



066-01-1995

American White Pelican

Pelicanus erythrorhynchos

Location: Presque Isle State Park

Date: May 15-19, 1995

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Zeiss 10 X 40 Binocular and TSN 4 Kowa scope at variable power

Details of sighting and description: On May 16, 1995 Chuck Gehringer and I had arrived at the end of the trail facing the south end of Gull Point when I spotted four large white birds. I easily identified them as White Pelicans. All four birds were sitting at the south end of Region I of Gull Point, preening. Their large orange bills and yellow pouches (one with extensive black on outer two-thirds of pouch) were diagnostic field marks. Three of the four birds had prominent mandible plates and ragged yellowish feathers along the back of their heads with a hint of yellow on the upper breast and wing coverts indicating that they were adults in high breeding plumage. Their huge robust bodies dwarfed the Tundra Swan that was feeding within a hundred feet or so of the pelicans. Their entire bodies including head and neck were snow white except their primaries that were barely visible that were black. The legs were bright orange on the three adults and the fourth bird had orange legs that were noticeably paler.

After observing them for 30 to 40 minutes, they flew into Thompson Bay. As they flew their very long, broad white wings contrasting with the black primaries, primary coverts, and outer secondaries (the black tapered to a point along the trailing edge towards the inner secondaries) was easily seen.

That evening I received a call from a Mr. John Salvetti who had seen the birds the evening before on May 15.

On May 19, I saw all four birds fly up into the air and when they were several hundred feet high, they began to soar. They slowly drifted off along the lake towards Buffalo and within a half hour disappeared in the distant haze. The next day, May 20, I found the non breeding plumaged bird sitting at Gull Point! It remained until May 21 when it was seen flying off in a northeastern direction towards Buffalo.

See photograph.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*)

Date of Sighting: 15 May 1995 to 19 May 1995

Location: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

County: ERIE

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 1995

Submitted by: Jerry McWilliams

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):

J. C. Haas

Date:

5-1-96