

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE
613 Howard Road, West Chester, PA 19380

29 January 2003

George Rowe
P.O. Box 145
Wycombe, PA 18980

Dear George,

Thank you for submitting documentation of the Swainson's Hawk on 14 September 2000 at the Buckingham site. After careful review, the Committee has voted not to accept this record.

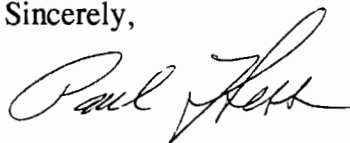
The vote was one member favoring acceptance and six members voting against it. Most of those who voted "no" placed the record in Class IV-A as "a record for which there exists a majority of evidence in support of the observer's identification; the record is probably correct, but not beyond reasonable doubt." In general the Committee felt that more complete details were needed. One member summed it up this way:

"This is a very deficient description: Why is this a buteo? Why is it a juvenile? How are the narrow tail bands different from other buteos? How are the head markings different from Broad-wings? What were the viewing conditions? What was the distance? The darker primaries than underwing coverts are of course strongly indicative of Swainson's, but as a firm principle no rarity of this stature should be accepted on the basis of only one character."

The Committee emphasizes that our non-acceptance does not imply a belief that it was not a Swainson's Hawk, but simply that the members felt more complete evidence was needed.

We hope that our non-acceptance in this case will not discourage you from submitting reports on any future rarities you find.

Sincerely,



For the Committee:
Paul Hess, Chair

Record No. 186-01-2000

P.S. I would like to apologize for the delay in announcing our result. We are striving to process the dozens of documentations we receive each year more quickly.

186-01-2000

Date - September 14, 2000

Time - 10:20 am

Observers - Caroline Vogt

Marya Halderman

George Rowe

Olwen Jarvis

Winds Southeast - light Clear sky No clouds

Temperature - 66 F

Height - 200'

Optics - Svarowski 10 x 42

Bushnell 10 x 50

Leica 10 x 42

Svarowski EL 10 x 42

Description - The juvenile Swainson's Hawk was with a kettle of Broadwinged Hawks, it was noted because of its larger size, longer two-toned under wings, and bands on its tail. Unlike the Red-shouldered Hawk, the primaries were darker than the underwing coverts, and the narrow bands on the tail were unlike any other buteo. The head markings were clearly different from the Broadwings with which it was flying. It was observed for several minutes by four experienced birders. As the kettle broke up, the Swainson's was the lead bird. The sighting was verified by The Photoguide to North American Raptors, Wheeler and Clark, Academic Press, 1955.

Caroline Vogt, who first spotted the bird, has seen numerous Swainson's Hawks in Mexico and our West.

Submitted by George Rowe, Buckingham Site Leader (for SEPT)

P.O. Box 145, Wycombe, PA 18980

Bucks Co

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Tabulation Form - Round One

Species: Swainson's Hawk (Buteo swainsoni)

Date of Sighting: 14 September 2000 to 14 September 2000

Location: BUCKINGHAM

County: BUCKS

Observer(s): Caroline Vogt, Marya Halderman, George Rowe,
Olwen Jarvis

Date of Submission: 2000

Submitted by: George Rowe

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead				X				
D. Couchman					X			
P. Hess				X				
R. Jakes J. Stanley			X					
B. Reid					X			
R. Lieberman P. Rodewald				X				
M. Sharp				X				
TOTALS			1	4	2			
DECISION				X				

Comments: 1/6

Signature (Secretary): 

Date: 11/19/00