

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE
2469 Hammertown Road
Narvon, PA 17555

June, 10, 1996

James Brett
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary
R.D. 2
Kempton, PA 19529

Dear Jim,

Thank you for submitting details on the Magnificent Frigatebird you saw at Hawk Mountain, Berks county on 15 September 1994 to P.O.R.C. After careful review, we regret that we are unable to accept this record. The committee felt that the description was too brief in detail for an adequate determination to be made. This does not mean of course, that the bird was not a Magnificent Frigatebird, merely, that the details did not allow for a concrete determination.

We hope that this does not discourage you from submitting documentation on any rare birds you find in the future. Please be encouraged to send as much detail as possible.

Sincerely,

Nick Pulcinella
Chairman

Record # 075-01-1994

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE
2469 Hammertown Road
Narvon, PA 17555

June, 10, 1996

Andy Higgs
11800 Beltsville Drive #313
Beltsville, MD 20705

Dear Andy,

Thank you for submitting details on the Magnificent Frigatebird you saw at Hawk Mountain, Berks county on 15 September 1994 to P.O.R.C. After careful review, we regret that we are unable to accept this record. The committee felt that the description was too brief in detail for an adequate determination to be made. This does not mean of course, that the bird was not a Magnificent Frigatebird, merely, that the details did not allow for a concrete determination.

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Sincerely,

Nick Pulcinella
Chairman

Record # 075-01-1994

075-01-1994

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to PORC

RARE SPECIES REPORT

SPECIES: <i>Fregata magnificens</i> (Mammillata) ^{Key Birds}		NUMBER SEEN: ①
SIGHTING DATE: 15 Sep 1994		SIGHTING TIME: 08:15 (EDT)
LOCATION:	COUNTY & STATE- Berks, PA DISTANCE & DIRECTION FROM NEAREST TOWN Owls Head Road / 6 Miles West of Hampton, PA DIRECTIONS, IF APPLICABLE- Hemlock Heights	
HABITAT:	Rooftop - Lookout	
SIGHTING CONDITIONS:	LIGHTING- Moonlight DISTANCE- ~ 500m EQUIP. USED- 10x40 Zeiss Binoculars / 30x Scope LENGTH OF SIGHTING- 1.5 Sec.	
DESCRIPTION:	VOICE- SIZE- Low - frigatebird size PLUMAGE- Dark/Black Conspicuous Angular wings / Dark. Many irregular flight which is often seen in ANATOMY (BILL LENGTH, LEG COLOR, ETC.)- Pelagic Birds - BEHAVIOR- OTHER FEATURES- Wings 20/25 mph from SE. ^{During 1000 winds}	
FAMILIARITY WITH THIS & SIMILAR SPECIES: Seen species throughout Caribbean / Baya / Bull Cormorant or COMPARISON TO SIMILAR SPECIES: Florida.		
HAS A PHOTOGRAPH BEEN TAKEN? ^{Angular wing.}		
HAS ANY ADDITIONAL OBSERVER(S) FILLED OUT A RARE SPECIES REPORT? IF SO WHO?		
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: The angularity of the wings was an obvious field mark.		
075-01-1994		
SIGHTING & REPORT BY: Jim Burt		PHONE NO.: (610) 756 8181
ADDRESS: HUNSA		756-6961
SIGNATURE: <i>[Signature]</i>		DATE: 13 Oct 1994

* Also observed by:
ANDY HISS, Sellersville, PA.
717-577-5450

designed by Kerry A. Grin

over

12/6/94
Mr. Keller,

075-01-1994

PORC

In response to your request, here is my description of the possible Magnificent Frigatebird seen by Jim Brett and myself at Hawk Mtn, 9/15/

I first observed the bird flying to the right of the North Lookout, above Owl's head. The bird was pretty far away, and flying above several hawks that were migrating through. The lighting was poor overall, and although the outline of the bird was clearly visible, no color could be seen on it at all. It was seen as a gray shape only. I watched it for about 10 seconds before conceding it was beyond my experience, and pointed it out to Jim Brett. It was observed by the two of us for perhaps 40-60 seconds.

The most outstanding feature was the wings. They were very long and pointed, with a very distinct crook at the wrist. My first reaction on seeing the bird was "Peregrine?", as it was evidently a large bird with pointed wings, but the wings were also rather thin, and as I noted had a crook at the wrist. The bird was big (there were hawks in the vicinity to use for size comparison), but the body seemed to have a slight build. Unfortunately, I spent so much time studying the wings, I didn't pay close attention to the head or the tail. If the tail were showing bifurcation, I'm certain I would have noticed it, but I saw no such field mark.

The bird flew somewhat erratically. Where as the raptors around it were moving through in a direct line of flight past the lookout, the mystery bird seemed to be taking its time, bobbing about erratically before leaving on its own way past the lookout.

Jim Brett suggested the bird may have been a Frigatebird, and the image I saw that day was very much like the flight picture of the Magnificent Frigatebird seen on page 79 of Peterson's "Eastern Birds". I have been birding for about 6 years now, and have no experience with seabirds, but this bird certainly seemed more akin to the Frigatebird than anything else I have encountered in my various birding books. In fact, over the last few weeks I saw an episode on the PBS series "Nature" dealing with Polynesia, and the footage included of a flying Frigatebird was indeed strikingly similar to what I saw that day at Hawk Mountain.

Sincerely,

Andy Higgs

11800 Beltsville Dr, #313

Beltsville, Maryland

20705

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Magnificent Frigatebird (Fregata magnificens)**

Date of Sighting: **15 September 1994 to 15 September 1994**

Location: **HAWK MOUNTAIN**

County: **BERKS**

Observer(s): **Jim Brett**

Andy Higgs

Date of Submission: **1994**

Submitted by: **Jim Brett**

Written Description: **YES** Photo: **NO** 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				1		6		
DECISION						X		

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

J. Chas

Date:

8-19-95