

**EIGHTEENTH REPORT**  
**of the**  
**PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE**  
**February 2011**  
**Nick Pulcinella for the Committee**

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The Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (hereafter “PORC” or “the committee”) evaluates and archives documentation it receives of any species or recognizable form that is on the Review List for Pennsylvania. In addition it reviews documentation for new species or new subspecies for the state. This report covers 55 records of 39 species. The 41 records accepted represent an acceptance rate of 75%.

Highlights in this report include, the first records for Western Grebe and Allen’s Hummingbird and the fourth records for Pink-footed Goose, Brown Pelican, Ash-throated Flycatcher and Lazuli Bunting. The addition of Western Grebe and Allen’s Hummingbird brings the state total to 415 species (Pulcinella 2006).

PORC encourages observers to document their sightings with photographs, videos or sound recordings when possible, but also urges observers to submit accompanying written documentation. Supporting written documentation may add details such as missing field marks or behavior notes that are not captured in some photos. The Committee continues to emphasize that the primary point of any documentation of a rare bird should be a detailed written description. There are several well written articles on documenting rare birds and observers are encouraged to consult the Committee’s web pages at <www.pabirds.org>, Dittman and Lasley 1992, and PORC 2000.

The Committee would like to emphasize the importance of submitting documentation directly to PORC. The posting of reports, including written details and photographs, on listservs or websites or blogs may not safely be assumed to have been discovered by PORC nor be assumed to be understood as documentation of a rarity.

Documentation can be submitted to **Nick Pulcinella, PORC Secretary, 613 Howard Road, West Chester, PA 19380, nickpulcinella@verizon.net.**

#### **Committee News**

The Committee membership and year of term expiration during this report period consisted of Ben Coulter (2013), Al Guarente (2012) (chair), Jonathan Heller (2011), Tom Johnson (2012), Geoff Malosh (2012), Cameron Rutt (2011) and Rick Wiltraut (2010). Nick Pulcinella (2011) is the non-voting secretary. Former members, Eric Witmer, Jerry Stanley and Kevin Fryberger voted on one or more records in this report. During this report period, Cameron Rutt took a temporary leave to assist with ornithological research overseas and was replaced by Dave DeReamus.

At the committee’s 2010 meeting, Ben Coulter was re-elected to additional three-year term. Rick Wiltraut rotated off the committee and was replaced by Dave DeReamus (2013). PORC thanks Rick for his six years of dedicated service. Al Guarente was elected chair for an additional year and Nick Pulcinella was re-elected non-voting Secretary for an additional one year term.

The Committee has a presence on the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology web site at <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 regarding the functions of the Committee.

#### **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, (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.

*Class IV-A:* A record for which there exists a majority of evidence in support of the observer’s identification; the record is probably correct, but not beyond reasonable doubt.

*Class IV-B:* A record for which there exists insufficient evidence for evaluation.

*Class IV-C:* A record for which there exists a majority of evidence in favor of an identification other than what was submitted.

*Class V:* The identification is correct, but the bird represents or may represent an escape or an introduced bird not yet established in Pennsylvania.

#### **Format of this Report:**

The records are arranged taxonomically following the American Ornithologists’ Union Check-list of North American Birds (AOU 1998) and supplements. The number in parentheses after the species name represents the number of accepted records, including those in this report, since the establishment of PORC in 1989. A (+) after the number signifies accepted historical records prior to the formation of PORC. Each accepted record includes the locality and county and date(s) when known. In many cases, dates are taken from the seasonal reports published in *Pennsylvania Birds*. Enclosed in parentheses following the date are the name(s) of the observer(s) responsible for finding and/or identifying the bird, if known, followed by a semicolon, then the names of those who submitted documentation (in alphabetical order). 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. An (\*) after a species name indicates that the species is no longer on the PORC review list.

**Abbreviations:** Christmas Bird Count (CBC), *North American Birds* (NAB), National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), *Pennsylvania Birds* (PB); Reservoir (Res.), State Game Lands (SGL), State Park (S.P.), Township (Twp.), Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

**Pink-footed Goose** (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) (4)

One adult at Lake Muhlenberg, *Lehigh*, 21-22 December 2009. (Matt Loyko (p); Peter Saenger, Robert Hoopes; Class I-P; 108-01-2004). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V24:38. Loyko went to Lake Muhlenberg to search for Cackling Geese and instead was rewarded with the state's fourth Pink-footed Goose. The bird was re-found the following day at Dorney Pond but not seen subsequently.

**Green-winged Teal (Eurasian)** (*Anas crecca*) (8+)

One in Newtown Twp., *Bucks*, 9 March-24 April 2009. (William Keim; Gerry Dewaghe (p); Class I-P; 119a-01-2009). 7/0. One Newtown Twp., *Bucks*, 4-8 December 2009. (William Keim; Ed Norman (p); Class I-P; 119a-02-2009). 6/1. Photograph published in PB V24:38. Both sightings were from Hidden Lake raising the possibility that the second report may be of a returning individual.

**Western Grebe** (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) (1)

One at Mechanicsburg, *Cumberland*, 14-21 February 2009. (Barry Horton; m.ob.; Class I-P; Chuck Berthoud, Dale Bicksler (p), Dave DeReamus (p), Mike Fialkovich, Pam Fisher, Geoff Malosh (p), Bob Moul (p), Eric Witmer (p); 010-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:36 and NAB V63:255. This first state record was found in the company of a Red-necked Grebe on the wooded Conodoguinet Creek, a location one would not expect to find either species. Pennsylvania birders had speculated that this species would be confirmed on one of the state's large lakes or at Presque Isle, so most were shocked at the location of this sighting.



Image 1. Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*). The state's first of this species was this cooperative bird (shown here with Red-necked Grebe at left) at an unlikely location on the Conodoguinet Creek in *Cumberland* 14-21 February 2009. (Dave DeReamus)

**Brown Pelican** (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) (4)

One adult on the Susquehanna River near Peach Bottom, *Lancaster*, 3 August 2009. (Bob Schutsky; Dave DeReamus (p), m.obs; Class I-P; 067-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:203. This bird had been seen the previous day on the Susquehanna River in Maryland only a few miles south of Pennsylvania, and a dedicated search for this bird 8/3 by Schutsky returned high dividends.

**White Ibis** (*Eudocimus albus*) (16+)

One immature at Picture Rocks, *Lycoming*, 7 August 2009. (Chris Maneval (p), Tessa Maneval; Wes Egli (p), David Ferry (p); Class I-P; 093-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published

in PB V23:203 and NAB V64:72. One immature Shenango Lake, *Mercer*, 1 September 2009. (Tom Moeller (p); Class I-P; 093-02-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:203. This species continues to be annual during late summer and early fall in PA. These two interior sightings should alert observers that species can show up away from the "usual" southeastern and southcentral counties.

**Wood Stork** (*Mycteria americana*) (7)

One over the Militia Hill Hawkwatch, *Montgomery*, 25 October 2009. (Andy Fayer, Jamie Stewart (p); Class I-P; 099-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:204. Lucky observers at the Hawkwatch were stunned to see this bird fly over but still able to capture a photo.

**Swallow-tailed Kite** (*Elanoides forficatus*) (13+)

One at Tyler Arboretum, *Delaware*, 24 September 2008. (Gerri Peevers, Lorraine Pryor; Class III; 168-02-2008). 5/2, 6/1. One at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center, *Erie*, 20 April 2009. (Jerry McWilliams; Class I-P; 168-01-2009). 7/0. One at Ft. Washington State Park, *Montgomery*, 27 August-5 September 2009. (Naomi Murphy; Devich Fartbotnik (p), Todd Fellenbaum (p), m.obs; Class I; 168-02-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:204 and NAB V64:73. The *Erie* bird was a first county record and probably a first for northwestern Pennsylvania. The *Montgomery* bird was most obliging during its nine-day stay by making daily prolonged and close appearances near the Militia Hill Hawkwatch. This record, together with the *Delaware* sighting, is part of an increasing pattern of fall reports.



Image 2. Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*). This bird, present 27 August-5 September 2009 near the Militia Hill Hawkwatch at Fort Washington S.P., *Montgomery*, was seen by dozens during its stay. Photographed here 31 August. (Todd Fellenbaum)

**Mississippi Kite** (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) (22+)

One first summer at Promised Land S.P., *Pike*, 23 May 2009. (Kevin Loughlin (p); Class I-P; 171-02-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:100. One over Lansdale, *Montgomery* 18 September 2009. (Ken Reiker; Class III; 171-04-2009). 5/2, 7/0. Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, *Berks*, 15 August 2009. (David Hughes, Robert Goodheart; Class III; 171-05-2009). 6/1.

**Swainson's Hawk** (*Buteo swainsoni*) (4+)

One immature intermediate phase over Rose Tree Park Hawkwatch, *Delaware*, 13 October 2008. (Jim Lockyer; Class III; 186-01-2008). 5/2, 6/1. This species continues to be one of



the more difficult to document. With the exception of a 1901 specimen, all documentation submitted to date has been of written reports of birds in flight usually passing a hawkwatch. With the presence of numerous cameras at hawkwatches, an identifiable photo of this species is high on the committee's wish list.

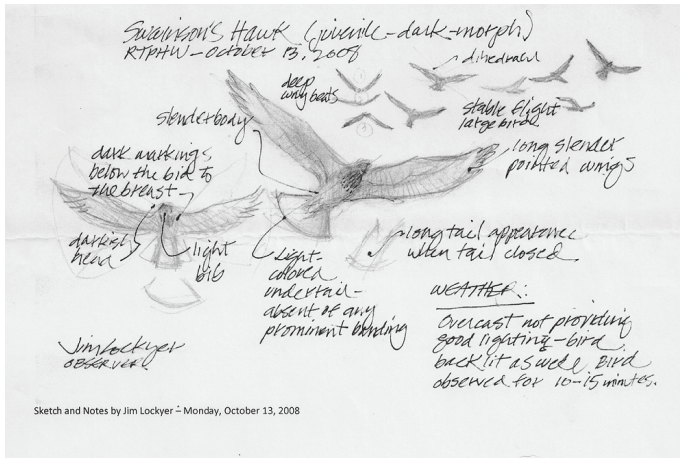


Image 3. Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*). Sketch submitted as part of the documentation for this bird that was observed passing the Rose Tree Park Hawkwatch, Delaware 13 October 2008. (Jim Lockyer)

#### Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*) (15+)

An adult with colored leg bands at Presque Isle S.P., Erie, 4 May 2009. (Julie Dell, Kathleen Ryan; Class III; 261-01-2009). 6/1. Another colored banded adult was at Shawnee S.P., Bedford, 9 May 2009. (Debbie Bodenschatz; Class I-P; 261-02-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:100. Both birds are most likely part of the small Great Lakes breeding population.



Image 4. Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*). This bird on the Kreider Farm pond near Annville, Lebanon 15-18 May 2009 (here 15 May) provided excitement for many who attended the PSO Meeting in nearby Morgantown. (Larry Usselman)

#### Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) (12+)

One adult at the Kreider Farm Pond near Annville, Lebanon, 15-18 May 2009. (Ramsay Koury, Chad Kauffman; Tom Johnson (p), Larry Usselman (p), et al.; Class I-P; 268-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:100. Two adult on the Conejohela Flats, Lancaster, 10 June 2009. (Chuck Chalfant, Pam Fisher (p); et al; Class I-P; 268-02-2009). 7/0. Mid-May continues to be the best time to look for this species

in Pennsylvania.

#### Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*) (19+)

One adult was observed at Laurel Hill S.P., Somerset, 18 August 2009. (Steve Tucker; Class III; 360-01-2009). 7/0. The solid written report included "the combination of this bird's entirely dark 'hood', lack of eye arcs, black bill with yellow tip, and unique wing pattern" clearly eliminated all other hooded gull species from consideration. This is one of the few non-storm related records of this species for Pennsylvania.

#### Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) (22+)

One first cycle along the Delaware River at Easton, Northampton, 18-21 November 2009. (Dave DeReamus (p); et al., Class I-P; 340-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:206.

#### California Gull (*Larus californicus*) (8)

One adult was at the Lakeview Landfill, Erie, 23-25 February 2009. (Jerry McWilliams (p); Class I-P; 346-01-2009). 7/0. The bird was seen and photographed in direct comparison to adult Herring Gulls. The long yellow bill with a red and black spot on the lower mandible, dark eye, slightly darker mantle, unmarked white head, nape and undersides and greenish-yellow legs were all noted.

#### White-winged Dove (*Zenaidura asiatica*) (9)

One frequenting a feeder in Carlisle, Cumberland, 22-23 April 2009 was a first county record. (Herb Weigle, Kathy Weigle, Ramsay Koury, Billy Weber, Vern Gautheir; Class I-P; 413-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:103.

#### Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) (1)

An adult female in Leola, Lancaster, late 8/09-12/29/09. (Debra Raddenbush; Justin Bosler (p), Howard Eskin (p), Franklin Hass (p), Tom Johnson (p, r), Bob Moul (p), Scott Weidensaul (p), m.ob.); Class I-P; 496-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V24[1] cover & p.41, and NAB V64:352. Long overdue for Pennsylvania, this bird was trapped and banded 8 December by Weidensaul. In-hand photographs and crucial tail feather measurements solidified the identification. Similar to Rufous Hummingbird, but with a less frequent occurrence pattern, Allen's Hummingbird appears in the east beginning usually in mid-late October and there have been records from Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Ohio. In contrast, according to the homeowner, this bird was first noticed in early August! There have also been a few unidentified *Selasphorus* hummingbirds reported in mid-August in Pennsylvania.

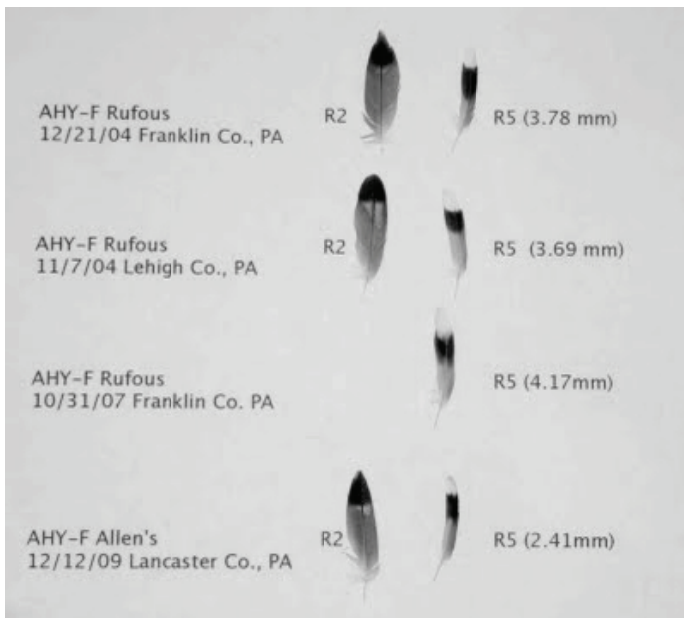
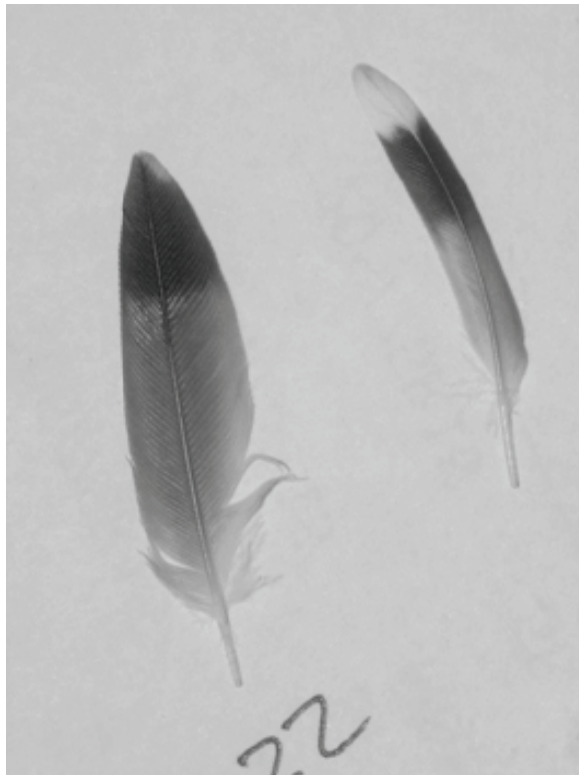
#### Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) (4)

Mt. Gretna, Lebanon, 20-28 November 2009. (Sid Hostetter; Chuck Berthoud (p), Jeffrey Davis (p), Mike Fialkovich (p), Geoff Malosh (p), Mike McKinne (p), Bob Moul (p), Drew Weber (p), m.ob.); Class I-P; 545-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23[4] cover & p.207. For further details see Miller 2009.

#### Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) (10+)

One observed at north lookout at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Berks, 20 September 2009. (David Barber (p); Class I-P; 650-01-2009). 6/1. In this age of digital photography, PORC seldom receives written documentation accompanying the images but this was one case where the solid written documentation supported the out-of-focus photograph. The

early date should alert observers of the possible occurrence of this species outside of its normal November-December pattern.



Images 5 and 6. Pennsylvania's first Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) generated a sizeable quantity of documentation including 17 photographs and several written descriptions. Two crucial pieces of documentation were the comparison photographs (immediately above) of the important two tail feathers (R5 and R2) which help distinguish and separate Rufous and Allen's Hummingbirds, and the single photo showing this bird's tail feathers (first above). The photos show the difference in size and shape of R5—narrow and "stiletto-like" in Allen's, and the shape of R2 which is distinctly "notched" in Rufous and either rounded or slightly "notched" in Allen's. Leola, Lancaster Co. 12 December 2009. (Scott Weidensaul)

**Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) (22+)**

One in Allentown, *Lehigh*, 30 January-22 March 2009. (Howard Eskin (p), Arlene Koch, et al; Class I-P; 666-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:38 and NAB V63:255. One at Peace Valley Park, *Bucks*, 22-25 December 2009. (Cameron Rutt; Devich Farbotnik (p), August Mirabella, et al; Class I-P; 666-02-2009). 7/0. The Allentown bird was on private property with restricted public access and was seen by only a few. The Peace Valley bird, although located in heavily birded park, proved to be difficult and unreliable to see during its short stay.

**Yellow-rumped "Audubon's" Warbler (*Dendroica coronata auduboni*) (5+)**

One was at Dorney Park, *Lehigh*, 16 January-23 March 2009. (Tom Johnson (p), Cameron Rutt, m.ob.; Class I-P; 736a-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:39 and NAB V63:354. Photos of this western subspecies of Yellow-rumped Warbler clearly show the yellow throat that separates this from the more common and expected "Myrtle" Warbler.

**Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*) (5+)**

Newville, *Cumberland*, 20-25 October 2009. (Vern Gauthier; Andy Markel (p), m.ob.; Class I-P; 737-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:208. A remarkable first *Cumberland* record and the first "tickable" for Pennsylvania since 2001, this cooperative bird was enjoyed by many from across the state. For more details see Gauthier 2009.

**Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* (14+)**

Butler, *Butler*, 28 January 2009. (Joshua Davis; Class III; 820-01-2009). 7/0. One was well described after it was observed several times at a backyard feeder and in fencerows in the company of American Tree and Song Sparrows. The written report described the "chestnut, black and white stripes and chestnut ear patch" a single dark "breast spot" and when in flight a "long tail with white outer tail feathers."



Image 7. Le Conte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*). This long-staying bird, present 25 January – 1 March 2009 at the Darlington Tract, *Delaware*, provided the first known over-wintering record for Pennsylvania. For a species that is usually "hard-to-photograph", 32 photos were submitted to PORC as well as several written reports. Photographed here 29 January. (Jim Lockyer)

**Le Conte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*) (8)**

One at the Darlington Tract, *Delaware*, 25 January-1 March 2009 was a first county record. (Al Guarente; Howard Eskin



(p), Devich Farbotnik (p), Mike Fialkovich (p), Jim Lockyer (p), Dustin Welch (p), m.ob.; Class I-P; 829-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:34 & 39 and NAB V63:354. Usually a “skulker”, this particularly accommodating individual obliged many a birder with good looks and close photographs many of which were submitted to the committee to support the sighting. This is also the first mid-winter record for Pennsylvania. For further details see Guarente 2009.

**White-crowned (Gambel's) Sparrow** (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) (9+)

One visiting feeders at Peace Valley Park, *Bucks*, 24 October 2008-3 January 2009. (August Mirabella, Howard Eskin (p), et al; Class I-P; 838a-02-2008). 7/0. This might have been a returning individual as one was seen at this location in March 2008.

**Harris's Sparrow** (*Zonotrichia querula*) (13)

An adult at a feeder in Beech Creek, *Clinton*, 7 January-24 February 2009 was a first county record. (Wayne Laubscher (p), et al.; Class I-P; 839-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:40. An immature in Steelville, *Lancaster*, 10-26 April 2009 was a first for *Lancaster*. (Chuck Chalfant; Pam Fisher, Tom Raub (p), Drew Weber (p); Class I-P; 839-02-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:105. The Steelville bird was especially accommodating to the many birders who visited the area as it gave direct comparisons to the numerous White-crowned and White-throated Sparrows with which it associated.



Image 8. Harris's Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*). This immature was present in Steelville, *Lancaster* 10-26 April 2009 where it spent most of its time feeding in the open with White-crowned Sparrows. Photographed here 25 April. (Pam Fisher)

**Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco** (*Junco hyemalis oregonus*) (8+)

One male was at West York, *York*, 22 November 2009. (Bob Moul (p); Class I-P; 840a-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:208. Another male was at Kirkridge, *Northampton*, 13 December 2009. (Jake Mohlmann (p); Class I-P; 840a-02-2009). 7/0. Both birds were observed visiting feeders. This subspecies is probably an annual winter visitor and observing birds at feeding stations seems to be the best way to find this species in Pennsylvania. The Dark-eyed Junco complex can be confusing with some immature “Slate-colored” Juncos showing some varying amounts of brown or pinkish tinged plumage and erroneously called “Oregon” or

“Pink-sided” Juncos. Photographs of both of these accepted records show striking adult males with clearly demarcated black hoods.

**Western Tanager** (*Piranga ludoviciana*) (8+)

One breeding plumaged male visiting a feeder in Waterford, *Erie*, 4-5 May 2008. (Toby Cunningham (p); Class I; 782-02-2008). 7/0. Photo published in NAB V62:407. This was the second spring record for 2008 (Pulcinella 2010).



Image 9. Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*). With nine years between sightings, this male in breeding plumage present in Waterford, *Erie* 4-5 May 2008 (here 4 May) was the second record for 2008. (Toby Cunningham)

**Lazuli Bunting** (*Passerina amoena*) (4)

One male was at a feeder in Catawissa, *Columbia*, 29 January-8 February 2009. (John Slotterback, Sally Slotterback, William Brown et al; Class I-P; 791-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:104. After an absence of sightings from 1975-2004, this species has been recorded three times since.

**Western Meadowlark** (*Sturnella neglecta*) (5+)

One singing individual was in Lykens, *Dauphin*, 5 April-21 May 2009. (Chester Zook, Chad Kauffman (p) (v), m.ob.; Class I-R; 858-01-2009). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V23:105. In the video documentation submitted by Kauffman the bird can be heard singing. See Troyer 2009 for further details.

**Hoary Redpoll** (*Carduelis hornemanni*) (9+)

One female seen with a flock of about 100 Common Redpolls at Presque Isle S.P., *Erie*, 14-15 February 2009. (Jerry McWilliams, Ben Coulter (p); Class I-P; 887-01-2009). 6/1. Separating Hoary and Common Redpolls can be difficult, but the photos and written reports submitted supported the identification based on the extensively white flanks with little streaking, the frosty appearance and extensive whitish rump. Photos showed the bird in direct comparison to Common Redpolls. To aid with redpoll identification observers are encouraged to read Czaplak 1995, Eckert 1997, Millington 1996, Sibley 2008, and Stoddart 1991.

**RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED, identification not established** (Votes are listed as for/against. A vote of 6/1 or 7/0 is required for acceptance). A number of factors contribute to a report being denied acceptance. It is very rare for a report to not be accepted because the bird was obviously

misidentified. More commonly, a report is not accepted because the documentation submitted was incomplete, insufficient or too vague to properly identify the reported occurrence while eliminating all other similar species. The Committee again stresses the importance of taking field notes either while the bird is under study or immediately afterwards. It is worth noting that written reports prepared entirely from memory weeks, months, or years after the sighting are rarely voted on favorably. The non-acceptance of any report reflects the opinion of the committee that the documentation, as submitted, did not meet the meticulous standards needed for adding the report to the official historical record. If the committee is unsure of a specific report, it prefers to err on the conservative side and not accept a good record rather than endorse a bad one. *It is important to note that non-acceptance by no means indicates that PORC or any of its members feel the record did not occur as reported.* All records whether accepted or not remain on file and can be re-submitted for review if additional material is presented.

#### **King Eider** (*Somateria spectabilis*)

A distant female seen in flight passing Presque Isle S.P., Erie, 30 December 2008. Class IV-A; 145-01-2008. 4/3, 1/5. Most members did not feel that this distant bird could positively be identified as this species based mostly on size. The committee did agree that the bird should be accepted as eider species.

#### **Magnificent Frigatebird** (*Fregata magnificens*)

One flying over Blue Marsh Lake, Berks, 20 September 2008. Class IV-A, 075-01-2008. 5/2, 4/3. One over the Militia Hill Hawkwatch, Montgomery 20 September 2008. Class IV-A, 075-02-2008. 4/3, 4/3. Both birds were seen following the passage of Hurricane Ike out of the Gulf of Mexico. Though the identifications were likely correct, the written reports and in the case of the Militia Hill bird, the distant photos did not adequately eliminate the similar Great Frigatebird or Lesser Frigatebird, which have been documented in the mainland United States three and four times, respectively. In the case of Lesser Frigatebird, it has been documented as close as Maine. The committee felt the descriptions and photos adequately supported the reports being accepted as Frigatebird species.

#### **Swallow-tailed Kite** (*Elanoides forficatus*)

One in flight over Cornwall, Lebanon, 20 September 2009, Class IV-A, 168-03-2009. 0/6. Though likely correct for such an unmistakable bird, there was very little detail as too the description in the report submitted.

#### **Mississippi Kite** (*Ictinia mississippiensis*)

One near the Breezy View Overlook, Lancaster, 31 May-2 June 2009. Class IV-C; 171-01-2009. 2/5. One in flight over the Pennsy Swamp, Mercer, 13 May 2009; Class IV-B; 171-03-2009. 0/7. The Lancaster was problematic as there were multiple reports of this bird on the PABIRDS listserv by several observers, but the only documentation submitted (a photograph) was not of this species. The Mercer report did not contain a plumage description. Mississippi Kite continues to be a species with a high non-acceptance rate, though that rate is decreasing. Similar species such as Northern Harrier or one of the falcon species seem to cause confusion. In addition, it appears that if a raptor cannot be adequately identified, Mississippi Kite becomes the default

species. Observers are directed to Johnson 2007 for identification keys.

#### **Long-billed Curlew** (*Numenius americanus*)

One in flight over Presque Isle S.P., Erie 26 July 2009. Class IV-B, 291-01-2009. 2/5. The written report was scant on plumage details for such a mega-rarity.

#### **Arctic Tern** (*Sterna paradisaea*)

One adult in breeding plumage at Lake Wallenpaupack 24 October 2009, Class IV-A, 369-01-2009. 3/4. Though likely correct, most members felt the identification challenge of separating medium sized Sterna (Arctic, Common, Forster's, Roseate) was not adequately accomplished with the documentation submitted.

#### **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** (*Tyrannus forficatus*)

One in Overfield Twp., Wyoming, 26 April 2009; Class IV-B, 561-01-2009. 2/5. The report did not provide enough detail to adequately assess the sighting.

#### **Bohemian Waxwing** (*Bombycilla garrulosa*)

One at the Piney Tract, Clarion, 8 June 2009; Class IV-B, 694-01-2009. 1/6. The description was suggestive of this species but there was no mention of the undertail coverts, a key feature in eliminating the expected Cedar Waxwing. Committee members were also troubled by the unexpected date and felt that a photograph would be needed to accept a record of this magnitude.

#### **Bullock's Oriole** (*Icterus bullockii*)

One immature/female type in Bethlehem, Northampton, 11 January 2006-7 April 2006; Class IV-A, 874a-01-2006. 4/3, 5/2, 5/2. During the second round of voting it was suggested that this report be sent for review outside of the committee since there was some speculation that the bird was a hybrid Bullocks/Baltimore Oriole. After the outside opinion was received and circulated, most members continued to feel that the bird was most likely a Bullock's Oriole but the photos showed characters that are inconsistent with pure Bullock's including the dark/dusky markings on the pale gray back. Six affirmative votes are needed for acceptance beyond the first round.

#### **Pine Grosbeak** (*Pinicola enucleator*)

Eight individuals in New Wilmington, Lawrence, 1 January 2009. Class IV-B, 879-01-2009. 2/5. The description submitted did not rule out crossbills.

#### **Common (Greater) Redpoll** (*Carduelis flammea rostrata*)

Three at a feeder in Harrisburg, Dauphin, 25 March-6 April 2008. Class IV-C, 886a-01-2008. 2/5. The numerous photos submitted show a redpoll that is larger but appears to be fluffed up. The birds considered to be "Greater" Common Redpolls lack the distinguishing field marks of heavier, dark streaking and less intense red than Common Redpoll.

#### **Hoary Redpoll** (*Carduelis hornemanni*)

One in Solebury, Bucks, 31 January 2009. Class IV-B, 887-02-2009. 1/6. The photos and written description seem to support Common Redpoll.

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**Corrigenda**

In the 17th PORC report, the record of the Sabine's Gull from Butler County was erroneously reported as a first county record. I was embarrassingly absentminded of the record of this species during the passage of Hurricane Fran in September 1996 by former PORC members Ed Kwater and Paul Hess.

**Occurrence Charts**

