



PORC report: Black-bellied Whistling Ducks – Dauphin County

Number of birds - 5

Date – May 30, 2010

Location – Deer Valley Golf Course, South Hanover Twp., Dauphin County, PA

Observers: Tom Johnson; Dick Williams, Pat Williams, Jan Getgood, Ernie Johnson, Ramsay Koury, Chuck Berthoud, perhaps others

Photos – yes, attached to this write-up

I wrote these brief notes immediately after watching the whistling-ducks:

I just got home from watching the group of five Black-bellied Whistling Ducks at the main pond of Deer Valley Golf Course in Hummelstown/ South Hanover Twp. (Dauphin Co.). Though several other birders were able to see the birds, normal activity around the golf course caused the birds to fly several times - the first couple of times, the ducks circled, squeaking, and came back and landed at the pond, but at 8:00AM, they took off fairly high to the east and have not yet returned.

Due to a number of records of escapee BBWDs in the northeast (supplementing and confounding a growing trend of wild vagrancy), I checked the birds carefully for bands and other signs of captivity (like clipped toenails or absurdly tame behavior). A lack of any monkey business around the feet and a general wary attitude in the close proximity of people suggests that these birds are indeed wild vagrants.

Additionally, it is definitely worth noting that 5 similarly wild Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks appeared in central New York the very next day, near Syracuse on Oneida Lake. I photographed those birds closely and while I can't really prove it, I think it is VERY likely these are the same birds. They stayed at the location for less than a day, similar to the pattern in PA and rather unlike the habit of many vagrant BBWDs to linger at a site for long periods of time. Interestingly, they will probably represent the first NY state record.

Other 2010 summer reports of BBWD in the mid-Atlantic include 10 in Luzerne Co., PA, 5 in Maryland, and 1 in Delaware.

Tom Johnson
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Compiled 13 July 2010

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis*

Date of Sighting: 30 May 2010 to 30 May 2010

County : DAUPHIN

Location : DEER VALLEY GOLF COURSE

Observer(s): Tom Johnson, Pat Williams, Richard Williams, Ramsay Koury, Chuck Berthoud, Jan Getgood, Ernie Johnson

Date of Submission: 2010

Submitted by: Tom Johnson

Written Description: Yes

Photo: Yes

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
D. DeReamus	X							
A. Guarente	X							
T. Johnson	X							
B. Coulter	X							
C. Rutt	X							
J. Heller	X							
G. Malosh	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments:

7/0

Signature (Secretary)

Nick Pulcinella

Date:

2/9/11