shape, proportions; bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species, *or for species that are known to hybridize frequently, stress features that help eliminate possible hybrids*):

The burrowing owl is unmistakable in appearance in being the only owl active during the day and that lands preferably on the ground. I could see the owl clearly and that it was rather long legged with light brown barring on its breast. The back of the owl was brown with beige spots. The eyes were yellow and rather large. The owl was looking at me and bobbed as it watched me.

16. Voice:

It did not make any noise.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):

Owls are distinctly different than any other group of birds, so the fact that it was unmistakably an owl eliminates all non-owl species. As for owl species, the fact that it flew up from the ground and landed again on the ground, is characteristic of the burrowing owl. Also, the tall, long-legged appearance also distinguishes it from other owls. It was much smaller than the barred and great horned owls and taller than the eastern screech owl. It had a rounded head with no ear tufts (horns) unlike the eastern screech and great horned owls.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?):

I took several pictures with my cellphone, which were lousy at best, but the owl is somewhat visible. The photo was attached to the below eBird checklist and added below.
<https://ebird.org/checklist/S122125486>



19. Previous experience with this species:

The lived on the ditch banks near my house where I grew up in Arizona, so I have seen them literally hundreds of times there by the house and numerous other locations in Arizona. I have also seen them in New Mexico, Texas, Bahamas, and the states of São Paulo and Mato Grosso do Sul in Brazil. I have posted photos on eBird of birds seen in Bahamas and Brazil on at least 3 occasions.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S21721992>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S21532483>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S21722100>

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

a. at time of observation: There was no need to consult any book or other birds in the identification of this species because it is unmistakable in appearance and behavior, and I have substantial prior experience with the species.

b. after observation: After the observation, I posted it on eBird and looked into the rarity of the bird in Louisiana because I knew this had to be the eastern extent of its range. Only then did I realize just how rare it was, but honestly I consulted books and eBird more to see the rarity than to confirm my identification because I had not doubt in what I saw.

21. This description is written from:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	notes made during the observation.	Are notes attached?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made after the observation.	At what date?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	memory		
<input type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

22. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain:

Entirely positive

23. Date: 2022 NOV 9

Time: 10:20am

24. May the LBRC have permission to display in whole or in part this report and accompanying photos on the LOS-LBRC website and LBRC Facebook page?

___yes_____

If yes, may we include your name with the report? ___yes_____