

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE
210 Welcome Ave. Norwood, PA 19074

28 January 2002

Peter G. Saenger
1830 Woodside Ave.
Alburtis, PA 18011

Dear Peter,

Thank you for submitting documentation on the Pacific Loon at Lake Ontelaunee on 27 November 1999. After careful review, the Committee has voted not to accept this record.

The balloting went to a second round because the members' views differed. Ultimately one member voted for acceptance and six voted against. Most of the latter group, however, considered it a close call and placed the record in Category IV-A: as "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." These members' general view was that various additional details were desirable to rule out other loon species conclusively.

We hope that our decision in this case will not discourage you from submitting reports on any future rarities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul".

For the Committee:
Paul Hess, Chairman

Record No. 002a-03-1999

002A-03-1999

SUGGESTED SPECIES: Pacific Loon *Gavia pacifica*

DATE: 27 November 1999

LOCATION: Lake Ontelaunee, Reading (Berks Co.) PA

TIME: 16:30 - 17:00

DISTANCE TO BIRD: ranged between 150 - 200 meters

WEATHER/SUN: 100% clear in late day lighting without any direct sunlight. Lighting from behind observers. Water was calm, with little movement.

OBSERVERS: Peter and Lauren Saenger, 1830 Woodside Ave., Albury, PA 18011 (crex@early.com) and Steve and Sue Fordyce, 191 Fredricksville Road, Mertztown, PA 19539 (spfordyce@fast.net).

Field observations: A loon species that appeared uniformly dark above with a sharp delineation between the white throat and dark hind neck. Dark crown extended down to the top of the eye, face white. Bill was noticeably smaller than a Common Loon (*G. immer*) and larger, thicker, and straight compared to Red-throated Loon (*G. stellata*). A faint line (chin-strap) across upper throat, but this was not seen when the bird moved closer and may have been the result of shadow, lighting or feather texture. Upon closer observation (and after consulting a field guide), it was noted that the upper mandible was darker than the lower and that the bird showed white along the sides at water-line, but there was no apparent flank patch.

After reviewing additional sources at home (Arctic and Pacific Loons: Field Identification, Birch & Lee, Birding, Vol. XXIX, No. 2, April 1997; The Complete Birds of the Western Palearctic on CD-Rom, Oxford; Seabirds, Harrison; Birds of North America, CD-Rom by Thayer, and various field guides), I feel that this birds face showed more clean white than any depicted in these sources. The white extended up to the top of the eye, but not above it (close look at one side only). The cheeks appeared to be unmarked, remaining pure white to where it met the darker nape color, though I can not rule-out that the auricular area was just not heavily marked and not noticed during my observation. Over all though, the face gave a very white impression.

Familiarity with Species: I have seen one Pacific Loon in alternate plumage (Washington, DC 1998) and hundreds of Red-throated and Common Loons.

Note: This bird was brought to our attention by Katrina Knight (Matt Spence found and originally identified the bird).

Submitted by: Peter G. Saenger
1830 Woodside Ave.
Albury, PA 18011

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Ballot - Round One

Species: Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*)

Date of Sighting: 27 November 1999 to 27 November 1999

Location: BERKS

County: LAKE ONTELAUNEE

Observer(s): Peter Saenger, Lauren Saenger

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: Peter Saenger

Written Description: Yes

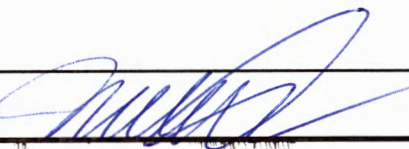
Photo: No

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Specimen: No			Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead				X				
D. Couchman				X				
P. Hess					X			
R. Ickes			X					
M. Sharp			X					
B. Reid			X					
P. Rodewald			X					
TOTALS			4	2	1			
DECISION								

Comments: 4/3/0 2nd Round

Signature (Secretary): 

Date: 12/2/00

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Tabulation Form - Round Two

Species: Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*)

Date of Sighting: 27 November 1999 to 27 November 1999

Location: LAKE ONTELAUNEE

County: BERKS

Observer(s): Peter Saenger, Lauren Saenger

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: Peter Saenger

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

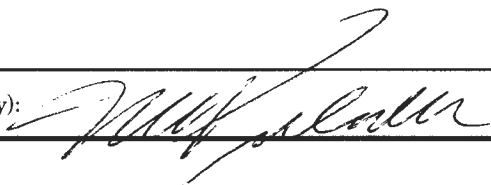
Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead				X				
D. Couchman				X				
P. Hess					X			
R. Ickes				X				
B. Reid					X			
P. Rodewald			X					
M. Sharp				X				
TOTALS								
DECISION			1	4	2			

Comments: ~~1/6~~ for Pacific Loon
 1/6
 Accept as Pacific/Arctic?

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

11/4/01