

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2020-08-28 15:53:15
Observer's Name	Liam Hart
E-mail	liamhart90@gmail.com
Phone	610-256-5073
Observer's Address	5903 Wayne Ave Philadelphia PA 19144 United States
Names of additional observers	Patrick McGill
Species (Common Name)	Brown Booby
Species (Scientific Name)	<i>Sula leucogaster</i>
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	First year.
Observation Date and Time	08-22-2020 7:20 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	https://ebird.org/checklist/S72688476
County	Philadelphia
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Southwest Philadelphia
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Army Corps of Engineers Compound
GPS coordinates of sighting	39.8896553,-75.2054787
Habitat	Delaware River.
Distance to bird	130 yards.
Viewing conditions	Early morning gray skies, but clear viewing conditions below cloud layer.
Optical equipment used	Swarovski EL 10x42

Description

Immediately striking as a dark sulid. A large athletic looking bird that appeared pointy in every direction. The long, snouty bill was quite visible as the bird banked. Also apparent was the bird's sleekly tapered, wedge-like tale. Color was nearly uniform dark brown, with only a bit of lighter coloration appearing on the secondary underwing coverts.

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

This bird popped up over the tree-line that was separating me from the river. It was not making a direct flight up or down the river and instead completed at least one full circle while in my view. The only other observer, Patrick McGill, notes that the bird appeared to be moving up river in the direction of Philadelphia when he lost site of it.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

The clear view of the bird's profile, with its tapered, wedge-like tail and long point head and bill ruled out possible species of confusion such as gulls. The thin, bent wings ruled out cormorants.

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

Incredibly, I am essentially certain that I saw this same bird almost exactly 24 hours previously. As I was driving East across the Walt Whitman bridge, a large dark bird appeared to my right. While it was only about a three second observation, the impression was strongly that of a BRBO. My first glimpse left me with the thought, "I wonder what this bird that looks like a dark sulid will actually be, maybe an Osprey or a Herring Gull." By the time I managed a second glimpse, the bird had banked enough to give me a clear view of the profile. I was dumbfounded to see the extended neck, head and bill of this bird. The same tail shape and long, pointy wings that would be expected with the species were visible as well. Despite the fleeting nature of the observation, I sent a message out to the Philly Bird Chatter group describing the encounter.

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

Yes. Photographs have been looked at with care.

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings

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[DSC_4326.jpg](#)



[DSC_4327.jpg](#)



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