

**Species (common & scientific):** Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)

**Number of Individuals:** 1 **Sex(es):** Unknown

**Age(s) & Plumage(s):** Unknown, probable adult

**Date Seen:** 27 DEC 2006

**Time:** ~8:00-8:30am

**Where Seen (Town/County):** Peace Valley Park, Doylestown, Bucks County

**Exact Location:** Seen on Lake Galena from the Boat Ramp opposite Sailor's Point. The bird was closer to the Sailor's Point side of the lake.

**Observer Reporting:** Stephen E Kacir

**Name:** Stephen E. Kacir

**Address:** 1720 Harding Blvd, Norristown, PA 19401

**E-mail:** kacir@mail.med.upenn.edu

**Telephone (optional):** (267) 760-6458

**Other Observers (Only those who saw & identified the bird with you):** None

**Distance to Bird:** The bird was near the opposite side of Lake Galena.

**Viewing Conditions (Sky, weather, position of sun relative to you):** Viewing conditions were excellent, no wind, sun to my back illuminating the geese perfectly. Clear skies.

**Optical Equipment Used:** Nikon Fieldscope

**Habitat:** Lake Galena

**Description (only what you observed; size relative to other species present; posture, body shape & proportions; colors & patterns of plumage; bill, eye, & leg characteristics; other features relevant to this individual):** Branta-type goose, smaller than Canada Goose and about the same size as accompanying Cackling Geese. Neck and breast were black, face was white, though top of head was black. Bill, lores and eyes were black. Mantle was silvery gray with black barring. Flanks were very light gray mildly contrasting with white undertail coverts. Tail and wingtips were black. Neck was short and basic body profile was similar to Cackling Goose. I specifically scrutinized the bird for any signs of hybridization with Cackling Goose, but no brown or tan plumage was in evident and facial markings were consistent for a pure-bred Barnacle Goose.

**Behavior (Be as specific as possible about what the bird was doing):** The Barnacle Goose was swimming slowly towards the dam with hundreds of Canada Geese and a2-3 Cackling Geese.

**Vocalizations:** None

**Supporting Evidence if Any (include with report):** None

**Photo:** **Video Recording:** **Audio Recording:** **Drawing:**

**Name, Address, e-mail, telephone (optional) of photographer, etc.**

**Separation from Similar Species (How you eliminated others):**

Cackling Goose has brown mantle and flanks, only white cheek patches rather than a white face. Breast is brown on Cackling Goose rather than black as in Barnacle Goose.

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Hybrid Canada/Cackling X Barnacle Goose would have shown some brown or tan on the breast, flanks and mantle with facial marking intermediate between Cackling/Canada Geese and Barnacle Goose.

Canada Goose is larger than this bird was, and all plumage marks mentioned separating this bird from Cackling Goose would also apply to separating it from Canada Goose.

Greater White-fronted Goose would have been larger than this bird. White on the face would be restricted to a bar around the base of the bill. Breast, neck, mantle and flanks would all have been gray-brown if the bird were a Greater White-fronted Goose. Bill would be pink to orange for Greater White-fronted Goose rather than black. Flanks would have been mottled with black in Greater White-fronted Goose.

Brant has white restricted to a necklace near the head. Mantle would be dark brown and flanks would be slate-gray to black which contrast starkly against the undertail coverts. Also, contrast between the mantle and the wingtips and tail would have been lower if the bird had been a Brant.

Emperor Goose would have had a shorter neck, a fully white head and the back of the neck would have been white. Body would have been nearly completely dark slate gray, including the vent and undertail coverts, with contrasting white tail feathers.

Blue Phase Ross's Goose would have had a very stubby bill, stubbier than a Cackling Goose. There would have been a white bar at the lower edge of the wing and white at the back half of the wing. Lores would have been white rather than black and bill would have been pink with a blue base rather than black. Flanks would have been black to dark gray.

Blue Phase Snow Goose would have had dark gray-brown flanks and mantle with no contrast between the flanks and mantle. While wingtips are black in Blue Phase Snow Goose, the tail feathers are white. Bill is orange pink with bluish grin patch rather than black, and bill shape is more wedge-like, not stubby enough. Lores of Snow Geese are white and the entire head is white, with blue-phase showing white on the sides of the neck, whereas in Barnacle Goose, the white is restricted to the face and not present on the sides of the neck.

**Discussion** (Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it): The bird was closely associated with a group of Cackling and Canada Geese. I tried to get a closer look at the bird and possibly photograph it by driving to the other side of Lake Galena, but upon arrival the bird could not be relocated. Many geese were flying from the lake at the time and the Barnacle Goose may have left with some other Branta geese. There was no indication that the bird was an escape, but the legs could not be observed and there were no people with which it might have interacted.

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**Previous Experience with this and/or Similar Species:** I have seen Barnacle Geese on the east coast on multiple occasions. I usually find at least one Barnacle Goose annually in recent years.

**Are you positive of your ID?** (Why or why not): 100% Positive. There is no other bird that comes close in appearance except Hybrid Barnacle x Canada/Cackling Goose and I specifically scrutinized the bird for indications of hybridization that day.

**References:**

During Observation: Sibley Guide to Birds by David Allen Sibley

After Observation: Sibley Guide to Birds by David Allen Sibley

**Date of report:** 20 Oct 2007

**Signature of Observer:**

The below electronic signature is provided in lieu of an actual signature. By placing this electronic signature on the document, I attest that the above information is true and complete.

Electronic Signature: Stephen E. Kacir

# Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

## Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Date of Sighting: 27 December 2006 to 27 December 2006

County : BUCKS

Location : PEACE VALLEY PARK

Observer(s): Steve Kacir

Date of Submission: 2007

Submitted by: Steve Kacir

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut			X					
A. Guarente			III					
T. Johnson								
B. Coulter			III					
E. Witmer			III					
J. Heller			III					
G. Malosh			III					
TOTALS								
DECISION								

Comments:

Signature (Secretary)

Date: