

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2017-12-29 21:34:26
Observer's Name	Mike Fialkovich
E-mail	mpfial@verizon.net
Phone	4127313581
Observer's Address	805 BEULAH RD PITTSBURGH PA 15235-4209 United States
Names of additional observers	MICHAEL P. FIALKOVICH
Species (Common Name)	Pacific Loon
Species (Scientific Name)	Gavia pacifica
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Basic plumage, age unknown.
Observation Date and Time	11-27-2017 5:20 PM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S41305675
County	Mercer
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Maurice Goddard State Park
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Boat Launch 2
Habitat	Lake
Distance to bird	30 yards or more; hard to say.
Viewing conditions	Excellent, clear, sunny with sun behind me; late afternoon light.
Optical equipment used	Leica Ultravid 10X42 binoculars; Leica spotting scope

Description

Smaller than Common Loon which it was swimming with at one point allowing comparison. Common Loon had a much heavier bill than the Pacific, larger overall body size and larger head, thicker neck. Common also showed a sharp point of brown near the base of the neck rather than a clean straight line as in Pacific. This does not show up well on the photos. Pacific showed dark brown crown and rear of neck, with sharp demarcation from the white chin and front of neck. The remainder of the bird was dark brown. Viewed through a spotting scope I could see pale fringes to the back feathers (especially prior to a dive) that appeared as pale lines across the back. Bill held horizontal unlike Red-throated Loon and plumage much too dark for Red-throated Loon. Red-throated Loon is light gray with white spotting on the back and wings and an isolated eye on a white face. Red-throated also shows pale flanks. The bill appeared dark above and light below and was thinner than the Common Loon it was swimming with. The bird lacked a pale area on the flanks, eliminating Arctic Loon. I was unable to see a chin strap, likely due to viewing distance, even with the use of a spotting scope.

Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)

Initially feeding, making repeated dives. Later swimming with a Common Loon and then two Common Loons.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

See description.

Discussion – anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

I've seen Pacific Loons in California and one in Pennsylvania at Presque Isle State Park in 1992.

Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)

Yes. Other observers found it and I was with one observer. With my experience with this species I was certain of the identification.

After

Sibley Guide to Birds, National Geographic Guide.

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings

[Pacific Loon, Maurice Goddard State Park 11-27-2017 \(11\).jpg](#)



[Pacific Loon, Maurice Goddard State Park 11-27-2017 \(4\).jpg](#)



[Pacific Loon, Maurice Goddard State Park 11-27-2017 \(5\).jpg](#)



[Pacific Loon, Maurice Goddard State Park 11-27-2017 \(6\).jpg](#)

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PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2018-09-27 21:59:44
Observer's Name	Michael David
E-mail	michaeldavid@gmail.com
Observer's Address	United States
Species (Common Name)	Pacific Loon
Species (Scientific Name)	Gavia pacifica
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Nonbreeding plumage
Observation Date and Time	11-27-2017 3:30 PM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S40778722
County	Mercer
Location (City, Borough, Township)	New Vernon
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	M. K. Goddard State Park
GPS coordinates of sighting	41.409776, -80.125008
Habitat	open water
Description	Large swimming waterbird with slim pointed bill - about Mallard sized. Dark gray on back, back of neck, and crown. White on front of neck, with border between light and dark crisp and straight. Bill straight and gray.
Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)	Swimming on the surface - don't recall for sure if it was also diving while I was there.
Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)	From Common Loon by smaller size, smaller straight bill, round head, and especially neck pattern with straight sharp border between dark and white areas. From Red-throated Loon by larger size, larger bill held straight, plainer back, and more extensive dark on neck and head, including covering eye. From rarer Arctic Loon by lack of white along rear flanks.
Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)	Yes, diagnostic photos taken

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings



[Pacific Loon, Mercer, PA 1.JPG](#)



[Pacific Loon, Mercer, PA 2.JPG](#)



[Pacific Loon, Mercer, PA 3.JPG](#)

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