

May 23, 2012

Nick,

As York County compiler, I am submitting this report of a 5/3/12 York sighting of a Swallow-tailed Kite on behalf of Jean and John Prescott, the observers.

Jean Prescott reported the observation to a few birders two days later on May 5. They are an elderly couple and have birded for 50+ years. They are not ones who would fill out a report of this type but Jean graciously provided me with some level of information and was agreeable to me submitting the report on their behalf.

I am a casual acquaintance of the Prescotts and I know them best for their devotion to the pursuit of warblers. They have been long term friends with one of York's leading birders, Randy Phillips, who will vouch for their birding skill and has expressed full confidence in the Prescott's identification of this nearly unmistakable bird.

I did not get around to submitting this report as quickly as I hoped but work schedules, PAMC, and grandkids took precedence.

I appreciate the PORC's review of this report.

Regards,



Phil Keener  
198 Jacobs Street  
East Berlin, PA 17316

# 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. Fill in all relevant fields and then click on the "Submit by Email" button at the end of the form to send it to the PORC Secretary. Or print the form and mail it to the PORC Secretary (see address below).

**NOTE:** The fields scroll down as you type to permit as much text as needed.  
The **RESET** button clears all of the fields if you wish to start over with a blank form.

Species (Common and Scientific Name): Swallow-tailed Kite (Elanoides forficatus)

Subspecies, if known

Number of individuals Sex(es) One

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 and Time of Observation Thursday, May 3 at 10:00 am.

Location (City, Borough, Township) Accomac Area of Hellam Township, York County

Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road) Directly in front of the Accomac Inn, fronting the Susquehanna River along RIVER DRIVE.

## Observer Reporting:

Name Jean Prescott

Address State Zip 1725 Third Avenue, York, PA 17403 -1912

E-mail (Optional)

Phone (Optional)

Other Observers (Only Those Who Saw and Identified the Bird with You): Husband John Prescott

Habitat (E.g. Mowed Field, Woodland Edge, Any other details) Fairly open river frontage with some mature trees

Distance to Bird (Specify feet, yards, etc.) ~ 200 feet overhead

Viewing Conditions (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you) Dissipating ground fog with clear sunny skies above

Optical Equipment Used Swarovski 8x32

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):

Long black forked tail was defining feature. White body, head, and underwing coverts with the rest of underside being black.

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

Bird was airborne for the full observation. Circling at same altitude for the majority of the observation with no wing flapping. Center of circle seemed to be over a tree containing kingbirds and some swallows. Length of observation was estimated to be a minimum of five minutes. At end of observation, bird was heading north and gaining altitude.

Vocalizations

Supporting evidence if any: (Check all that apply)

- Photograph       Video Recording       Audio Recording       Drawing

**Photographer/recorder/illustrator:**

Name

Address

City State Zip

E-mail (Optional)

Phone (Optional)

**Please send a copy of the photograph, drawing, or recording to:**

Nick Pulcinella, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee  
613 Howard Ave.  
West Chester, Pa 19380  
Nickpulcinella@verizon.net

**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)

Distinct forked tail and clean black and white delineations. Behavior characteristics of extensive effortless soaring and distinctiveness of silhouette while in that behavior mode.

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

Previous experience with this and/or similar species

In the 1990's at Aransas NWR in Texas.

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

100% certainty due to the combination of distinctiveness of silhouette, bold markings, effortless soaring, and prior experience with the species.

**References Consulted:**

During Observation

After Observation

Date of this Report:

(Click on the box and select date from calendar)

Reset Form

Submit by Email