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# Wayward Bird Will Roost in

By JAMES P. BARR  
Sun-Gazette Staff

Hurricane Fran brought more than wind and rain into Pennsylvania in early September.

It apparently blew in several species of birds not normally seen here.

Flamingoes were sighted at Chambersburg and at Colyer Lake, near State College. A black skimmer was spotted at Bald Eagle State Park, a black-capped petrel on the Delaware, seagulls and tropical terns in other parts of the state.

All are birds of southern climes or the Atlantic shore.

Possibly the oddest wayward wanderer, though, was a dull-brown, seagull-like bird that ended up on the parking lot of Fairfield Toyota on East Third Street.

Dr. Paul W. Schwalbe, a retired professor of ornithology at Lock Haven University, identified it as a Cory's shearwater. What's more, he said, it was the first of the species ever seen in Pennsylvania.

Shearwaters are birds of the open ocean, like albatrosses. They spend summers in the northern Atlantic and winters off the coast of Africa. They almost never go on land, except to nest, Schwalbe said.

He surmised that the shearwater found here mistook the car dealership's wet parking lot for a pond and injured itself trying to land.

A young woman at Murray's Cheese House, next to the dealership, saw the bird floundering Sept. 9 and called the county SPCA, said Lester Yeagle, the society's animal-control officer.

"We got a call about an injured bird. When I got there, she had put a cardboard box over it. So all I had to do was pick it up and take it to Ed."

Ed is Edwin Reish, who, with his wife, Tink, operates the Farragut Animal Rehabilitation Center at their Montoursville RR 4 home.

"It was in pretty bad shape when we got it," Reish said. "It had a kind of dent between its eyes. It couldn't stand, and it



A CORY'S SHEARWATER IS SHOWN IN THIS PHOTO ... from the Audubon Society's North American field guide

couldn't see right."

Despite the Reishes' ministrations, the bird died Sept. 14.

Reish said he initially thought the bird was a northern fulmar, a related species that also lives on the open ocean. It was unusual enough that he preserved it in a freezer until it could be properly identified.

That's one reason the name of the find is just coming out, he said. It wasn't until Thursday that Schwalbe and his wife, Glenna, identified it as a Cory's shearwater.

"We took some measurements and photographs, just to be able to convince some people what it was," Schwalbe said.

"Well, isn't that something?"

# Record Books

Yeagle said who told what kind of bird it was.

Schwalbe also happens to be a member of the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Commission, a group of scientists that verifies and keeps records on any new information about birds, such as new species being found in the state.

A check of the records showed no prior sightings of Cory's shearwaters in Pennsylvania, he said.

It's not that important a find, the retired professor said. Shearwaters are common birds in their normal habitat, and hurricanes frequently blow oceanic and shore birds inland.

"I'm not saying that others (shearwaters) haven't been blown in in the past, but they were never found. It would have happened eventually."

Being the first of its kind in the state, the dead Cory's shearwater is destined for a place of honor.

Reish said he will send it to the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, where it will be mounted and displayed

for scientists and the public to examine.

Multiple reports of rare (for Pennsylvania) birds being blown into the state by Hurricane Fran probably have more to do with the fact that people are looking for such birds, rather than an unusual number of birds being involved or anything special about the storm, Schwalbe said.

"Birds have wings and the winds blow. There are vagrants all the time," he said. "Ten or 15 years ago, you just didn't have as many people out looking for them."

For instance, he said, he and his wife spotted the black skimmer and several seagulls at Bald Eagle Park. They went there specifically because they knew that hurricanes blow in birds and that sea birds would be looking for water.

The flamingoes, though, probably escaped from a domesticated flock during the storm, he said. It's unlikely they were wild birds chased from their native South America.























032-01-1996

REPORT OF AN UNCOMMON OR RARE SPECIES AND/OR HIGH NUMBERS

SPECIES: Cory's Shearwater, *Calonectris diomedea borealis*

OBSERVER(S) WRITING ACCOUNT: Paul Schwalbe & Glenna Schwalbe

DATE BIRD WAS FOUND: 9 September 1996

DATE OF REPORT: 4 February 1997

LOCATION: Williamsport, Lycoming Co., Pa.

PHOTOS: Color prints attached.....

SIGNIFICANCE OF OBSERVATION: New species for Pennsylvania

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH OBSERVATION WAS MADE: Identification was made with the dead bird in hand. Measurements were taken along with several photographs.

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE BIRD WAS FOUND: The live bird was found two days after Hurricane Fran passed through the state, which was the night of 6-7 September, 1996. It was originally found in the parking lot of Fairfield Toyota in the Golden Strip shopping center. After being picked up by an SPCA officer, it was taken to the Farragut Animal Rehabilitation Center in Lycoming County operated by Ed & Tink Reish, where it died on the 14th of September. We first saw the dead bird on the 25th of September. See Schwalbe & Schwalbe 1996.

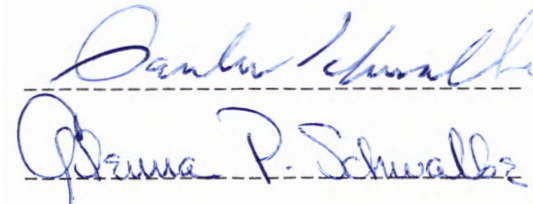
DESCRIPTION: See PA BIRDS, 10:152-153, and the attached notes on measurements and plumage. This report is submitted down to the subspecies identification of the bird.

ELIMINATION OF OTHER SPECIES: See attachments, references and photos.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: NA

REFERENCES/LITERATURE CITED:

Schwalbe, Paul and Glenna Schwalbe. 1996. Cory's Shearwater, in Pulcinella, Nick; Rare Bird Reports. *Pennsylvania Birds* 10:152-153.

  
Paul Schwalbe  
Glenna P. Schwalbe



032-01-1996

Additional notes for the RBR to PORC on the Cory's Shearwater,  
*Calonectris diomedea borealis*.

By Paul and Glenna Schwalbe

There are three subspecies of the Cory's Shearwater. The Cape Verde Islands race, *C. d. edwardsii*, breeds in the Cape Verde Islands, but its winter range is unknown (Cramp 1977, Palmer 1962). The nominate Mediterranean race, *C. d. diomedea*, breeds in the Mediterranean; and the east Atlantic race, *C. d. borealis*, breeds in the Azores, Madeira, Canary and Berlenga Islands (Cramp 1977, Harrison 1983, Palmer 1962). Both *diomedea* and *borealis* are found in the northwest Atlantic in summer and fall, but *borealis* is the most common.

The Cape Verde race *edwardsii* is smaller, has a shorter bill and wings (by 10-15%), the bill is black instead of yellow, and the body is noticeably darker above (Cramp 1977). The measurements of the Lycoming Co. bird (see Table 1) entirely rule out this subspecies.

The other two races, *diomedea* and *borealis*, are not considered separable in the field. However, with the bird in hand, wing and bill measurements can be helpful with some individuals even though there is overlap in the size of these structures. More importantly, the extent of white on the inner web of the primaries is definitive (Cramp 1977, Palmer 1962).

The Lycoming Co. bird had a tail length of 139.5mm (almost 5½"). This individual was not sexed, but may be a male since the tarsus is 58mm. This is greater than that given by Cramp (1977) for any of the 61 female *borealis* (the larger of the two races) measured, which had a range of 51-57mm. Other measurements are found in Table 1 below.

Note that the wing (flattened) is slightly greater than that given for *diomedea* by Cramp for either sex, but falls well within his series for ♀ *borealis*. Since only two measurements of the flattened wing are available for ♂ *borealis*, a valid comparison there is not possible. However, in the Palmer series, in which the wings were not flattened during measurement, our specimen does fall within the high end of the range for *diomedea* males. The bill measurement for the bird found in Lycoming Co. falls close to the mean for *borealis*, but as with the wing, it is not

	Lycoming Co. Specimen	<i>borealis</i>		<i>diomedea</i>		<i>edwardsii</i>	
		♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	
Wing Chord: Not flattened	345	*329-367 m351.5-50	*329-362 m344.3-50	*327-347 n - 9	*312-337 n - 11	-----	-----
Flattened	352	†361,367 (two skins)	†347-363 m 358-11	†339-351 m 346-9	†330-347 m 339-5	†298-321 m 313-9	†302-319 m 308-7
Bill	54	*51-59 m 55.5-50 †51-59 m 55.5-52	*49-57 m 52.9-50 †49-57 m 52.8-60	*49-56 n - 9 †49-55 m 51.2-17	*44-51 n - 11 †45-50 m 47.3-16	----- †41-46 m 44.6-52	----- †39-46 m 42.5-52

TABLE 1. Adapted from Cramp and Palmer

† = From Cramp. \* = From Palmer. All measurements in millimeters.

\*312-337 indicates that this is the range in mm of all specimens of ♀ *diomedea* reported by Palmer. n - 9 is the number of specimens where the mean is unknown. m358-11 indicates a mean of 358mm for 11 specimens.

entirely outside the upper range of measurements for *diomedea* males. This suggests that the bird in question is *borealis*, but we must look at the primaries to settle this identification problem.

Cramp (1977) and Palmer (1962) state that the inner webs of the primaries in both *diomedea* and *borealis* have some white present. The white is much more extensive and projects well beyond the under wing coverts on *diomedea*, but is masked by these coverts on *borealis*. Photos of the Lycoming Co. bird show quite clearly that the white on the primaries is completely hidden by the under wing coverts (see attached photos or the photo of the underside of the bird on page 160, PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS, Vol 10, 1996. This can best be seen on the right wing, since there are highlights on the left wing in this particular photo.) Therefore, the Cory's Shearwater discovered in Lycoming Co., Pa., must be of the east Atlantic race, *Calonectris diomedea borealis*.

#### LITERATURE CITED:

- Cramp, Stanley. (Chief Ed.) 1977. *Handbook of the Birds of Europe the Middle East and North Africa*. Vol. 1. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Harrison, Peter. 1983. *Seabirds, an identification guide*. Houghton Mifflin, Boston.
- Palmer, Ralph S. (Ed.) 1962. *Handbook of North American Birds*. Vol. 1. Yale University Press, New Haven.

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## CORY'S SUBSPECIES DETERMINED

By Paul and Glenna Schwalbe

Last September Hurricane Fran gave Pennsylvania a new species for it's official list, it was a Cory's Shearwater, *Calonectris diomedea* (Schwalbe & Schwalbe 1996).

There are three subspecies of the Cory's Shearwater. The Cape Verde Islands race, *C. d. edwardsii*, breeds in the Cape Verde Islands, but its winter range is unknown (Cramp 1977, Palmer 1962). The nominate Mediterranean race, *C. d. diomedea*, breeds in the Mediterranean; and the east Atlantic race, *C. d. borealis*, breeds in the Azores, Madeira, Canary and Berlenga Islands (Cramp 1977, Harrison 1983, Palmer 1962). Both *diomedea* and *borealis* are found in the northwest Atlantic in summer and fall, but *borealis* is the most common.

The Cape Verde race *edwardsii* is smaller, has a shorter bill and wings (by 10-15%), the bill is black instead of yellow, and the body is noticeably darker above (Cramp 1977). The measurements of the Lycoming Co. bird (see Table 1) entirely rule out this subspecies.

The other two races, *diomedea* and *borealis*, are not considered separable in the field. However, with the bird in



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hand, wing and bill measurements can be helpful with some individuals even though there is overlap in the size of these structures. More importantly, the extent of white on the inner web of the primaries is definitive (Cramp 1977, Palmer 1962).

The Lycoming Co. bird had a tail length of 139.5mm (almost 5½"). This individual was not sexed, but may be a male since the tarsus is 58mm. This is greater than that given by Cramp (1977) for any of the 61 female *borealis* (the larger of the two races) measured, which had a range of 51-57mm. Other measurements are found in Table 1 below.

	Lycoming Co. Specimen	<i>borealis</i>		<i>diomedea</i>		<i>edwardsii</i>	
		♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀
Wing Chord: Not flattened	345	*329-367 m351.5-50	*329-362 m344.3-50	*327-347 n - 9	*312-337 n - 11	-----	-----
Flattened	352	†361,367 (two skins)	†347-363 m 358-11	†339-351 m 346-9	†330-347 m 339-5	†298-321 m 313-9	†302-319 m 308-7
Bill	54	*51-59 m 55.5-50 †51-59 m 55.5-52	*49-57 m 52.9-50 †49-57 m 52.8-60	*49-56 n - 9 †49-55 m 51.2-17	*44-51 n - 11 †45-50 m 47.3-16	----- †41-46 m 44.6-52	----- †39-46 m 42.5-52

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† = From Cramp. \* = From Palmer. All measurements in millimeters.

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his series for ♀ *borealis*. Since only two measurements of the flattened wing are available for ♂ *borealis*, a valid comparison there is not possible. However, in the Palmer series, in which the wings were not flattened during measurement, our specimen does fall within the high end of the range for *diomedea* males. The bill measurement for the bird found in Lycoming Co. falls close to the mean for *borealis*, but as with the wing, it is not entirely outside the upper range of measurements for *diomedea* males. This suggest that the bird in question is *borealis*, but we must look at the primaries to settle this identification problem.

Cramp (1977) and Palmer (1962) state that the inner webs of the primaries in both *diomedea* and *borealis* have some white present. The white is much more extensive and projects well beyond the under wing coverts on *diomedea*, but is masked by these coverts on *borealis*. Photos of the Lycoming Co. bird show quite clearly that the white on the primaries is completely hidden by the under wing coverts (see the photo of the underside of the bird on page 160, **PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS**, Vol 10, 1996. This can best be seen on the right wing, since there are highlights on the left wing in this particular photo.) Therefore, the Cory's Shearwater discovered in Lycoming Co., Pa., must be of the east Atlantic race, *Calonectris diomedea borealis*. If accepted by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee, this will be a new species for the Official List of Birds of Pennsylvania (Pulcinella, 1995, 1996).

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**LITERATURE CITED:**

Cramp, Stanley. (Chief Ed.) 1977. *Handbook of the Birds of Europe the Middle East and North Africa*. Vol. 1. Oxford University Press. Oxford.

Harrison, Peter. 1983. *Seabirds, an identification guide*. Houghton Mifflin, Boston.

Palmer, Ralph S. (Ed.) 1962. *Handbook of North American Birds*. Vol. 1. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Pulcinella, Nick. 1995. Official List of the Birds of Pennsylvania. *Pa. Birds* 9:118-123.

- - - - - . 1996. Seventh Report of the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee June 1996. *Pa. Birds* 10:48-54.

Schwalbe, Paul and Glenna Schwalbe. 1996. Cory's Shearwater, in Pulcinella, Nick; Rare Bird Reports. *Pennsylvania Birds* 10:152-153.



Dr. Paul & Mrs. Glenna Schwalbe  
546 Wilson St.  
Jersey Shore, PA. 17740  
10 September 1997

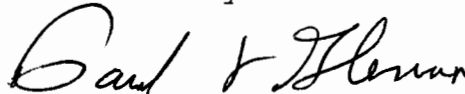
Frank Haas  
Secretary, PORC  
2469 Hammertown Rd.  
Narvon, PA. 17555

Dear Frank:

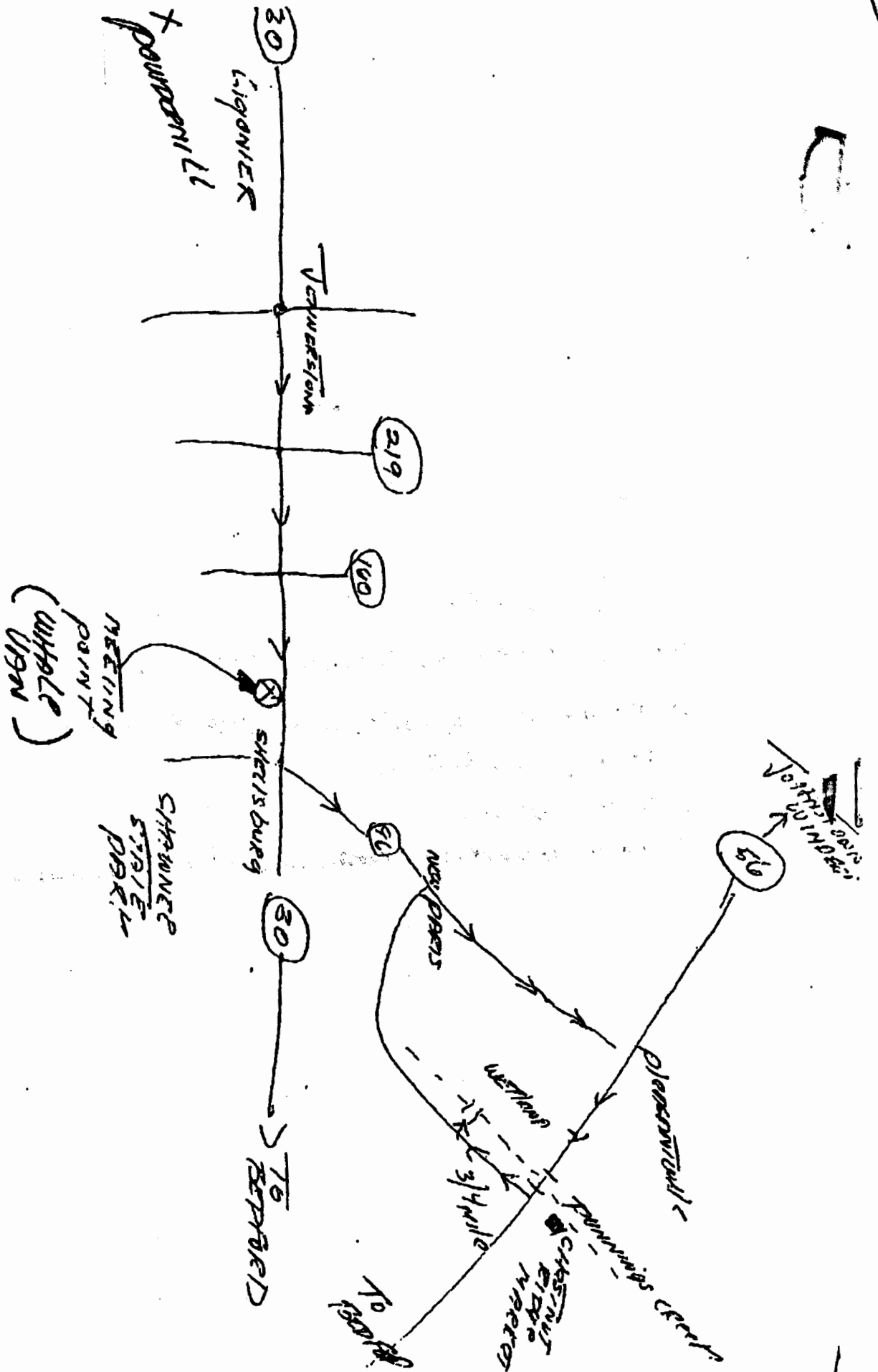
Please add the following to the PORC record # 032-01-1996,  
Cory's Shearwater, *Calonectris diomedea*.

The Cory's Shearwater found in Williamsport, Lycoming County,  
Pa., on 9 September 1996, is now specimen # ANSP 187591 in the  
collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, Pa.  
It is prepared as a skin and a spread wing. A frozen tissue sample  
from the specimen, # 6117 is also preserved.

Sincerely



Paul & Glenna Schwalbe



032-01-1996

# Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

## Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*)

Date of Sighting: 9 September 1996 to 9 September 1996

Location: WILLIAMSPORT

County: LYCOMING

Observer(s): Paul Schwalbe; Glenna Schwalbe

Date of Submission: 1996

Submitted by: Paul Schwalbe; Glenna Schwalbe

Written Description: YES

Photo: YES

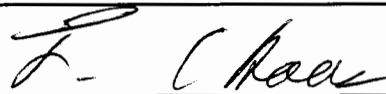
Specimen: NO

Recording: NONE

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V			Abstain
					A	B	C	
F. Haas	X							
N. Pulcinella	X							
E. Kwater	X							
R. Ickes	X							
G. McWilliams	X							
P. Schwalbe								X
S. Feldstein	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

8-16-97