

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2017-12-08 07:09:41
Observer's Name	Marcia Bonta
E-mail	marcibonta@hotmail.com
Observer's Address	Plummer's Hollow Tyrone PA 16686 United States
Species (Common Name)	Swallow-tailed Kite
Species (Scientific Name)	Elanoides forficatus
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Adult
Observation Date and Time	05-27-2003 10:00 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Not yet (please do, eBird is great!)
County	Blair
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Tyrone Township
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Top of First Field, Brush Mtn., Bruce Bonta property, part of Plummer's Hollow Nature Reserve.
GPS coordinates of sighting	40°38'46.5"N 78°15'03.3"W
Habitat	Circling above mountaintop forest along westernmost ridge of Ridge-and-Valley
Distance to bird	First saw 100 feet above me, and observed until it soared out of view
Viewing conditions	excellent -- clear, with clouds and sun
Optical equipment used	did not need to use binoculars
Description	Similar in size to nearby red-tailed hawk. A raptor. I saw white on head, throat, breast, belly, and underwing coverts, and the rest of the underside dark; deeply forked tail and pointed wings.
Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)	Birds circled higher until disappeared from sight into the blue sky.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

The species is unmistakable and though I had not seen one previously, I immediately ID'ed it. The deeply forked tail and white underparts are diagnostic; I am quite familiar with all the expected raptors in the area, as well as with gulls and terns. I eliminated Magnificent Frigatebird juvenile—the frigatebird is much larger, longer-winged, white on underparts not nearly as extensive.

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

I did not report this at the time but have been encouraged to do so recently by a family member who is also helping me put in all my historical records to eBird. eBird informed me that it was necessary to first submit the records to the PA Rare Bird Report.

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

I am positive; I did not even need binoculars to confirm that this was exactly the species as portrayed in the guidebooks

After

Peterson; Kaufman; Sibley

Click to edit

PORC-webform00439