

Debbie Yavanovich  
120 Aubrey Dr.  
Butler PA 16001

October 28, 2004

Thank you very much for submitting written details of the bird you observed on 12 April 2001 to the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee. Regardless of how the committee votes on your description, just by sending it to us it becomes part of the permanent record of the birdlife of Pennsylvania.

The bird you described sounded very much like a Pacific Loon. Committee members were nearly unanimous in placing the record in the 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. The main reason for this placement was that the bird was viewed at such a distance that the subtle field marks separating non-adult plumaged loons were not described. Size is a very difficult feature to judge on a solitary bird at 300 yards and the only feature mentioned that would positively identify the bird was the "chinstrap" a mark that can be approximated by shadow or displaced feathers, or both.

I want to stress the point that the Class IV-A designation does not mean that the bird was incorrectly identified, it simply means that the evidence reviewed by the committee was not sufficient to come to a positive conclusion. The record remains part of the record for researchers or any interested person to consider.

Thanks again for contributing to our understanding of the dynamic nature of PA's Birds.

Sincerely

Matt Sharp  
Chair: Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee.

Hebbie Yovanovich  
Butler, PA

Pacific Loon

002A-01-2001

I arrived at Moraine around 2 p.m. on Thursday, April 12, 2001. I sat and scanned (about 30 ft. up on a cliffside) with binoculars (10x42 Swarovski) for about 5 minutes when I came across a basic plumaged loon. It was diving a lot, but I set up my scope (Leica APO, 20-60 zoom) + it took another 5 minutes before I found it again. It was very windy, but I found that the wind helped blow away the heat waves, so I could see pretty clearly. The sun was shining behind me.

A few minutes after I got the scope on it, the bird stopped diving + it sat on the water for about 20 minutes. It was probably 300 yards out at this point but I noticed right away its smaller build (compared to Common Loon). Its back looked relatively dark with possibly some light scaling.

The bird was flopping around a lot, bathing, + it started pattering across the water toward me. It was now roughly 150-200 yds out. The head looked rounded, without the big "forehead" as on the Common Loon. The bill was noticeably more slender + had a bluish cast when the sun shone on it. It was hard to distinguish how dark the head was or how far down the shading reached, but it was definitely there. The other mark that I ~~saw~~ saw more than once was a darkish line on the front of its

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neck just below the head — the "chinstrap" described in the field guides.

Also worth mentioning is that I watched the bird for about 1 1/2 hrs. and it never once postured like a Red Throated Loon, I left the park at 4 pm with the bird still there.

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Ballot - Round One**

Species: Pacific Loon ( Gavia pacifica )

Date of Sighting: 12 April 2001 to 12 April 2001

Location: MORaine STATE PARK

County: BUTLER

Observer(s): Debbie Yavanovich

Date of Submission: 2001

Submitted by: Debbie Yavanovich

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

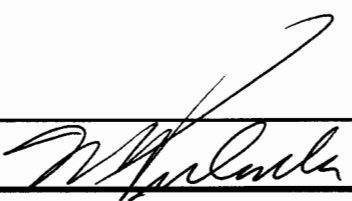
Specimen: No

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. Heathcote				X				
P. Hess					X			
J. Stanley				X				
E. Witmer				X				
R. Leberman				X				
M. Sharp				X				
TOTALS				6	1			
DECISION								

Comments: 0/7

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

1/9/03