

ELEVENTH REPORT of the PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

February 2002

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This report covers 141 records of 71 species submitted to the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (hereafter PORC or the Committee). The 72 records accepted, of 47 species, represents an acceptance rate of 51%. Highlights include the first records for Greater Shearwater, White-tailed Tropicbird, Long-tailed Jaeger, Black Guillemot, and second record for Eurasian Collared-Dove. The addition of the four new records brings the state total to 394 species (Pulcinella 2000).

PORC requests reports of any species on the Review List as well as any species not previously accepted for Pennsylvania. The committee encourages observers to document their sightings with photographs, videos or sound recordings when possible. The committee also emphasizes that the primary point of any documentation of a rare bird should be a detailed written description. At times, the committee receives photographs that do not adequately depict the field marks needed to clinch the identification, whereas supporting written documentation may add the missing information. When the written description is the only means of documentation, the observer(s) should include as much detail as possible regarding field marks and plumage, as well as information regarding behavior and habitat. As an aid to observers in solving particularly difficult identifications, the Committee includes useful references with some of the species records in this report.

Unfortunately, a large number of submissions are single observer reports. Many of these submissions mention other observers. Ideally, all observers of a rarity should submit a report, and PORC again encourages observers of well watched multi-observed rarities to submit documentation and not to depend on others to submit a report. Each observer's report builds upon the

others, forming a large body of evidence for the committee to work with. Assessing a report is much easier when there is a wealth of information to work with.

Many of the problems listed above contributed to the unusually low 51% acceptance rate of records in this report, compared with an average of approximately 75% of all previous records the Committee has evaluated since its formation in 1989. For tips and guidelines on documenting rare birds, observers are encouraged to consult the Committee's web pages at <http://www.pabirds.org>, Dittman and Lasley 1992, Hanisek and Lehman 1997, and PORC 2000.

Documentation can be submitted to Nick Pulcinella, PORC Secretary, 210 Welcome Ave., Norwood, PA 19074.

Committee News: Since the last report the Committee has had several membership changes. Roy Ickes' term expired in June 2001, and he was succeeded by Jerry Stanley. Paul Rodewald took a leave of absence and then resigned after moving to Ohio, and the remainder of his term is being filled by former committee member Robert Leberman. The remaining membership consists of Paul Hess (chair), Doug Couchman (vice chair), Matt Sharp (treasurer), George Armistead and William Reid. Nick Pulcinella is the non-voting secretary. Recent members who voted on some records in this report include Roy Ickes, Frank Haas and Jerry McWilliams.

At the Committee's annual meeting in June 2001 the position of Vice Chair was created. The Vice Chair will call and preside at Committee meetings in the absence of the Chair. The Committee also discussed the status of Barnacle Goose and decided that until more definitive evidence can be established for the natural occurrence of this species in

Pennsylvania, it will not be accepted to the official state list.

The Committee now has a presence on the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology web site, www.pabirds.org where PORC's pages include the Official State List, the Review List of species requiring documentation, tips for improving documentation of rarities, and a documentation form that can be downloaded. The site also contains information about the functions of the Committee as well as a photo gallery of rarities found in Pennsylvania.

Classification of Records:

Class I: An accepted record based on an existing identifiable specimen, a diagnostic photograph or a diagnostic recording. Abbreviations are (p) photograph submitted, (r) sound recording, (a) audiotape, (v) videotape, (s) specimen.

Class II: An accepted sight record documented independently by two or more observers.

Class III: An accepted sight record documented by one observer.

Format of this Report. The records are arranged taxonomically following the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (AOU 1998). The number in parentheses after the species name represents the number of accepted records, including this report, since the establishment of PORC in 1989. Within each species, the records are listed chronologically. Each record includes the locality and county and date(s) when known. In many cases, dates are taken from the quarterly reports published in Pennsylvania Birds. Enclosed in parentheses following the date are the initials of those who submitted documentation. Not all observers who saw the bird are listed, only those who submitted details. Following the list of

observers is the record's classification and the PORC record number. This is followed by the Committee's vote tally for each record. All photographs, video and sound recordings are currently being held with the Secretary until a permanent location is established. An * after a species name indicates that the species is no longer on the PORC review list.

Abbreviations - NAB = North American Birds; NWR = National Wildlife Refuge; PB = Pennsylvania Birds; PISP = Presque Isle State Park; Res. = Reservoir; SGL = State Game Lands; S.P. = State Park; Twp. = Township

ACCEPTED SPECIES

Greater Shearwater (*Puffinis gravis*) (1). One found on the parking lot of East Penn Manufacturing Co, Lyons, Berks, on September 9, 1999. (S W (p) (s) ; C l a s s I ; 035-01-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:143. The bird's presence most likely resulted from the remnants of Hurricane Dennis that passed through Pennsylvania on September 5-6, 1999. It was taken to the Kutztown Animal Hospital where the following day Scott Weidensaul confirmed the identification. Later it was transported to Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research in Newark, DE. Despite intensive efforts at both sites, the bird died on September 14, 1999. This is the first confirmed state record.

White-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus*) (2). One female collected at Nanticoke, Luzerne, on October 16, 1954 by D.M. Christian (Class I; 058-01-1954; USNM 45764) 7/0. Another female collected near Gettysburg, Adams, October 16, 1954 by C.H. Wolford (Class I; 058-02-1954; USNM 463391) 7/0. Both of these birds were brought inland by Hurricane Hazel. This species is now added to the Official State List.

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) (9). One observed and sketched in Tinicum Twp, Delaware, May 8, 1999 (DM; Class III; 095-01-1999)

7/0. One at Nazareth, Northampton, June 16, 2000 (RW; Class I; 095-01-2000). 6/1. Photograph published in PB 14:103. Glossy Ibis is a regular migrant throughout the state, and its range is expanding along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts. Documentation for this species must rule out the very similar White-faced Ibis, a species not yet reported in Pennsylvania. (Patten and Lasley 2000)

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) (2). An immature bird in Willistown, Chester, August 15-21, 1999. (Class I; 099-01-1999) 7/0. This record found its way to the Committee through a strange path. A photograph of this bird was brought to the attention of Al Guarente, a Delaware County birder by a customer of his feed store, several days after the bird had departed the area. The photo was taken by the landowner who is familiar with the common birds of his area but was unfamiliar with this species. Upon checking his field-guides he suspected it was a Wood Stork. When the rarity of this species was explained, the landowner did not wish the location of his home to be released fearing a rush of eager birders to his property. The exact dates of occurrence are unknown, but the observer believed that it was within the range of dates given in the report. Photograph published in PB 13:144.

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*) (11). One white morph in Cranberry Twp. Butler, March 4-13, 1999 (MW, PH, MF, WS(p); Class I; 112-01-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:30. One white phase Saltsburg, Indiana, November 27, 1999 - January 1, 2000 (MD, RH(p); Class I; 112-02-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:204. This species continues to be a regular but rare migrant throughout the state. It has been removed from the review list for several southeast and south-central counties where it can be found annually at times in double-digit numbers.

Green-winged (Common) Teal (*Anas crecca crecca*) (4). One at PISP, Erie, March 25, 2000 (BCo; Class III; 119a-01-2000) 6/1. Reports of this

species decreased considerably since it was "lumped" with the Green-winged Teal of North America. This subspecies may be overlooked because of its similarity to the North American race. The Committee hopes that observers search for this subspecies so that its true status in Pennsylvania can be ascertained.

King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*) (4). One seen in flight with Red-breasted Mergansers (*Mergus serrator*) at PISP, Erie, November 16, 1999 (JM; Class III; 145-01-1999) 6/1. All Pennsylvania records of this species have come from this location.

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) (4). One seen in flight over Quarryville, Lancaster, August 26, 1999 (CA; Class III; 168-01-1999) 7/0. This species wanders frequently to the northeast, and there is strong potential for more sightings.

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) (8). One seen briefly in flight at Peace Valley Park, Montgomery, May 7, 2000 (DF; Class III; 171-02-2000) 6/1. One seen in flight at Mt. Wilson, Lebanon, May 30, 2000 (RM; Class III; 171-03-2000) 6/1. More often than the Swallow-tailed Kite, this species wanders frequently to the northeast especially from mid-May to early June. It is annual in New Jersey and Ontario, therefore further sightings should be expected in Pennsylvania.

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) (1). One seen in flight over Grove City, Mercer, November 6, 1999 (RSt; Class III; 186-02-1999) 7/0. This species is annual in fall in Pennsylvania but has a very high rate of non-acceptance by the Committee. The reason is that Buteos in general contain much variation within species, and it is sometimes difficult to describe this bird with enough detail to eliminate similar species.

Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) (3). One first heard and then audio recorded at Cricket Farm Marsh, Berks, May 17 - June 2, 1999 (MM(a), MMo, DF; Class I; 223-01-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:92. This bird was discovered while Mark Miller was

doing nocturnal field work on frogs and toads. He heard an unfamiliar call from a small wetland he was surveying, which he audio-taped and later identified as this species. To the delight of many birders, the bird remained in the marsh for several weeks and was easily heard.

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyula martinica*) (1). An immature at PISP, Erie, October 14-16, 1999 (JM(ph), WS(ph); Class I; 242-01-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:205 and NAB 54:115. It was discovered at PISP by park naturalist Randy Neyer who notified McWilliams. The bird was easily approachable and many close photographs were made. Individuals of this species occasionally wander far north of their normal range in the southern U.S. and could appear anywhere in the state.

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) (1). One was briefly but adequately described at Pymatuning NWR, Crawford, September 22, 1999 (MB; Class III; 286-01-1999) 7/0.

Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*) (12). One at Yellow Creek S.P., Indiana, August 29, 1999 (MH, RH; Class III; 330-01-1999) 7/0. One at Green Lane Res., Montgomery, September 5, 1999 (KR; Class III; 330-02-1999) 7/0. This species is a regular migrant and as illustrated by these two reports from opposite corners of Pennsylvania, it can appear anywhere in the state.

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) (4). One observed both in flight and sitting on the water at PISP, Erie, December 2, 1999. (JM; Class III; 332-01-1999) 7/0. Another noted in flight at PISP, Erie, December 28, 1999 - January 2, 2000 (JM; Class III; 332-02-1999) 7/0. One found dead at PISP, Erie, April 19, 2000 (JM; Class I; 332-01-2000) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 14:102

Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) (9). One noted in flight at PISP, Erie, November 4, 1999 (JM; Class III; 333-02-1999) 7/0.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) (1). An adult observed near the Conejohela Flats,

Washington Boro, Lancaster, May 22, 2000. (DF, RW, JH; Class I; 334-01-2000) 7/0. The bird was superbly photographed and videotaped, and remained for two days. Photograph published in PB 14:102. This is the first state record.

Jaeger species (*Stercorarius sp.*) (7). One observed in flight at PISP, Erie, November 7, 1999 (MF; Class III; 332a-01-1999) 7/0. One seen at a distance both in flight and on the water at PISP, Erie, December 30, 1999 (JM; Class III; 332a-02-1999) 7/0. Another seen briefly at some distance at PISP, Erie, December 30, 1999 (JM; Class III; 332a-03-1999) 6/1.

Franklin's Gull (*Larus pipixan*) (8). One at Shenango Res., Mercer, August 14-15, 1999 (MF, MMcC; Class II; 338-01-1999) 7/0. This species is nearly annual.

Little Gull (*Larus minutus*) (11). One at Pymatuning Lake, Crawford, December 19, 1999 (RL; Class III; 339-01-1999) 6/1. One adult in Caernarvon Twp., Lancaster, March 28, 2000 (FH(ph); Class I; 339-01-2000) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 14:30. Both birds were discovered in flocks of Bonaparte's Gulls. The Lancaster County bird was observed feeding over a farmer's field away from any significant water source.

Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) (12). One adult at PISP, Erie, April 1, 1999 (JM; Class III; 340-01-1999) 7/0. One adult in basic plumage on the Ohio River near Pittsburgh, Allegheny, November 3-21, 1999 (SK(ph), WS(ph), MF; Class I; 340-03-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:202. Another adult in breeding plumage at PISP, Erie, April 29, 2000 (JM(ph), Class I; 340-01-2000) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 14:102. The Allegheny County bird was present for two weeks and viewed by many observers. The two Erie sightings were with flocks of Bonaparte's Gulls, allowing direct comparison of the two similar species.

Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*) (18). One adult at Presque Isle Bay, Erie, February 4, 1999 (JM; Class III; 348-01-1999) 6/1. One immature at

Presque Isle Bay, Erie, February 13, 1999 (JM; Class III; 348-02-1999) 6/1. An adult at Presque Isle Bay, Erie, March 30, 2000 (JM; Class III; 348-02-2000) 6/1. Nearly all accepted records so far have been from Erie County, where this species appears to be a rare and regular winter visitor.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) (10). One on the Ohio River at Montgomery Dam, Beaver, December 14, 1999 (SK; Class III; 357-01-1999) 6/0. The bird surprised Scott Kinzey, who was counting Herring and Ring-billed Gulls when the kittiwake came into view. It was seen only in flight, but the blackish "W" pattern on the wings, the blackish hindneck, black leading edge of the wing and bright inner primaries were all noted.

Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) (5). Two in flight at Green Lane Res., Montgomery, July 14, 1999 (AM; Class III; 372-02-1999) 7/0. One in flight and perched on the Susquehanna River, Dauphin, July 7, 1999 (RK; Class III; 372-03-1999) 7/0. This species is a regular post-breeding wanderer into southeastern and south central parts of the state, especially along the Susquehanna and Delaware Rivers.

Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*) (4). An immature found in State College, Centre, September 7, 1996 following the passage of Hurricane Fran. (RG; Class I; 375-06-1996) 7/0. The bird was brought to Centre Wildlife Care where rehabilitation was attempted. It appeared initially that the bird would recover because it was eating and gaining weight, but its condition worsened and it died on September 26, 1999. Photograph published in PB 14:101. Thanks to Dan Brauning for bringing the record to the Committee's attention. This was one of several Sooty Terns observed after the passage of Hurricane Fran (Pulcinella 1996).

Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) (2). One at Washington Boro, Lancaster, June 11, 2000 (DF(v), EW(ph); Class I; 382-01-2000) 7/0. Though this bird was seen by many individuals, no written documentation was ever submitted.

Black Guillemot (*Cephus grylle*) (1). One at Lake Ontelaunee, Berks, December 1, 1999. (FH, PR(v); Class I; 388-01-1999) 7/0. It was observed only in flight. This record is a good example of how one documentation might not clinch an identification, but more than one submission assessed together build a case for the correct identification. The video, though an admirable attempt at recording a rapidly flying acid-type bird, is less than diagnostic, the additional written documentation by a second observer enabled acceptance by eliminating similar species. This is the first confirmed state record.

Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) (2). One photographed in Eckville, Berks, May 7, 2000 (DB(ph); Class I; 409a-01-2000) 6/1. Photograph published in PB 14:103. This is the second accepted record of this species for Pennsylvania.

Chuck-will's widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*) (3). One at Bristol, Bucks, May 13-31, 2000. (DF(ph), PR(v); Class I; 463-01-2000) 7/0. This bird was heard by many observers during its short stay near the Delaware River. The song is easily identified on the video.

Selasphorus hummingbird species (2). An immature/female at Germansville, Lehigh, August 14-December 15, 1995 (RW; Class I; 495a-02-1995) 7/0. Though the bird was present for four months and seen by many individuals, the only documentation submitted was one photograph. This is an example of how additional photos or written documentation may have aided in an identification of the species.

Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*) (11). An immature in Edgmont Twp., Delaware, October 1, 1999 (JG, NP(ph); Class I; 557-01-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:204. One in Huntingdon Valley, Montgomery, November 6, 1999 (JR; Class III; 557-02-1999) 6/1. This species is nearly annual in fall. Documentation should include notes on separation from the "yellow-bellied" *Tyrannus* kingbirds and Myiarchus flycatchers as some of these species have occurred in the northeast.

Bewick's Wren (*Thryothorus bewickii*) (1). One seen and heard near Meadville, Crawford, May 4, 2000 (IF; Class III; 622-01-2000) 6/1.

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) (6). One at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Berks, November 13, 1999 (BW(ph); Class I; 650-01-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:203. It was found just after sunrise perched atop a hemlock on North Lookout. The record falls into the usual mid-October to late November pattern of occurrence in Pennsylvania.

Swainson's Warbler (*Limnothypis swainsonii*) (7). One netted and banded at Powdermill Nature Reserve, Westmoreland, May 21, 1985 (BL(ph), BM; Class I; 756-01-1985) 7/0. One at the Loyalhanna Wetlands, Westmoreland, May 8, 1999 (MMcC(vt); Class I; 756-01-1999) 7/0. This species has been annual in the state since 1997, with five of the seven accepted records occurring in the May 7-21 period.

Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) (13). An immature male described and photographed at PISP, Erie, May 13, 2000 (JM; Class I; 780-02-2000) 7/0. One seen and heard in Lewisbury, York, May 28, 2000 (JF; Class III; 780-01-2000) 7/0. This species is rare outside of Greene County, where it breeds. (Brauning 1992)

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) (6). One photographed in Glen Rock, York, January 15-March 31, 1999 (DB(ph), PR; Class I; 782-01-1999) 7/0. A male in definitive basic plumage at Harrison Hills Park, Allegheny, October 3, 1999 (PH; Class III; 782-03-1999) 6/0. The York County bird made daily appearances at a backyard feeder and was seen by several observers.

Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*) (2) One at a feeder in Export, Westmoreland, December 30, 1999-March 15, 2000 (MMcC(ph), FH; Class I; 800a-01-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:201. It was seen by many observers.

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) (4). One at Rock Springs, Centre, May 10-June 5, 1999 (PR, FH(ph); Class I; 820-01-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:93 and NAB 53:341. It was seen by many observers and sang infrequently during its stay. One at Moraine S.P., Butler, September 24, 1999 (DY, BD; Class II; 820-02-1999) 7/0. In both instances the Lark Sparrows were first found in mixed sparrow flocks.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*) (4). One seen briefly at Lake Latonka, Mercer, October 18-21, 1998 (NT; Class III; 830a-02-1998) 6/1 on second round. One at Yellow Creek S.P., Indiana, October 12, 1999 (MH; Class III; 830a-01-1999) 6/1. Separating the two "sharp-tailed" sparrow species is difficult, and attempts at written descriptions nearly always contain a few pitfalls. Though at least 14 observers saw the Mercer County bird, the Committee received only one written description so brief that some members were concerned about whether similar species could be ruled out. On second-round discussion, all but one member decided that enough information was provided for acceptance of the record. This is a good example of a case in which several independent written reports might have made the decision easier.

Seaside Sparrow (*Ammodramus maritimus*) (2). One at Washington Boro, Lancaster, April 20, 1999 (EW(ph); Class I; 831-01-1999) 7/0. Photograph published in PB 13:93. This is one of the more difficult sparrows to find in Pennsylvania, and the Committee congratulates Witmer for not only discovering the bird but also relocating it later to obtain photographic evidence.

White-crowned (Gambel's) Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*) (6). One at Martin's Creek PP&L Power Plant, Northampton, February 22, 1999 (RW(ph); Class I; 838a-01-1999) 7/0. One in Butler Twp., Butler, October 28, 1999 (DY; Class III; 838a-02-1999) 7/0. This subspecies, not often identified in the east, is one for which the Committee seeks to compile an ornithological

record in Pennsylvania that is as complete as possible. Archiving the appearance of subspecies away from their usual range can build a valuable database showing geographic and temporal patterns of vagrancy.

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) (2). One male meticulously described in Manheim, Lancaster, May 7, 1999 (RM; Class III; 788-01-1999) 6/0. This bird joined a gathering of eight Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at Miller's feeder allowing direct comparison of the two species. This is apparently the first Lancaster County record.

Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*) (7). One at PISP, Erie, May 13, 1999 (MHe; Class III; 790-01-1999) 7/0. This species is rare outside of the southern parts of the state.

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) (6). An adult male at Washington Boro, Lancaster, October 24, 1999 (EW, TG; Class II; 794-02-1999) 7/0. First Lancaster County record.

Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) (14). One male in Rose Twp., Jefferson, March 2, 1999 (JF; Class III; 861-01-1999) 6/1. Two at Gray, Somerset, April 4, 1999 (SB; Class III; 861-02-1999) 6/1. A female at Moraine S.P., Butler, October 24, 1999 (PH; Class III; 861-03-1999) 6/0. A male at Moraine S.P., Butler, October 24, 1999 (PH; Class III; 861-04-1999) 6/0. This species is regular in small numbers from late October through early April and probably occurs much more often than is reported. It is difficult to document convincingly, and nearly as many records are rejected as accepted. When attempting to compare Brewer's to similar species, a careful description of bill size and shape should be included.

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*) (2). A female/immature male at Mt. Joy, Lancaster, January 9-February 15, 2000 (MG(ph), CB, BC, MF, TG, RM; Class I; 874a-01-2000) 6/1. Photograph published in PB 14:28. The Committee received multiple written descriptions as well as a series of close photographs. The serrated upper wingbar, dark transocular line, pale supercilium,

grayish "saddle" where the nape meets the back, and white feather edges on the greater coverts extending far up the leading edge of the feathers are all characters favoring Bullock's over a dull immature/female Baltimore Oriole. The most useful articles published about Bullock's and Baltimore identification are Lee & Birch 1998 and Jaramillo 2001.

Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*) (6). One at PISP, Erie, February 10, 2000 (JM(ph); Class I; 887-01-2000) 6/0. A single individual in a flock of Common Redpolls was photographed and painstakingly described addressing many field marks that separate the two species: general "very frosty look," appearance of being "flat-headed with a steep forehead", bill shorter than the accompanying Common Redpolls, red cap confined to the front of the head and less extensive than the Commons, pale nape contrasting with a darker back, pure white undertail coverts, and underpart streaks limited to sides of the breast and upper flanks.

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED, identification questionable (Votes are listed as for/against/abstain. A vote of 6/1 or 7/0 is required for acceptance.)

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*). One at Peach Bottom, Lancaster, 10 October to 11 November 1997 (002a-01-1997) 2/5 after two rounds, but accepted as Pacific/Arctic. One at Strubel Lake, Chester, 23 April 1999 (002a-01-1999) 1/6. One at Peace Valley Park, Bucks, 8-9 November 1999 (002a-02-1999) 0/7. One at Lake Ontelaunee, Berks, 27 November 1999 (002a-03-1999) 1/6 after two rounds, but accepted as Pacific/Arctic. One at Lake Nockamixon, Bucks, 23 April 2000 (002a-01-2000) 1/6. The bird at Peace Valley Park was photographed, but in the members' opinion it was a Common Loon. On the other four records, a majority of the Committee believed the birds were probably Pacific Loons but considered other loon species not eliminated conclusively. Worthwhile references for identification of the five loon

species are Birch & Lee 1997, Kaufman 1990, and Zimmer 2000.

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*). A carcass found along the Lake Erie shore, Erie, 24 February 1998 (052-01-1998) 3/3/1 after two rounds. Those not in favor of acceptance questioned whether other storm-petrel species were ruled out conclusively and/or whether the dead bird's presence in Pennsylvania was a natural occurrence. In line with the Committee's bylaws, one member has requested an unusual third round of discussion and voting on this record.

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*). One in flight over Rose Tree Park, Delaware, 26 April 1999 (074-01-1999) 4/3 after two rounds. The three dissenting members felt that the record was probably correct but that a cormorant was not ruled out. One in flight over Rose Tree Park, Delaware, 30 September 1999 (074-02-1999) 2/5. A majority believed that the description was insufficient for evaluation.

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*). One at Eckville, Berks, 1 May 1999 (095-02-1999) 0/6/1. The Committee felt that the brief details submitted were not sufficient to evaluate adequately.

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*). One at Indian Lake, Somerset, 26 November 1999 (112-03-1999) 1/6. In the view of most members the details, largely because of poor weather conditions for observation, were not sufficient to eliminate Snow Goose and Snow x Ross's hybrid conclusively.

Canada Goose (small race) (*Branta canadensis*). One at Nazareth, Northampton, 21 January 1998 (116b-01-1998) 5/2 after two rounds. Two members believed that a written description was necessary to rule out medium-sized subspecies.

Trumpeter Swan (*Tachycineta bicolor*). Three at Oakland Mills, Juniata, 18 April 1999 (105-01-1999) 2/5. One at West Fairview, Dauphin, 16-28 April 1999 (105-02-1999) 0/7. Two at New Galilee Wetland, Beaver, 29 August 1999 (105-05-1999) 2/5. A majority of the

Committee felt that the descriptions lacked sufficient details to eliminate Tundra Swan without a doubt. An important reference discussing separation of Trumpeter from Tundra is Patten and Heindel 1994.

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*). One at Ford's Pond, Lackawana, 5 March 2000 (141-01-2000) 2/4/1 after two rounds. No crest was visible at close range, and a majority of members felt that a Scaup x Tufted Duck hybrid was not eliminated by the description. An extensive discussion of the pitfalls of Tufted Duck identification is provided in Toochin 1998.

King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*). One at PISP, Erie, 18 December 1999 (145-02-1999) 2/5. A majority felt that the record was probably correct but did not rule out Common Eider.

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*). One in flight over the Gwynedd Preserve, Montgomery, 13 May 1999 (171-01-1999) 0/7. One in flight over SGL 227 near Hometown, Schuylkill, 29 May 1999 (171-02-1999) 3/4 after two rounds. One in flight over Haverford College, Delaware, 13 May 2000 (171-01-2000) 4/3 after two rounds. In the Schuylkill County case, a majority of members considered the record probably correct but were concerned that Merlin was not ruled out. In the Montgomery and Delaware County cases those who voted against acceptance considered the details insufficient for evaluation.

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*). One over the Rocky Ridge Hawk Watch, York, 9 September 1999 (186-01-1999) 1/6 after two rounds. Most of the Committee considered the description insufficient to rule out other Buteos.

Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*). One at Mechanicsburg, Cumberland, 14 December 1997

(200-02-1997) 3/4 after two rounds. One at Stone Mt. Hawk Watch, Huntingdon/Mifflin, 7 December 1999 (200-02-1999) 2/5. In both cases a majority of the Committee felt that

the records were probably correct but that the description did not enable elimination of other raptors conclusively.

King Rail (*Rallus elegans*). One found dead in Hopewell Twp., Cumberland, 1 June 1999 (235-01-1999) 5/2 after two rounds. Photograph published in PB 13:92. Members voting against acceptance felt that the record was probably correct but were concerned that a hybrid Clapper x King Rail or a Clapper Rail of the bright Florida race *scottii* were not ruled out. They emphasized that a written description to accompany the photograph, discussing portions of the plumage not visible, might have enabled acceptance.

Sandhill Crane* (*Grus canadensis*). Two at Brotherton, Somerset, 2 April 1998 (248-01-1998) 1/6 after two rounds. The majority felt that the description was not sufficient to establish the identification.

Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*). One at Springton Res., Delaware, 8-10 November 1997 (276-01-1997) 0/7 after two rounds. This was a difficult and important record to evaluate. Two members felt that a majority of evidence supported the record but not beyond a reasonable doubt; four members felt that despite the admirably detailed descriptions, several critical characters necessary to identify a Wood Sandpiper were not provided; one member felt that several of the characters described were inconsistent with Wood Sandpiper. The Committee believes that the description did not point to any *Tringa* species with certainty, and offers no speculations about what this unusual bird might have been.

Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*). One at Green Lane Res., Montgomery, 4 November 1998 (293-02-1998) 5/2 after two rounds. The majority believed that the photograph was diagnostic, but two members felt that a written description covering points not ascertainable in the photo would have been essential to rule out Black-tailed Godwit. One member commented, "This is a fine example of a record where, if a written

description were included, the record would likely be easily accepted."

Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*). One at Plains Flats, Luzerne, 8 May 1999 (321-01-1999) 4/3 after two rounds. Among concerns expressed by the dissenting members were that essential details describing the tail and uppertail coverts were lacking, that "lemon-yellow legs" as described were not consistent with the orange legs a Reeve should have in the spring, and that in May a Ruff would not likely remain in the basic plumage reported.

Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*). One at Jonestown, Columbia, 20 March 1996 (330-01-1996) 4/3 after two rounds. Two at Green Castle Res., Franklin, 7-16 September 1999 (330-03-1999) 1/6. One at Codorus S.P., York, 7 September 1999 (330-04-1999) 5/2 after two rounds. Photograph published in PB 13:144. In all three cases, the members who voted not to accept these records considered the written descriptions and the photograph insufficient to rule out Red Phalarope conclusively.

Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*). One at PISP, Erie, 7 December 1997 (332-01-1997) 1/6 after two rounds. The majority felt that the description did not rule out Parasitic Jaeger or - though extremely unlikely - a skua species.

Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*). One at PISP, Erie, 28 October 1999 (333-01-1999) 3/4 after two rounds. The four voting not to accept believed the bird was probably a Parasitic as suggested by its flight style, behavior, size, and structure, but that Long-tailed had not been eliminated conclusively.

Little Gull (*Larus minutus*). One at Bainbridge, Lancaster, 25 October 1998 (339-03-1998) 4/3 after two rounds. The dissenting members believed that the brief details were not sufficient for an adequate evaluation.

Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*). One at Beltzville S.P., Carbon, 29 May 1999 (340-02-1999) 0/7 after two rounds. The Committee

felt that some features pointed to this species, but the description lacked important diagnostic details such as the underwing pattern.

Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*). One at Lake Ontelaunee, Berks, 2 January 2000 (343a-01-2000) 2/4/1. The gull was very well described, and nearly every detail pointed to this species, but one member summarized the majority opinion: "Given the lack of clear detail shown in the photos, the ambiguity of the written description of a key ID feature [the tail band], and the extreme variability of large white-headed gulls, I don't think the photographic and written documentation can rule out 100% the possibility of an extreme variant 2nd or 3rd basic Lesser Black-backed Gull, however unlikely that possibility is." This would have been a first state record, which is why the majority took a particularly conservative position.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*). One at Peace Valley County Park, Bucks, 11 May 2000 (346-01-2000) 0/5/1 with the seventh member not voting. Most of the Committee felt that in the absence of a written description no conclusion was possible. Three members believed that the photograph showed a typical first-basic/first-alternate Ring-billed Gull.

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus cachinnans*). One at the Tullytown landfill, Bucks, 12 February 2000 (350a-01-2000) 1/6. In the majority's view, the details submitted were not sufficient to enable the very difficult separation of this species from a yellow-legged Herring Gull or a Herring x Lesser Black-backed hybrid. An extraordinarily complete description with all details pointing to Yellow-legged Gull, and perhaps even a series of diagnostic photographs, might be necessary to establish the first state record of this species

Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*). One at Memorial Lake S.P., Lebanon, 24 December 1997 (348-03-1997) 5/2 after two rounds. One at PISP, Erie, 23-25 January 1998 (348-01-1998) 4/3 after two rounds. One near Kahle Lake, Venango, 17 April 1999

(348-03-1999) 1/6. Photograph published in PB 13:93. One at the Tullytown Landfill, Bucks, 14 February 2000 (348-01-2000) 0/7. For the Lebanon County and Presque Isle reports, the minority voting against acceptance felt that the record was probably correct but not beyond doubt. For the Kahle Lake and Tullytown birds, the majority considered the details (and photographs of the Kahle Lake gull) insufficient for adequate evaluation to rule out other species.

Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*). One at the Tullytown Landfill, Bucks, 28 February 2000 (351-01-2000) 0/7. The Committee believed that the brief details were not sufficient for an adequate evaluation, particularly for what would be a first state record.

Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*). One at Kirby Park, Luzerne, 8 May 1999 (372-01-1999) 3/4 on two rounds. The majority's vote was based on a view that the description was insufficient for evaluation.

Black Guillemot (*Cepphus grylle*). One at lake Ontelaunee, Berks, 6 April 1957 (394-01-1957) 4/2 after two rounds, with one member not voting as to species. Accepted as guillemot species because the two dissenters did not believe the brief description ruled out Pigeon Guillemot. This was a historic record by the eminent observer Earl Poole, and one member who accepted the record commented that Poole "would have written this in a more precise way if PORC had been in existence then."

Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*). One at the Hidden valley Golf Course, Schuylkill, 18 April 1998 (409a-01-1998) 2/5 after two rounds. The majority felt that the details shown in the photographs and listed in the written description were not sufficient to rule out a domestic collared-dove. Elements lacking were vocalization, shade of undertail coverts, and pattern of black on the outermost retrices. In various areas of North America, increasing doubt is being expressed about whether birds reported as "wild" Eurasian Collared-Doves are more likely to be

commonly bred domestic doves that have escaped. This may be an irritating problem without an answer unless every aspect of the bird is considered. An important paper describing the pitfalls is Smith 1987.

Northern Hawk-Owl (*Surnia ulula*). One along Interstate 80 between mile markers 144-145, Centre, 15 January 2000 (446-01-1999) 3/4 after two rounds. All members considered the record most likely correct, and the observation was made by an experienced observer. Nevertheless, the bird was seen only in passing at highway speed, and the majority felt that a "drive-by" of this nature was not satisfactory in principle for acceptance of such a Pennsylvania rarity.

Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*). One at Schuylkill Haven, Schuylkill, 13 May 1997 (463-01-1997) 4/3 after two rounds. One at Stone Jug Road, Adams, 8 May 1999 (463-01-1999) 2/5. For the Schuylkill County bird, the dissenters considered the written description of the call not wholly consistent with this species. For the Adams County bird, the majority noted that the documentation did not describe the call.

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*). One in Boyertown, Berks 15 September-31 December 1998 (495-01-1998) 4/3 after two rounds. Accepted as Rufous/Allen's. No written description accompanied the photographs submitted. This was a male, but Committee members disagreed about whether enough of the back was visible to conclusively separate it from an "orange-rumped" variant of Allen's, and the three who felt that not enough was visible were too large a minority for acceptance.

Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*). One in Jobs Corner, Tioga, 9-12 June 2000 (496-01-2000) 0/7. The Committee considered the description as offering insufficient details to solve the extremely difficult problem of distinguishing Allen's from Rufous, though the bird's display flight was indeed indicative of Allen's. Most hummingbird experts caution

against separating the two species without close inspection and measurement of selected retrices. A useful reference is Heidcamp 1997.

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*). One collected at Schnecksville, Lehigh, 23 December 1966 (535-01-1966) 3/4. The specimen, now in the State Museum in Harrisburg, was sent to Ned K. Johnson, the foremost expert on Empidonax flycatchers, for his opinion. In a personal reply to Committee Chair Ed Kwater in 1994, Johnson concluded that it was "probably (but not certainly) correctly identified" as a Hammond's. A majority of the Committee considered this expert's uncertainty a significant reason not to accept the record.

Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*). Two at Moraine S.P., Mercer, 25 November 1999 (576-01-1999) 3/4. This would have been a first state record, but a majority of the Committee considered the quality of the sighting - through no fault of the observer - insufficient for conclusive identification. The late November date was consistent with a pattern of Cave Swallow vagrancy to the northeast tht fall, but unfortunately the birds could be viewed only in heavy overcast and steady rain at a distance no closer than 100 yards.

Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*). One at Memorial Lake, Lebanon, 19 October 1998 (646-02-1997) 4/3 after two rounds. The members voting against acceptance felt that the bird was likely this species but were concerned that a key field mark, the tail, was not described.

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*). One at Hoffman Heights Road, Westmoreland, 15 January 2000 (650-01-2000) 3/4. Several points concerned those who voted not to accept the record: the brevity of the observation; the fact that the entire bird could not be seen (the tail was hidden); and a description of a "pinkish wash" on the gray breast, which is not consistent with the species; and absence of a discussion about how the possibility of a dull first-winter female Eastern Bluebird was eliminated.

Swainson's Warbler (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*). One at Celery Swamp, Mercer, 9 May 1998 (756-01-1998) 5/2 after two rounds. The two dissenting voters felt that the bird was probably this species, but that the description was not sufficient for conclusive acceptance.

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*). One at Jobs Corner, Tioga, 8 June 1999 (782-02-1999) 0/7. The members considered the details insufficient to rule out other tanagers, as well as other species besides tanagers.

Clay-colored Sparrow* (*Spizella pallida*). One heard at Piney Tract, Clarion, 15-16 April 1998 (814-01-1998) 3/4 after two rounds. Those voting not to accept the record felt that the bird was probably this species, and in fact was confirmed nesting there later, but that the description provided for this individual bird did not rule out other species. A juvenile at Piney Tract, Clarion, 15-25 July 1998 (814-03-1998) 2/5 after two rounds. A majority of the members believed that the bird photographed was probably a juvenile Clay-colored but that a Chipping Sparrow could not be eliminated conclusively. However, in retrospect, those records were clearly correct. The Committee congratulates observer John Fedak for the patient and careful study that led to his discovery of a nest confirming the first breeding record in Pennsylvania. The record is documented in Fedak 1999.

Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*). One at Callensburg, Clarion, 6 June 1998 (858-01-1998) 1/6 after two rounds. One at Lake Twp., Mercer, 13 March 2000 (858-01-2000) 1/6. In both cases the majority felt that the brief descriptions of the birds' vocalizations were insufficient to evaluate the record adequately. In general, recordings of the song and especially the call are necessary for conclusive evidence of a Western Meadowlark in the east.

Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). Two at Pennsy Swamp, Mercer, 13 November 1999 (861-05-1999) 1/6 after two rounds. One female at PISP, Erie, 17 October

1999 (861-07-1999) 1/6. In both cases the majority felt that the descriptions pointed toward Brewer's, but that a lack of details such as bill shape and size left the birds inconclusively separated from other blackbird species.

Hoary Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*). One at Piney Tract, Clarion, 25 January 1998 (887-01-1998) 2/5 after two rounds. This species is always difficult to gain the Committee's acceptance. A majority of the members felt that this record was probably correct, but that a lack of descriptions of two important characters-- the bill size and shape, and the undertail coverts -- left the separation from a pale Common Redpoll inconclusive. An excellent reference on identifying the two redpoll species is Czaplak 1995.

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED because they represent or may represent an escapee or an introduced species not yet established in Pennsylvania. IDENTIFICATION ACCEPTED.

Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*). One at Codorus S.P., York, 20 January 1999 (AS; 115-01-1999). One at Green Lane Reservoir, Montgomery, 26 November 1999 (115-02-1999).

Trumpeter Swan (*Tachycineta bicolor*). One 3 miles south of Leesburg, Lawrence, 3-13 May 1999 (RSt; 105-03-1999). One at Moraine S.P., Butler, 15 July-15 October 1999 (PH, WS(ph)); 105-04-1999). Photograph published in PB 13:145.

European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*). One at Braden Road, Beaver, 4 March 1999 (ER; 892-01-1999). Photograph published in PB 13:32. One in Mifflin Twp., Clinton, 5 April 1999 (LF; 892-02-1999). Photograph published in PB 13:94.

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PORC Review List - June 2001

The Review List contains species that are considered rare or accidental in Pennsylvania. PORC requests details, including descriptions, photos or video/sound recordings if possible, of all records of the following species for the committee to review for possible inclusion onto the official state list into the ornithological history of Pennsylvania. Please note county exemptions

Review List A - rarities

Pacific Loon
Northern Fulmar
Black-capped Petrel
Cory's Shearwater
Leach's Storm-Petrel
Northern Gannet
Brown Pelican
Great Cormorant (*exempt in Bucks, Delaware, Philadelphia*)
Anhinga
Magnificent Frigatebird
Tricolored Heron
Cattle Egret
White Ibis
Glossy Ibis
Roseate Spoonbill
Wood Stork
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck
Pink-footed Goose
Greater White-fronted Goose (*exempt in Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Montgomery, Philadelphia*)
Ross's Goose (*exempt in Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon*)
Montgomery, Philadelphia
Cinnamon Teal
Eurasian Wigeon (*male only exempt*)
Tufted Duck
King Eider
Harlequin Duck
Barrow's Goldeneye
Masked Duck
American Swallow-tailed Kite
Mississippi Kite
Swainson's Hawk
Gyr Falcon
Yellow Rail
Black Rail
Clapper Rail
King Rail
Spotted Rail
Purple Gallinule
Snowy Plover
Wilson's Plover
Piping Plover
American Oystercatcher
Black-necked Stilt

Whimbrel (*Erie exempt*)
Black-tailed Godwit
Hudsonian Godwit
Marbled Godwit
Surfbird
Red Knot
Purple Sandpiper (*Erie exempt*)
Buff-breasted Sandpiper
Ruff
Red-necked Phalarope
Red Phalarope
Pomarine Jaeger
Parasitic Jaeger
Laughing Gull (*exempt in Erie and the lower Delaware and Susquehanna rivers*)
Franklin's Gull (*Erie exempt*)
Little Gull (*Erie exempt*)
Black-headed Gull
Mew Gull
Thayer's Gull
Black-legged Kittiwake
Ross's Gull
Sabine's Gull
Gull-billed Tern
Royal Tern
Roseate Tern
Arctic Tern
Least Tern
Sooty Tern
Black Skimmer
Dovekie
Thick-billed Murre
Ancient Murrelet
Band-tailed Pigeon
Eurasian Collared-Dove
White-winged Dove
Common Ground-Dove
Northern Hawk Owl
Great Gray Owl
Boreal Owl
Chuck-will's-widow
Rufous Hummingbird
Black-backed Woodpecker
Pacific-slope Flycatcher
Say's Phoebe
Vermilion Flycatcher
Western Kingbird
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
Loggerhead Shrike
Violet-green Swallow
Boreal Chickadee
Bewick's Wren
Sedge Wren
Northern Wheatear
Mountain Bluebird
Townsend's Solitaire
Bicknell's Thrush
Varied Thrush
Bohemian Waxwing
Black-throated Gray Warbler
Townsend's Warbler
Kirtland's Warbler

Swainson's Warbler
Summer Tanager (*exempt in Greene*)
Western Tanager
Green-tailed Towhee
Spotted Towhee
Lark Sparrow
Lark Bunting
LeConte's Sparrow
Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Seaside Sparrow
Harris' Sparrow
Golden-crowned Sparrow
Black-headed Grosbeak
Blue Grosbeak (*exempt in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Philadelphia and York*)
Lazuli Bunting
Painted Bunting
Western Meadowlark
Yellow-headed Blackbird
Brewer's Blackbird
Bullock's Oriole
Brambling
Pine Grosbeak
Hoary Redpoll

Review List B - Extirpated Species

Greater Prairie-Chicken
Eskimo Curlew
Brown-headed Nuthatch
Bachman's Sparrow.

Recognizable forms and subspecies

"Black" Brant (*Branta bernicla nigricans*)
small races of Canada Goose
Green-winged (Common) Teal (*Anas crecca crecca*)
"Eastern" Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus semipalmatus*)
Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler (*Dendroica coronata auduboni*)
White-crowned (Gambel's) Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*)
Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco (*Junco hyemalis mearnsi*)
Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco (*Junco hyemalis thurberi*)
Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco (*Junco hyemalis aikeni*)

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Sighting Report Excerpts

The following are excerpts of interesting reports received this quarter.

Glossy Ibis

Devich Farbotnik

Date: 8/2-3/2001

Location: Rohn & Haas Co., Bristol, Bucks

Conditions: Cloudy with drizzle and light rain and occasional sun. Seen with binoculars and scope at about 800 feet.

Behavior & Habitat: On both nights, the bird flew in and landed on mudflats in a water impoundment.

Description: An ibis that was dark all over indicating an adult, was seen after sunset on both days. As it flew in, the typical long neck with decurved bill and trailing long legs and feet were clearly seen. With the scope, the dark face with pale thin white border on top and bottom in front of the eye could be seen. The eye was dark.

Similar Species: Since it was an adult, the date would indicate the bird should still be in breeding plumage, so the dark face with very fine lighter border in front of the eye would eliminate White-faced Ibis. No sign of reddish eye could be seen against dark face as well.

(Documentation and video submitted to PORC.) ✂

Whimbrel

Cameron Rutt

Date: August 10, 2001, 4:30-6:30 PM

Location: In cut grass in a retention pond behind the Clemens Food Market in Quakertown, Bucks

Conditions: Very overcast with a slight wind and drizzle at times. Seen at about 60 feet with binoculars and scope.

Behavior and Habitat: This bird definitely seemed to prefer the grassy area compared to the pond. When I first flushed it, it flew to the edge of the pond, and then flew again to the

opposite shore. But instead of feeding there, it quickly started to disappear into the weedy vegetation to the back of the pond. After this it moved back to its original feeding area which was a plot of 4-5 inch grass. The Whimbrel would walk one direction plucking (probably grasshoppers) from the grass as it would go, then would turn and go the other direction doing the same thing.

Description: This Whimbrel was in worn adult plumage. It was a fairly big shorebird with mottled brown upperparts (scapulars, mantle, coverts). It had a brown streaked breast and a fairly long decurved black bill. The bird had dark legs as well as dark eyes. The face and crown had a very unique pattern. It had a black eye-line bordered by a light supercilium with a dark cap interrupted in the middle by a pale median crown stripe. It also appeared to have a lighter area below the eye-line. This bird was observed in flight four times. Its upperparts in flight were basically brownish overall, lighter at points, but showed no white, buff, etc. Each time it flew it called a loud, quick "whi, whi, whi, whi, whi", that was sharp and basically stayed on one pitch.

Similar Species: Bristle-thighed Curlew has buff patch on rump, flight call also differs. Long-billed Curlew has longer bill (usually by a fair amount), more buffy overall, plain crown, orange/buff underwing and secondaries as well as some primaries. European/Siberian Whimbrel has a white upper rump. Eskimo Curlew is smaller with cinnamon/buff wing linings. Little Curlew is smaller, has an incomplete eye-line (pale lores) and straighter bill. Far Eastern Curlew has a longer bill and no distinctive head and crown pattern. Eurasian Curlew has no distinctive head and crown pattern and has a white rump.

(Documentation and video submitted to PORC.) ✂

Hudsonian Godwit

Jerry McWilliams

Date: 8/26/2001, 4:30-5:45 PM

Location: Presque Isle State Park

Conditions: Cloudy, wind westerly, good viewing conditions. Observed with binoculars and scope.

Description: Looking across Thompson flats from beach 11 I saw an adult Hudsonian Godwit in pre-basic plumage. The godwit was noticeably larger than some nearby Greater Yellowlegs. The basal third of the slightly upturned bill was pink and the remainder of the bill was black. The upperside of the bird was gray with dark blotching. The upper breast and flanks were gray-brown. The lower breast, belly, and undertail coverts were white with patches of chestnut and barring scattered throughout. It had a white supercilium being most prominent above and in front of the eye. The legs were long and entirely dark gray. The bird flew a short distance a few times and showed black flight feathers with a prominent narrow white wing stripe. The rump was white and the entire tail was black. The underwing coverts (wing linings) were distinctly black ruling out Black-tailed Godwit. The black flight feathers and tail as well as the white wing stripe and rump, strongly contrasted against the over all gray body plumage of the godwit when it was in flight. (See photograph in Photo Highlights section). I have seen several Hudsonian Godwits in Pennsylvania and a few along the Atlantic Coast.

(Photographs and documentation submitted to PORC.) ✂

Black-throated Gray Warbler (adult male)

Rick Fridell

Date: 9/8/2001, seen for 5-8 minutes around 2:40 PM

Location: Presque Isle State Park, Erie

Description: Head and face boldly patterned with a black crown, white supercilium, black auriculars, white cheeks, black throat and yellow supraloral spots. Back dark gray. Wings dark gray with two prominent white wing bars. Sides white with bold black streaks. Belly and undertail coverts white, underside of tail white with dark outer side edges. (I did not note top of tail characterls). Legs and bill black.

Warbler was foraging within the canopy of Scotch or Austrian Pines, gleaning and hover-gleaning among mostly dead branches. We did not hear any vocalizations from this warbler. The warbler was among a loose flock of Black-capped Chickadees and Red-breasted Nuthatches. Kristen Cornella and I observed the warbler together for approximately 3 minutes. Kristen then went down the trail to attempt to find Ben Coulter and some other birders. I watched the warbler for approximately another 5 minutes until I lost track of it as it moved through the pines to the west. Unfortunately we could not relocate the warbler when Kristen, Ben and the others returned.

Similar Species: This is a very distinct warbler. Pattern is similar to Black-throated Green and Townsends Warbler, however these were ruled out by a complete lack of yellow other than small face spots. Black-and-white Warbler was ruled out because of complete black crown (no white medial stripe), and pure white undertail coverts. Breeding male Blackpoll Warbler was ruled out by season, and face pattern and leg color.

(Documentation submitted to PORC.) ✎

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow
August Mirabella

Date: 9/16/2001

Location: Peace Valley Park, near Doylestown, Bucks

Conditions: Seen with binoculars at 15-30 feet

Behavior and Habitat: The bird was at the edge of a large field with about foot high weeds of various types. The edge had taller goldenrod mixed with clumps of multiflora rose and other thickets. Also, patches of wetland rushes and sedges were within 15 feet. As I walked the edge, about five sparrows flushed up into a multiflora rose. It only stayed up for a few seconds and went down. I was able to get it in view one more time for another few seconds before it went down and stayed down.

Description: The first view was its back, which I noticed to be brightly patterned with white, chestnut, and black. It was very sharply marked and I knew it was not a regularly occurring species. I then noticed that as it turned its head toward me, it had small bright orange spots irregularly located on the lores, supercilium, and malar area. The crown was dark with a center gray median stripe. The second view was a direct front view. I was startled by the pale to medium orange breast that had a very sharply defined break with the clean white belly. The breast had dull parallel streaking against the orange breast. Each streak was fairly continuous from the top to bottom of the breast. I don't remember the flanks possibly because I never got a side view. The spotty nature of the orange on the face was surprising and I can not explain it other than the bird may have still been molting. I originally thought the bird was an "Atlantic" form as shown in Sibley because of the dull streaking but the brightness of the face spots and back now leads me to believe it may have been the "Interior" form or an intergrade between the two.

Similar Species: Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow would not have the sharp break between the breast and belly and would have more sharply defined breast streaks.

(Documentation submitted to PORC.) ✎

ERRATA

In Volume 15, No. 2;

Nick Kerlin retired as the compiler for Sullivan County, not Susquehanna.