

October 28, 2004

Steve Farbotnik
C/O Devich Farbotnik
PO Box 252
Milford Square PA 18935

The committee unanimously agreed with you that the record not be accepted to the state's provisional list of species (Class III). While no one doubted your identification everyone felt that there was simply not enough detail in the description to form any conclusion on what the bird may have been other than a Ferruginous Hawk. A pale or leucistic Red-tail was mentioned as was a immature Broad-wing and a white Gyrfalcon.

Ferruginous Hawk is an extremely rare vagrant anywhere east of the Mississippi River, though one which will likely be recorded in Pennsylvania. Compiling records such as yours will help piece together the occurrence of the species in the east.

Sincerely

Matt Sharp
Chair: Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee.

191-02-2002

Revere PA
November 8, 2002

Ferruginous Hawk

On my property, about one mile north of Revere, I have a track on which I walk almost daily. This day, in the fourth mile of a six-mile walk, I happened to glance up and saw a large bird about 200 feet up and about 15 degrees southwest of my vertical—almost overhead. The bird was in a glide, heading southward on long, out-stretched wings. Looked almost eagle-like. The skies were mostly clear with sparse clouding. The sun was low, but still working. I got my binoculars on it quickly. The first thing that struck me about its appearance was: the parts of the head and neck, that I was able to see, were WHITE!

What th' hell?

The rest of the bird: the chest, belly, the undersides of the wings and the whole under-tail appeared to be a uniform, off-white color. The only other color I could see was the dark tips of the flight feathers. No other markings. At no time did I see any part of the upper side of the bird. I had my binoculars—10 x 50 Eagle Optics (new)—on the under side for only about fifteen seconds. Soaring away, it gradually offered only a rear-end view for probably less than a minute before dropping behind a tree horizon. Interestingly, the bird interrupted its steady glide a couple of times and hung motionless in mid-air for a few seconds each time before it disappeared.

The time: 3:10 p.m.

Back home, I checked my field guides and made some phone calls. My son Devich asked me if I noticed a dihedral. I didn't. I couldn't recall clearly what shape the wing level was in. Even in a veteran birder such as myself, the excitement of such a sighting can adversely affect perception.

Ferruginous hawk would be my 300th species for Bucks County, but I was still in doubt as to its identity.

But after checking my field guides and bouncing the episode off some of my friends, I began to take a stand.

Considered

Krider's... almost always has color in the tail and other streaking. Wings would be shorter

Leucistic... pattern is almost always asymmetrical. No?

Falconer's escape... remotely possible, but I don't believe that Ferruginous is a popular 'falcon' and I saw no jesses.

Foreign... ehhhh!

I'm taking the time to make this report, certain that you will not accept it. And I agree that without documentation, you shouldn't. But I'm hoping that someone else spots this bird in our area, adding to its credibility.

As for me

It is already on my Bucks County and Pennsylvania life lists.

Steve Jurbotnik

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Tabulation Form - Round One

Species: Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*)

Date of Sighting: 8 November 2002 to 8 November 2002

Location: REVERE

County: BUCKS

Observer(s): Steve Farbotnik

Date of Submission: 2002

Submitted by: Steve Farbotnik

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						X		
P. Hess					X			
J. Stanley				X				
E. Witmer				X				
R. Leberman					X			
M. Sharp				X				
TOTALS				3	3	X		
DECISION				X				

Comments: 0/7

Signature (Secretary): 

Date: 6/7/03