

PENNSYLVANIA RARE BIRD REPORT FORM

This form is presented as a convenience and guide. It can be used if desired, but is not necessary for submitting a report. Species requiring documentation are those on the Review List or not on the Official List of Birds of Pennsylvania. Send documentation to:

Nick Pulcinella, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee  
613 Howard Ave.  
West Chester, PA 19380  
nickpulcinella@comcast.net

168-02-2005

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SPECIES (common and scientific name) Swallow-tailed Kite *Elaenoides forficatus*  
Subspecies, if known unknown

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 1 SEX(ES) unknown

AGE(S) AND PLUMAGE(S) (e.g. immature; adult in breeding plumage; year for gulls; basic or alternate if you prefer those terms; state of molt if applicable): adult

DATE OF OBSERVATION 8/31/05 TIME 4:50 pm

LOCATION (city, borough, township) Sugar Bay, Allegheny National Forest, McKean Co.

EXACT SITE (e.g. name of park, lake, road) Rt 321 between 1/4 and 1/2 mile south of  
The entrance to the boat launch

OBSERVER REPORTING:

Name John FERRIS  
Address 26 Race St  
City Bradford State Pa ZIP 16701  
e-mail (optional) john.ferris@att.net phone (optional) 814 362 1052

OTHER OBSERVERS (only those who saw and identified the bird with you): NONE

HABITAT (e.g. mowed field, woodland edge, any other details) WOODS EDGE to brushy field/swamp  
to lake

DISTANCE TO BIRD about 40' (less than the distance between 2 Telephone Poles)

VIEWING CONDITIONS (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you) cloudy, windy good light

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED Naked Eye

DESCRIPTION (Include as much detail as you observed - size relative to other species present; "jizz"= e.g. posture, body shape, and proportions; colors and patterns of plumage; bill, eye, and leg characteristics; other features relevant to this individual): About size of Osprey Forked Tail white head + belly, white wing linings with black flight feathers. The rest of the bird was black

(Please use an additional page if necessary.)

BEHAVIOR (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing) Bird flew low (Tree top high)  
across the road toward the west to N.W. It looked  
as if it was going to land in the valley. The flight was  
so different from an osprey or hawk, very buoyant & graceful  
like a tern or shrike but much more.

VOCALIZATIONS NONE heard

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IF ANY:  
Photograph \_\_\_\_\_ Video recording \_\_\_\_\_ Audio recording \_\_\_\_\_ Drawing \_\_\_\_\_

Photographer/recorder/illustrator:  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ phone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Please include a copy of the photograph or recording with your report, and accompany it with a complete written documentation if the identification is obvious to you. If you made a drawing, please include it.

IF THIS IS A DEAD BIRD:  
General condition \_\_\_\_\_  
If collected (by permit), location of specimen if known \_\_\_\_\_

SEPARATION FROM SIMILAR SPECIES (how you eliminated others) Osprey does not have  
forked tail and is not purely white headed & flight feathers +  
body are not black. Magnificent frigatebird would not  
be osprey sized and does not have white wing linings even  
in juv. or im. plumage

DISCUSSION - Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:  
This was unexpected. I was checking the area for Hurricane  
Vanuati and had finished and was heading home. I did  
not even get to put binoculars on it. It was an identifiable  
view, but I would have liked a better look.

(Please use an additional page if necessary)

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND/OR SIMILAR SPECIES Have had Swallow-tailed  
Kite in Louisiana a few times

ARE YOU POSITIVE OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION? (why or why not) YES, really nothing  
else it could be, coloration and flight were distinctive.

REFERENCES CONSULTED:  
During observation NONE  
After observation After writing this report I check sibley + N. Geographic

DATE OF THIS REPORT: 8/31/05

SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER 

**John and Lisa Fedak**

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**From:** "John and Lisa Fedak" <jlfedak@atlanticbb.net>  
**To:** "PA Birds" <PABIRDS@LIST.AUDUBON.ORG>  
**Cc:** "John and Lisa Fedak" <jlfedak@atlanticbb.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 31, 2005 4:51 PM  
**Subject:** American Swallowtailed Kite - McKean County

At about 4:50pm an adult American Swallow-tailed Kite was observed flying across the road about 1/4 to 1/2 mile south of the entrance to the Sugar Bay Boat Launch on Route 321 in McKean County. I was just leaving after checking out Sugar Bay for hurricane vagrants and coming up with good shorebirds but no ' storm birds'. My first thought was an Osprey (about the right size) then it went to Magnificent Frigate bird when I saw the tail, but after realizing that the wing linings were white underneath, the only candidate left is American Swallowtail kite. After consulting my field guides, I am 100% absolutely sure POSITIVE that it was an adult Swallow-tailed Kite! I did not see any barring on the underside so I am sure it was an adult. The bird was flying low down and across the road and may have landed as I went back and scanned the air and ridgetops and turned up nothing. I did not expect this bird although I had hoped for other vagrants, but I am not complaining.

The bird was white headed, white bellied, white wing linings, black looking above, black flight feathers under, and a black swallow tail.

Good birding,  
John Fedak  
Bradford

I will post the shorebirds when I get back from bowling league!

## Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

### Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Swallow-tailed Kite (Elanoides forficatus)

Date of Sighting: 31 August 2005 to 31 August 2005

Location: SUGAR BAY

County : MCKEAN

Observer(s): John Fedak

Date of Submission: 2005

Submitted by: John Fedak

Written Description: Yes

Photo: ~~Yes~~

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut			X					
A. Guarente			X					
P. Guris		X						
J. Stanley			X					
E. Witmer			X					
J. Heller			X					
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS		1	6					
DECISION			X					

Comments: 7/0

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

7/24/06