

Submission Date	2012-08-23 16:12:13
Observer's Name	Benjamin Leese
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Phone	717.521.8376
Observer's Address	Street Address: 107 Gettysburg St City: Dillsburg State / Province: PA Postal / Zip Code: 17019 Country: United States
Names of additional observers	0
Species (Common Name)	Swallow-tailed Kite
Species (Scientific Name)	Elanoides forficatus
Subspecies (if known)	
Number of individuals	1
Have you submitted this to eBird?	
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	
Observation Date and Time	08-23-2012 1:10 PM
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Reading Township
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Intersection of Possum Hollow Road and Route 234 (East Berlin Road) less than 1 mile west of the boro of East Berlin
GPS coordinates of sighting	39.938238,-77.01592
Habitat	pasture, hay, and other crop land
Distance to bird	100 ft at some time. Bird was directly above road, so distance changed as I moved in the car back and forth to observe the bird
Viewing conditions	clear day, viewed twice from moving vehicle, once while stopped
Optical equipment used	naked eye
Description	A large falcon-like bird circling in a thermal with two Turkey Vultures. The Kite was lower to the ground

than the TUVUs. The bird was larger than our normal falcons, maybe the size of a very large peregrine or even bigger. Seemed about 1/2-3/4 the size of the Turkeys vultures, but very much leaner than the TUVUS. Kite had a sharply forked tail. Upper part of body, wings, and head were white to grayish. Tail was black, long, and deeply-forked.

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

Bird was circling/soaring apparently in a thermal over a pasture area/barnyard. I observed it twice after turning around to have good looks at it on this major road without pull-offs. When I finally stopped and exited the car, the bird was headed north. An adult Bald Eagle was then on the scene, and may have caused it to leave. I searched 20 minutes to re-find the bird without success.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

The deeply forked tail and color pattern rule out any other species.

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

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

Yes. The markings were very clear, and although I felt the bird was bigger than I expected (having never seen the species before), a consultation with a field guide at home makes the size I observed reasonable for the species.

During

none

After

Peterson Eastern Birds

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Upload images, audio, video or drawings

Click to edit

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