

Fifth Report of the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

June 1994

by Ed Kwater, Chairman

This report covers all decisions made by the PORC from May 1993 to June 1994. During this period, a total of 84 records were reviewed. Of these, 66 were accepted, representing an acceptance rate of 78%. The average acceptance rate over the five-year period since the first PORC report in 1990 is 71%. The most encouraging trend in the current report is the greatly increased proportion of accepted records making it to Class I status (62% compared to only 52% in the fourth report, 48% in the third, 28% in the second and 8% in the first). This means that observers are making a much greater effort to document their sightings with photographs, which is extremely encouraging. However, it should be remembered that the focus of any documentation of a rare bird should be a written description. The photograph should be used to support the written word. Unfortunately, many photographs are still being received with no written descriptions.

No fewer than eight species were added to the Pennsylvania List during this assessment period — Leach's Storm Petrel, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, American Oystercatcher, Ancient Murrelet, Golden-crowned Sparrow (all Class I), Anhinga, and Brown Pelican. There were also second state records of Barrow's Goldeneye, LeConte's Sparrow, and Bohemian Waxwing. Perhaps the most surprising record was the Ancient Murrelet in Berks County which showed itself to a few lucky observers. The Leach's Storm Petrel and Golden-crowned Sparrow represent historical records for which adequate documentation has finally been received. Events such as this are always welcome (the Committee is still hoping for a description and/or photographs of the Reddish Egret at Presque Isle in 1953).

The Official State List was published in 1990 (see *Pa. Birds* 4:2 pp 51-53). The first published revision of this list is due in 1995. At least 22 species have been added to the list since 1990 due to the activities of PORC. The rarity status of all bold-faced and underlined species will be reviewed between now and 1995 and any changes noted in the revised list.

The Committee this past year consisted of: Ed Kwater (Chairman), Paul Schwalbe (Treasurer), Frank Haas (Secretary), Roy Ickes, Jerry McWilliams, Nick Pulcinella, and Jerry Skinner.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF ACCEPTED RECORDS BY CLASS (AOU ORDER)

CLASS I

EARED GREBE

Podiceps nigricollis

Erie Co. One at Presque Isle State Park 18 October to 6 November 1992 (J. McWilliams, W. Shaffer), and one at the same locality 18 April 1993 (J. McWilliams).

Cambria Co. One at Prince Gallitzin State Park 25-26 November 1992 (G. Lamer).

LEACH'S STORM PETREL

Oceanodroma leucorhoa

Berks Co. A bird collected at Reading on 25 August 1933 was the first and only state record (G. McNeil). The committee examined photographs of the specimen.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN

Pelecanus erythrorhynchos

Erie Co. One at Presque Isle State Park 22 April 1992 (G. Robinson).

Philadelphia Co. One at Fort Mifflin 14-19 August 1992 (F. Haas, E. Witmer, N. Pulcinella).

GREAT CORMORANT

Phalacrocorax carbo

Carbon Co. One at Beltzville State Park 22 December 1992 (R. Wiltraut).

GLOSSY IBIS

Plegadis falcinellus

Bedford Co. One at Mench 21-22 April 1993 (S. & B. Miles).

GLOSSY/WHITE-FACED IBIS

Plegadis falcinellus/chihi

Erie Co. One at Presque Isle State Park 15 October 1992. Submitted as a *Plegadis* sp. by the observer, it was not possible to assign the photographs conclusively to either species (J. McWilliams).

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING DUCK

Dendrocygna autumnalis

Indiana Co. A flock of 11 at Saltsburg 8 June 1993 then at Loyalhanna Reservoir the following day, where they stayed until 22 June. The first documented state record, these birds coincide with a small invasion into the Northeast in 1993 (M. A. Dunmire, R. Wiltraut).

EURASIAN WIGEON

Anas penelope

Erie Co. Male at Presque Isle State Park 18 April 1992 (J. McWilliams).

KING EIDER

Somateria spectabilis

Erie Co. A male in basic 1 plumage, Presque Isle State Park 14-24 January 1993 (J. McWilliams, R. Wiltraut).

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE

Bucephala islandica

Erie Co. A female at Presque Isle State Park 13-20 February 1993 (J. McWilliams). Second confirmed state record following two males and a female at the same site in February and March 1992.

SANDHILL CRANE*Grus canadensis*

Huntingdon Co. One at Aitch Access 10-15 January 1992 (R. Criswell).

Clarion Co. A pair at Limestone 17 March 1992 (M. Buckwalter).

PIPING PLOVER*Charadrius melodus*

Erie Co. A territorial bird at Presque Isle State Park 13 May to 5 June 1992 (R. States, J. McWilliams, E. Kwater). This individual raised hopes that the species may breed in Pennsylvania for the first time since the 1950s.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER*Haenatopus palliatus*

Carbon Co. One at Beltzville State Park 2 April 1993. First state record (R. Wiltraut).

BLACK-NECKED STILT*Himantopus mexicanus*

Philadelphia Co. Male at Philadelphia Sewage Ponds, 18 June 1992 (R. Schutsky).

HUDSONIAN GODWIT*Limosa haemastica*

Cumberland Co. Juvenile at Kuhn Lake 26 October to 5 November 1992 (R. Schutsky, D. Henise).

RED PHALAROPE*Phalaropus fulicarius*

York Co. Juvenile at Codorus State Park 28 September 1991 (R. Ryan).

FRANKLIN'S GULL*Larus pipixcan*

Lancaster Co. One in alternate definitive plumage, Conowingo Pond, Susquehanna River 18-19 April 1992 (R. Schutsky).

COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULL*Larus ridibundus*

Chester Co. A bird in basic definitive plumage at a sewage treatment plant near Oxford 23 January 1993 (F. Haas). Stayed for

several weeks (no late date submitted).

LEAST TERN*Sterna antillarum*

Lancaster Co. One at Holtwood Fly Ash Pond 8-10 July 1992 (R. Schutsky, F. Haas).

BLACK SKIMMER*Rhynchops niger*

Lancaster Co. An adult and a juvenile at Conejohela Flats 26 September 1992 with the juvenile still present the following day (R. Wiltraut).

ANCIENT MURRELET*Synthliboramphus antiquus*

Berks Co. One at Lake Ontelaunee 8 November 1992. A first state record and an almost unbelievable occurrence. The bird was seen by five lucky observers and unfortunately did not stay (E. Witmer, M. Wlasniewski).

RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD*Selasphorus rufus*

Erie Co. Adult male at a feeder on Blazy Road (near the intersection of routes 6N and 98) in southern Erie Co. from late September (photographed on 27th) till well into October (no late date available) 1992. (J. Stull, E. Kwater). First county record.

SAY'S PHOEBE*Sayornis saya*

Berks Co. One at Eckville 4-15 January 1993 (R. Wiltraut).

WESTERN KINGBIRD*Tyrannus verticalis*

Erie Co. One banded at Presque Isle State Park 26 September 1992 (R.F. Leberman, T. Patton). First county record.

SEDGE WREN*Cistothorus platensis*

Bedford Co. A pair at Dunnings Creek wetlands 13 June 1992 (R. Schutsky).

TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE*Myadestes townsendi*

Bucks Co. One at Revere 23 March 1993 (G. Dewaghe).

VARIED THRUSH*Ixoreus naevius*

Erie Co. One in a yard in Greene Twp. 10-21 March 1993 (C. Brown).

WARBLING VIREO*Vireo gilvus*

Erie Co. An extremely late bird photographed near Roderick Wildlife Management Area 28 November 1993 (F. & B. Haas).

SUMMER TANAGER*Piranga rubra*

Chester Co. A bird at West Chester on 9 May 1993 was almost certainly an alternate 1 male (P. Early).

PAINTED BUNTING*Passerina ciris*

Erie Co. A male in alternate definitive plumage at a feeder in Fairview 20-27 April 1993 (J. McWilliams). First county record.

Chester Co. A male in alternate definitive plumage at West Chester 12 May 1993 (C. Bliss).

LE CONTE'S SPARROW*Ammodramus leconteii*

Chester Co. One at Struble Lake 16-26 April 1992 (R. Schutsky, F. Haas, R. Wiltraut). Second confirmed state record.

GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW*Zonotrichia atricapilla*

Northampton Co. One banded near Easton 4 June 1952. The bird stayed till 18 June (A.E. Conway, G.A. Clark). First and only state record.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW*Zonotrichia leucophrys*

Erie Co. One of the Alaskan race *gambelii* at Presque Isle State Park 15 May 1993 (J. McWilliams).

HARRIS'S SPARROW*Zonotrichia querula*

Chester Co. A bird at a feeder

near Cochranville, 12 May 1993, stayed into March (F. Haas). No late date received.

DARK-EYED JUNCO

Junco hyemalis

Erie Co. A bird of the race *oreganus*, commonly referred to as "Oregon" Junco was at Presque Isle State Park 7 April 1993 (J. McWilliams).

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD

Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus

Northampton Co. One at Easton 7-8 September 1992 (A. Koch).

CLASS II

RED-TAILED HAWK

Buteo jamaicensis

Center Co. A dark-morph bird of the western race *calurus* near State College 23 February 1992 (T. Floyd, J. Hoover). The bird was apparently seen on subsequent dates by other observers but no details received.

CLASS III

BROWN PELICAN

Pelecanus occidentalis

Erie Co. One at Presque Isle State Park 13 July 1992 (L. McWilliams). First fully confirmed state record.

ANHINGA

Anhinga anhinga

Delaware Co. Two males and a female in flight at Swarthmore 18 April 1993 (N. Pulcinella). First state record.

WHITE IBIS

Eudocimus albus

Bedford Co. An adult at Shawnee State Park, Schellsburg 16 October 1992 (C. Voytko)

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

Anser albifrons

Montgomery Co. An adult probably of the Greenland race *flavirostris* at Red Hill 24 December 1992 to 1 January 1993 (K. Crilley).

GREEN-WINGED TEAL

Anas crecca

Dauphin Co. One of the nominate Eurasian race at Wildwood Lake 16 January 1993.

EURASIAN WIGEON

Anas penelope

Erie Co. A male at Presque Isle State Park 28 October 1992 (J. McWilliams).

MISSISSIPPI KITE

Ictinia mississippiensis

Luzerne Co. Juvenile five miles north of Berwick 20 October 1989 (D. Gross).

BLACK RAIL

Laterallus jamaicensis

Lancaster Co. One at Holtwood Fly Ash Pond 12 October 1992 was seen and heard (R. Schutsky).

BLACK-NECKED STILT

Himantopus mexicanus

Lancaster Co. One at Conejohela Flats, Susquehanna River, 22 May 1992 (J. Book, J. Heller).

AMERICAN AVOCET

Recurvirostra americana

Erie Co. One at Presque Isle State Park 22 April 1992 (J. McWilliams).

WILLET

Catoptrophorus semipalmatus

Lancaster Co. One at Conejohela Flats, Susquehanna River, 22 May 1992 (J. Book, J. Heller).

MARBLED GODWIT

Limosa fedoa

Erie Co. Two at Presque Isle State Park 26 August 1992 (J. McWilliams). Three at Presque Isle State Park 12 May 1993 (J. McWilliams, E. Kwater).

HUDSONIAN GODWIT

Limosa haemastica

Center Co. An adult in basic plumage Bald Eagle State Park 1 November 1992 (T. Floyd).

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE

Phalaropus lobatus

York Co. One at Brunner's Island 30 April 1993 (A. Spiese).

FRANKLIN'S GULL

Larus pipixcan

Lancaster Co. A bird in alternate definitive plumage at Conejohela Flats, Susquehanna River, 20 May 1993 (J. Book).

LITTLE GULL

Larus minutus

Delaware Co. Two in alternate definitive plumage at Marcus Hook on the Delaware River 29 April 1993 (N. Pulcinella).

COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULL

Larus ridibundus

Erie Co. One in alternate definitive plumage at Presque Isle State Park 12 April 1993 (J. McWilliams).

THAYER'S GULL

Larus thayeri

Erie Co. One in basic definitive plumage at Presque Isle State Park 14 March 1992 (J. McWilliams, E. Kwater) and a different bird there the next day (J. McWilliams).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE

Rissa tridactyla

Luzerne Co. One in basic definitive plumage at Harveys Lake 1 January 1992 (J. Hoyson). Second state record.

LEAST TERN

Sterna antillarum

Montgomery Co. One at Green Lane Reservoir 24 June 1993 (J. Horn).

SHORT-EARED OWL

Asio flammeus

Clearfield Co. One near Kee-waydin 21 June 1993 (P. & G. Schwalbe) included here because it may represent an expansion of the known breeding range.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING

Bombycilla garrulus

Erie Co. One at Roderick Wildlife Management Area 8 November 1992 (J. Pogacnik). Apparently only the second accepted state record.

OVENBIRD

Seiurus aurocapillus

Washington Co. An extremely late bird at Finleyville 21-26 December 1992 (E. Higbee).

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER

Dendroica coronata

Erie Co. A female of the western race *auduboni* commonly referred to as "Audubon's" Warbler at Presque Isle State Park 24 April 1992 (J. Mc Williams).

SUMMER TANAGER

Piranga rubra

Philadelphia Co. A male in alternate 1 plumage John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge 25 April 1992 (N. Pulcinella).

Indiana Co. One (probably alternate 1 male) at Yellow Creek State Park 24 April 1992 (M. Higbee).

Cumberland Co. An alternate definitive male at Messiah College 26-27 April 1992 (D. Henise).

BLUE GROSBEAK

Guiraca caerulea

Westmoreland Co. A male near Blairsville 1-19 July 1992 (M. Higbee).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW

Spizella pallida

Lancaster Co. One at Octoraro Lake 23 April 1992. (J. Book, R. Schutsky).

Montgomery Co. Two at Horsham 14 March to 2 April 1993 (J. Tilley).

DARK-EYED JUNCO

Junco hyemalis

Butler Co. One of the western "Pink-sided" form in Slippery Rock Township 16 December 1992 (G. Wilhelm).

List of Records Not Accepted

Great Cormorant—15-22 November 1992 Martin's Creek Quarry, Northampton Co. Details did not conclusively rule out other cormorant species.

Tufted Duck—3 October 1992. Male at Pymatuning, Crawford Co. Possibility of escape from captivity not ruled out.

Sandhill Crane—9 April 1992. Three at Fairview. Photographs not diagnostic enough.

Whimbrel—26 July 1992. ABE Airport, Lehigh Co. Description does not rule out other *Numenius* spp.

Hudsonian Godwit—30 October 1992. Brunner's Island, York Co. Photograph not clear enough to rule out other godwit species. No written description.

Curlew Sandpiper—2 October 1992. Octoraro Lake, Lancaster Co. Description did not rule out Stilt Sandpiper.

Red Phalarope—27 September 1991. Kaercher Creek Park, Berks Co. Description did not conclusively rule out Red-necked Phalarope.

California Gull—4-9 December 1992. Blue Marsh Lake, Berks Co. Details did not rule out Herring Gull.

Black-Legged Kittiwake—12 November 1991, Blue Marsh Lake, Berks Co. Details incomplete, wing pattern not described.

21-22 April 1992, Lake Somerset, Somerset Co. Details given were incomplete.

Arctic Tern—19-20 October 1989. Muddy Run Fishermen's Park, Susquehanna River, Lancaster Co. Details did not rule out other small *Sterna* spp.

Black-backed Woodpecker—2 May 1992. Philadelphia Co. Details did not rule out aberrant Hairy or Three-toed Woodpeckers.

Bewick's Wren—22 May 1992. Tuscarora State Forest, Perry Co. Details incomplete and did not rule out Carolina Wren.

Summer Tanager—2 May 1992, Kings Gap Environmental Education Center, Cumberland Co. Details received were extremely brief.

Black-headed Grosbeak—6-7 May 1993. Limestone Township, Clarion Co. Photographs depicted a Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

Lark Bunting—2 May 1993. Tulpehocken Township, Berks Co. Details given were extremely brief.

Brewer's Blackbird—4 November 1992. Prince Gallitzin State Park, Cambria Co. Description did not conclusively rule out Rusty Blackbird.

14 November 1992. Yellow Creek State Park, Indiana Co. Description did not rule out several other *icterid* species. †

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