

OBSERVER: Michael Schall

description written 9/15/01

Species: Swainson's Hawk

LOCATION: Little Gap Hawk watch site, Northampton County
at N 40° 48' 21.2"
W 75° 32' 28.3" elevation 1475 ft.

AGE: possible 2nd year intermediate

Flight Path: Bird was first seen on the North side of the ridge rising in some wispy clouds. It rose above the clouds and slowly circled over the middle of the ridge nearly directly above the lookout drifting in a southwest direction. The hawk was visible without binoculars until it began drifting southwest. Except when first seen, the background was clear blue sky with the sun going down at our backs.

Behavior: The first observer (Kathy) called possible Bald Eagle in clouds. Also thought she saw osprey-looking profile. I spotted the hawk as it came out of the clouds and first impression was an eagle. It soared and circled the entire time it was observed. There was no flapping and it was alone. My only view was the underside of the hawk. It slowly became higher and could only be seen with binoculars once it drifted to the southwest. No dihedral flight was observed.

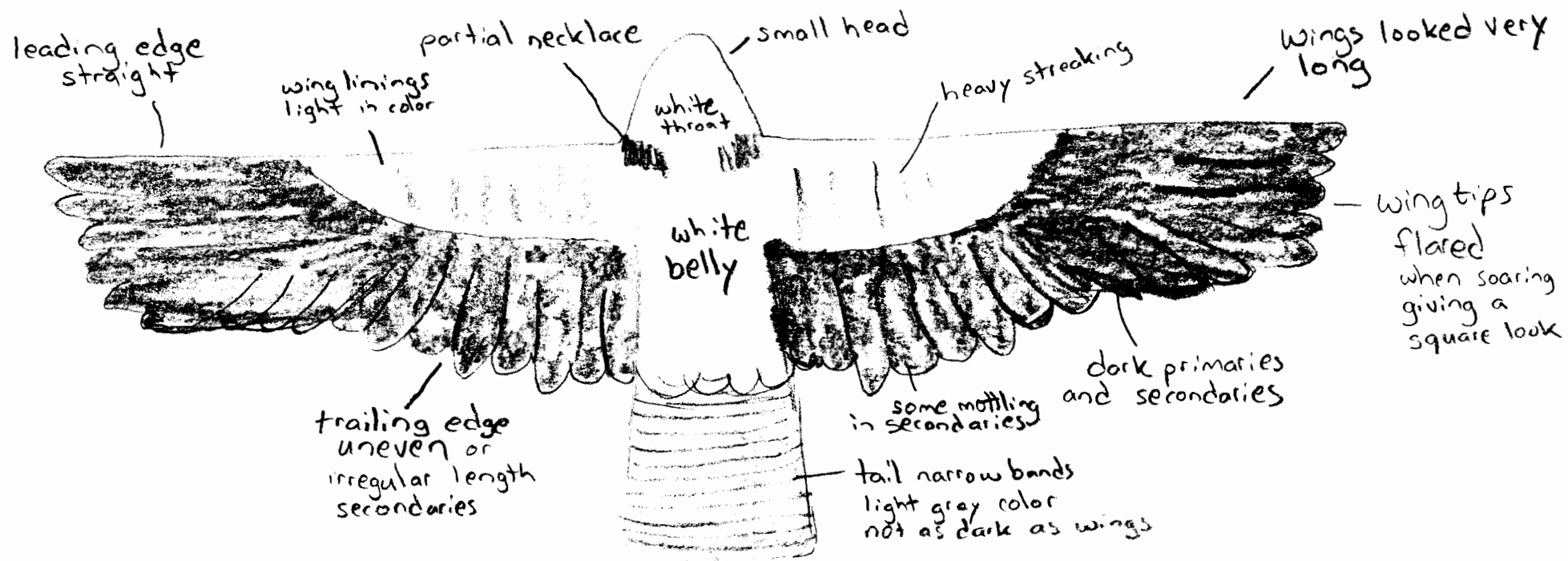
Description:

It was a buteo-shaped bird with a small head and very long wings, the tail moderate length. The leading edge of wings straight across between wing tips. The trailing edge was irregular (primaries and secondary feather length varying) due to

obvious molting. Wing tips were flared as it circled, giving an almost square look, otherwise semi-pointy. The tail was kept closed and not fanned while soaring.

The key feature seen was the dark primaries and secondaries. Some mottling could be seen in the old feathers. The chest and belly were white. Throat area was white with a partial necklace separating the chest. Wing linings were light colored with heavy streaking that made the entire underwing look black at some angles while it circled. The wing linings were distinguishable from the black primaries and secondaries. The tail had narrow bands giving a grayish look which was not as dark as the primaries and secondaries. Because the wings looked quite long, the tail did not seem to be very long, only moderate length.

SWAINSON'S HAWK



drawn by
Mike Schall

SUBMITTED
TO
MIKE SCHALL
16 SEP 2001

Species: Swainson's Hawk

Location: Little Gap Hawk Count, Nham City, PA.

Date: 15 SEP 2001 about 1535

Duration: 3-5 minutes

Observer: BRAD S. Silfies, PO Box 242 DANIELSVILLE, PA.
Mike Schall, Adam Miller, Floyd Miller, Kathy Miller, Jim
Fowler.

Distance: 800-2000' bird was first seen on the North
side of the Kittatinny Ridge crossed over it and
continued South West. It was always soaring and
I did not see it flap

Weather Conditions: Excellent. Sun was to our backs the sky
was mostly clear with some high white wispy cirrus clouds.

Optics used: 10x42 Ranger Binoculars, were used about 4 min.
Kowa Scope about 30 sec. @ 20x.

Behavior: Soaring and wheeling heading south. Alone.

Description: A butea shaped bird to eagle profile raptor
was seen from the top of the Blue Mt. The bird was
observed by the rest of the group for a while before I
saw it. When I did it had made a turn and the dark
distal portion of the primaries and secondaries was
very noticeable. The belly area appeared white. I waited
a second time to watch closer to make sure of the
colored pattern on the wings. After a few minutes the
scope was used and I could see a mottled (molt) appearance to
the wings and tail but they were all the same pattern
but some were lighter. The tail appeared to have some type
of narrow marking (like bars) but it was not easy to
recognize as I only saw it about 30 sec and then
lost it. There was also dark splotches or heavy streaking

under the throat and this was noticeable with binoculars also, but looked darker in the scope. ALL flight feather tracks were in heavy molt. The under wing coverts were light but did not appear white. They were clear in the scope + binocs AND had no noticeable PATTERN. The wing tips at times were squared and not always pointed in fact the bird would look like a black vultures wings AT TIMES when its primary were fully stretched out. Most of the time though the bird soared on pretty closed wings. The head area was noticeably light. This contrasted with the markings on the throat and agreed with the light belly + under wing. The under tail coverts were not seen well AND NOT NOTED. No fleshy parts could be detected. Eye color was not seen. The dorsal side could only be seen briefly on the turns and only appeared to be uniformly med-dark brown. There were no other birds in site near it to compare it with. No dihedral was noted but the bird was not seen head on by myself. The first and most lasting impression from this bird was the light coverts contrasting against the dark flight feathers.

I have seen this bird out west but much closer. I did not watch Swainson's this far away.

186-01-2001

State/Regional Bird Records Committee

Rare Bird Report Form

Species: Swainson's Hawk Date: 09/15/01

Number-Age-Sex: 2nd year intermediate Time: 1534 to 1539

Location: Little Gap Hawk Lookout, Northampton County

Habitat: along Kittatinny ridge

Weather Conditions: nearly clear sky with a few wispy
cirrus clouds (15%)

Distance: At limit of unaided vision

Optical Equipment: 10X Binoculars
KOWA Spotting Scope at 20X (used by Brad Silfies)

Photographs Taken?: Yes: No:

Other Observers:

Name	Address	Phone	e-mail
<u>Brad Silfies</u>	<u>1525 Blue Mtn Dr. Danielsville PA 18038</u>	<u>610-826-3817</u>	<u>bsilfies@aol.com</u>
<u>Adam Miller</u>	<u>2197 George Lane Bath PA 18014</u>	<u>610-759-2065</u>	<u>leadcrow@enter.net</u>
<u>Kathy Miller</u>	<u>2197 George Lane Bath PA 18014</u>	<u>610-759-2065</u>	
<u>Floyd Miller</u>	<u>2197 George Lane Bath PA 18014</u>	<u>610-759-2065</u>	
<u>Jim Foster</u>			

Experience of main observer: _____

Date Description Written: 9/15/01

Description of Sighting: (include size, shape, color patterns, song, call notes, behavior, and other diagnostic characteristics, but only what was actually observed in the field. Attach sketches, photographs, and additional sheets, if necessary.)

See written reports by Mike Schall
Brad Silfies

Similar Species / How Eliminated:

Bald Eagle: Both the body and head were too small for an eagle, nearer the size of a Red-tail.

Broad-winged hawk: It was a much larger buteo with very long, somewhat pointed wings. The broad-wing does not have dark primaries and secondaries.

Red-tailed hawk: A RT has whitish primaries & secondaries. There was a partial necklace but no belly band. The wings were very long in relation to the body, a red-tail's wings looks more proportionate with the body and tail.

Name: Michael Schall Signature: Michael L Schall Date: 12/4/01

Address: 1149 Mickley Ave. 610-435-2781
Whitehall, PA 18052 mdtjschall@yahoo.com

Mail this form along with accompanying (stapled) materials to:
Address of Committee inserted here.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Tabulation Form - Round One

Species: Swainson's Hawk (Buteo swainsoni)

Date of Sighting: 9 September 2001 to 9 September 2001

Location: LITTLE GAP HAWK LOOKOUT

County: NORTHAMPTON

Observer(s): Brad Silfies, Adam Miller, Kathy Miller, Floyd Miller, Jim Foster, Michael Schall

Date of Submission: 2001

Submitted by: Brad Silfies, Micahel Schall

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

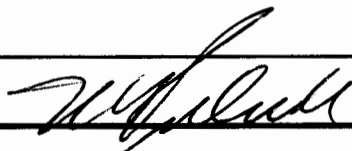
Specimen: No

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. Heathcote D. Couchman		X						
P. Hess		X						
J. Stanley		X						
E. W. Traver B. Reid				X				
R. Leberman				X				
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS		4	1	2				
DECISION								

Comments: 5/2- Go to 2nd round

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 6/4/03

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round Two

Species: Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)

Date of Sighting: 9 September 2001 to 9 September 2001

Location: LITTLE GAP HAWK LOOKOUT

County: NORTHAMPTON

Observer(s): Brad Silfies, Adam Miller et al

Date of Submission: 2002

Submitted by: Brad Silfies, Michael Schall

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

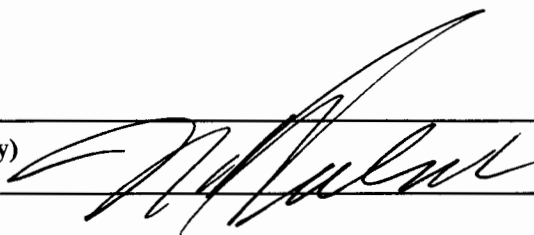
Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
G. Armistead		X						
D. Heathcote			X					
P. Hess		X			X			
J. Stanley		X						
E. Witmer		X						
R. Leberman				X				
M. Sharp		X						
TOTALS		5	1	1				
DECISION		X						

Comments: 6/1

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

2/10/08