



Mr. George Wertz, Jr.  
65 Runyon Rd.  
Hummelstown, PA 17036

February 12, 1987

Dear Bernie -

191-01-1987

This may sound odd or impossible to you but please reserve judgement until you read it through.

To get to Harrisburg, we drive west on Route 322, a divided 4 lane highway. About 3 miles west of Hummelstown, there is a hill, several hundred feet high which slopes down to the road. It is covered with trees for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile along 322 and from 200 to 400 yards deep. Across from it are open areas, small wood lots and industrial buildings (84 Xumber, Mobil tank yard etc).

On Tuesday morning, at approximately 9:45 my wife Kathryn and I were going to Harrisburg in this area and we saw a hawk circling nearby. It kept coming our way and we were astounded to see a bird we had never seen before. It was large sized. The upper wing was black with an oblong rust colored patch on each wing and out where a wing window would be was a brilliant white patch. The under wing was all white except the primary feathers were black-tipped for maybe an 1" to  $\frac{1}{2}$ ". The entire under body was a brilliant white from beak to the tip of the tail. There were no body marks or bands on the tail, just the most white we have ever seen on a bird.

I took my wife up to the Harrisburg East Mall and about 15 minutes returned to this area on an errand but on a service road north and parallel to Route 322. The bird was still circling, obviously hunting for food and I got out of the car. It passed by overhead low - 50' to 100' overhead. I was able to verify all of the above. It was bearing toward the northern

and went beyond a small grove of trees. I turned around and chased it but it was out of sight and I did not see it again.

We searched our bird books and the only thing we could come up with was an immature Ferruginous hawk. The National Geographic describes this bird to a T. I know - they don't come this far east but there was a verified sighting in New Jersey some years ago.

Several people have looked for it with no success, so it hasn't been verified but my wife and I know what we saw. I am not writing to have it in American Birds unless you know of or hear from somebody who may have seen or photographed it or it may have died and been collected.

For 36 hours from Sunday afternoon through Monday evening we had winds from 30 to 50 miles per hour starting in the Southwest and swinging around to the Northwest.

I thank you for reading this letter and we would appreciate it if you would inform us if you hear any thing from anybody else.

Sincerely yours.

George Wertz Jr.

GEORGE WERTZ JR.  
65 RUNYON ROAD  
HUMMELSTOWN, PA 17036

Record No.: 191-01-1987

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Tabulation - Round # of**

**Species:** Ferruginous Hawk

**Date of Sighting:** 02/10/87

**Observer(s):** George Wertz, Jr.

**Date of Submission:** 1989 *Dolphin*

**Submitted by:** George Wertz, Jr.

| Member          | Class I | Class II | Class III | Class IV | Class V |   |   |
|-----------------|---------|----------|-----------|----------|---------|---|---|
|                 |         |          |           |          | A       | B | C |
| E. Kwater       |         |          |           |          |         |   | X |
| B. Haas         |         |          |           |          |         |   | X |
| F. Haas         |         |          |           |          |         |   | X |
| R. Leberman     |         |          |           |          |         | X |   |
| G. McWilliams   |         |          |           |          |         | X |   |
| S. Santner      |         |          |           |          |         |   | X |
| P. Schwalbe     |         |          |           |          |         |   | X |
| <b>TOTALS</b>   |         |          |           |          |         | 2 | 5 |
| <b>DECISION</b> |         |          |           |          | _____   |   |   |

**Comments:**

**Signature (Secretary):**

*B. Haas*

**Date:**

*12-26-89*