

March 14, 2007

David W. Hughes
133 Birch Road.
Orwigsburg, PA 17961

Thank you for submitting your report of a Gyrfalcon at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Berks County PA on December 13, 2003

After two long rounds of voting, the record was voted upon (5/2) as a Class IV-A: a record for which there is a majority of evidence in support of the observers identification; the record is probably correct, but not beyond reasonable doubt.

Some of the dissenting voters comments included mention of the following:

References to size "larger than a Goshawk or Red-tailed Hawk" would be difficult to note with no other birds seen during the observation.

References to a darker wider sub terminal band and well defined dark trailing edge to the wings above and below could not be confirmed in references.

Members of the committee acknowledged the superb artistic drawings, but had some reservations of the fine details that appeared in them. Concerns were raised over when they were drawn and if they were made from field sketches.

Thank you for taking the time to submit this report.

Sincerely,



J. Eric Witmer
Chairman: Pennsylvania Ornithological Committee

Record # 200-01-2003

PENNSYLVANIA RARE BIRD REPORT FORM

This form is presented as a convenience and guide. It can be used if desired, but is not necessary for submitting a report. Species requiring documentation are those on the Review List or not on the Official List of Birds of Pennsylvania. Send documentation to:

Nick Pulcinella, Secretary
Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee
613 Howard Ave.
West Chester, PA 19380
nickpul@bellatlantic.net

SPECIES (common and scientific name) GYRFALCON (GRAY MORPH)
Subspecies (if known) NONE

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 1 SEX(ES) UNKNOWN

AGE(S) AND PLUMAGE(S) (e.g. immature; adult in breeding plumage; year for gulls; basic or alternate if you prefer those terms; state of molt if applicable): ADULT - PLUMAGE WAS GRAY

DATE OF OBSERVATION 12-13-03 TIME 1618HRS.

LOCATION (city, borough, township) KEMPTON PA. 19529

EXACT SITE (e.g. name of park, lake, road) HAWK MTN. SANCTUARY

OBSERVER REPORTING:

Name DAVID W HUGHES
Address 133 BIRCH RD.
City ORWIGS BURG State PA. ZIP 17961
e-mail (optional) _____ phone (optional) 570-385-0961

OTHER OBSERVERS (only those who saw and identified the bird with you):
NONE

HABITAT (e.g. mowed field, woodland edge, any other details) ROCKY OUTCROPPING ON MOUNTAIN TOP (NORTH LOOKOUT)

DISTANCE TO BIRD 200 FT.

VIEWING CONDITIONS (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you) 100% CLOUD COVER, COLD, SLIGHT WIND (NNW) AFTERNOON LIGHT WAS STILL GOOD.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED 8.5X42 SWAROVSKI BINOS, SWAROVSKI SCOPE 20X60

DESCRIPTION (Include as much detail as you observed - size relative to other species present; "jizz" = e.g. posture, body shape, and proportions; colors and patterns of plumage; bill, eye, and leg characteristics; other features relevant to this individual): BIGGER THAN A RED-TAIL HAWK AND A GOSHAWK, GRAY COLOR COVERED 80% OF BIRD, SOME WHITE ON A BROAD BODY, BARREL LIKE SPOTS ON TOP OF BREAST THAN BARRING ON SIDES OF BODY. FEET WERE YELLOW, FALCON LIKE POSTURE, WINGS WERE LONG POINTED WITH GRAY ON TOP, WING TIPS WERE BLACK UNDERWINGS WERE LIGHTER GRAY ON PRIMARIES AND SECONDARIES, COVERTS AND AUXILIARIES WERE DARKER GRAY, WING TIPS WERE BLACK. HEAD WAS LIGHT GRAY WITH A SLIGHT MUSTACHE. TAIL WAS LONG WITH SLIGHT BARRING, THE LAST BAND WAS A LITTLE DARKER, THE TIP OF THE TAIL WAS DULL WHITE, NOT VERY BRIGHT.

(Please use an additional page if necessary.)

BEHAVIOR (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing) GYRFALCON WAS CIRCLING FOR ABOUT 3 MINUTES, EACH CIRCLE WAS SLOW AND POWERFUL, THE BIRD WAS LOOKING AROUND, IT THEN STARTED TO GLIDE TO THE NORTH SIDE OF LOOK IT TOOK TWO VERY POWERFUL OAR LIKE BEATS OF THE WINGS, IN TWO MINUTES IT WAS GONE, ALL THIS HAPPEN BELOW EYE LEVEL.

VOCALIZATIONS
NONE.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IF ANY:

Photograph Video recording Audio recording Drawing

Photographer/recorder/illustrator:

Name DAVID W HUGHES

Address 133 BIRCH RD.

City ORWIGSBURG State PA ZIP 17961

e-mail (optional) _____ phone (optional) 570-385-0961

Please include a copy of the photograph or recording with your report, and accompany it with a complete written documentation if the identification is obvious to you. If you made a drawing, please include it.

IF THIS IS A DEAD BIRD:

General condition N/A

If collected (by permit), location and number of specimen if known _____

SEPARATION FROM SIMILAR SPECIES (how you eliminated others) WAS NOT A PEREGRINE BECAUSE THE MUSTACHE WAS NOT OUTSTANDING BODY WAS TOO BIG, WINGS WERE LONG AND BROAD (NOT LONG AND GULL LIKE ON A PEREGRINE) WAS NOT A GOSHAWK BECAUSE THE WINGS WERE LONG AND POINTED, BODY WAS BROADER AND HEAVIER LOOKING, TAIL WAS LONGER, THE EYE WAS DARK, NOT RED

DISCUSSION - Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it
THE GYRFALCON WAS SO CLOSE IT FILLED UP THE SCOPE'S VIEWING AREA I USED THE SCOPE TO MAKE MENTAL NOTE FOR DESCRIPTION, USED MY BINOS TO WATCH FLIGHT PATTERN.

(Please use an additional page if necessary)

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND/OR SIMILAR SPECIES

SAW A DARK MORPH GYRFALCON AT BRIGLINE N.J. IN 1972 FOR 6 HRS. ALSO SAW THE GYRFALCONS IN LANCASTER COUNTY IN THE 80'S.

ARE YOU POSITIVE OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION? (why or why not) YES, THE GYRFALCON WAS SO CLOSE, CIRCLING JUST 200 FT. AWAY, THE DETAILS OF POSTURE, PLUMAGE AND BODY SHAPE, IT ONLY COULD BE A GYRFALCON, I'VE BEEN WATCHING RA FOR 40 YRS. AT HAWK MTN.

REFERENCES CONSULTED:

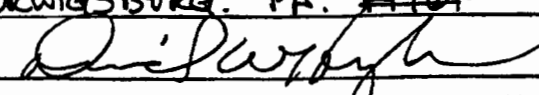
During observation NONE

After observation NONE, CONSULTED WITH LAURIE GOODRICH

DATE OF THIS REPORT: 12-16-03

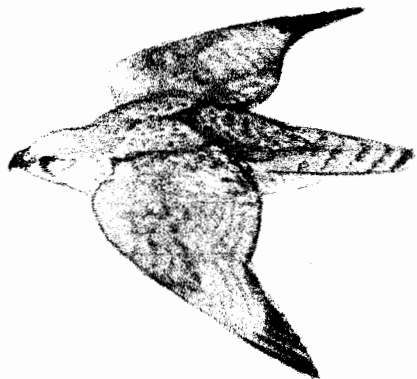
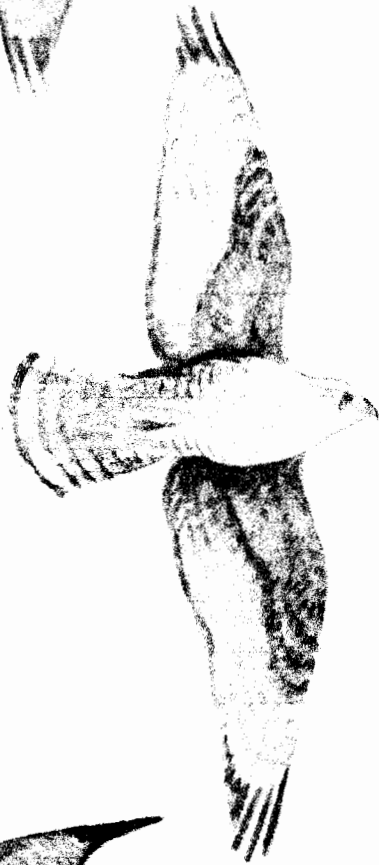
SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER David W Hughes

RARE SPECIES REPORT

SPECIES: GYRFALCON (GRAY MORPH)		NUMBER SEEN: 1
SIGHTING DATE: 12-13-03		SIGHTING TIME: 1618 HRS.
LOCATION: HAWK MTN. SANCTUARY	COUNTY & STATE- BERKS - PENNA. DISTANCE & DIRECTION FROM NEAREST TOWN- 6 mi. - WEST OF HAMBURG, PA. DIRECTIONS, IF APPLICABLE- 2 MILES OFF RT. 895	
HABITAT: ROCKY OUTCROPPING ON MOUNTAIN TOP (NORTH LOOKOUT)		
SIGHTING CONDITIONS: AFTERNOON CLOUDCOVER	LIGHTING- CLOUDY SKY, STILL A GOOD LIGHT FOR TIME OF DAY DISTANCE- 200 FT. EQUIPMENT USED- 8.5X42 SWAROVSKI BINOS, SWAROVSKI SCOPE 20X60 LENGTH OF SIGHTING- 3-5 MINUTES	
DESCRIPTION:	VOICE- NOT HEARD SIZE- BIGGER THAN A RED-TAIL HAWK AND A GOSHAWK PLUMAGE- GRAY COVERING 90% OF THE BIRD, SOME WHITE ON THE BODY, BLK WING TIPS, BODY HAD SPOTS FROM BREAST THAN BARON ON SIDE OF BODY AT BOTTOM AREA WHERE FEET ARE * CONTINUED ON BACK OF PAPER ANATOMY (BILL LENGTH, LEG COLOR, ETC.)- FEET WERE YELLOW, WINGS LONG AND POINTED. BODY WAS BROAD, HEAVY LOOKING, EYE WAS DARK, NOT RED. TAIL LONGER THAN OTHER BIRDS. BEHAVIOR- CIRCLING FOR 3 MINUTES, THAN TWO POWERFUL WING B OTHER FEATURES- WINGS WERE LONG, POINTED AND BROAD AS IT CAME INTO BODY BODY WAS BROAD, BARREL-LIKE, TAIL WAS LONG.	
FAMILIARITY WITH THIS AND SIMILAR SPECIES: WATCH A GYRFALCON (BLK MORPH) AT BRIGTINE NJ. IN 1972 (NORTH) FOR 6 HRS., SAW THE GYRFALCONS AT LANCASTER COUNTY IN THE 80'S. WATCHED PELEGRINES AND GOSHAWKS AT HAWK MTN. FOR 35 YRS.		
COMPARISON TO SIMILAR SPECIES: THIS WAS NOT A PERLEGRINE BECAUSE THE MUSTACHE WAS NOT OUTSTANDING, BODY WAS TOO BIG, WINGS WERE TOO BROAD. THIS BIRD WAS NOT A GOSHAWK BECAUSE THE WINGS WERE LONG AND POINTED, TAIL WAS LONGER, BODY WAS BROADER AND HEAVIER LOOKING. THE EYE WAS DARK, NOT RED.		
HAS A PHOTOGRAPH BEEN TAKEN? NO		
HAS ANY ADDITIONAL OBSERVER(S) FILLED OUT A RARE SPECIES REPORT? IF SO, WHO? NO		
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: THE GYRFALCON WAS CLOSE TO LOOKOUT- ABOUT 200 FT. GOOD LOOKS AS IT CIRCLED THAN GLIDED AROUND NORTH SIDE OF LOOKOUT BELOW EYE LEVEL. JUST GREAT! ILLUSTRATION DONE (LAURIE GOODRICH WAS THEM)		
SIGHTING & REPORT BY: DAVID W HUGHES		
ADDRESS: 133 BIRCH RD.		PHONE NO.: (570) 385-0961
ORWIGSBURG, PA. 17961		
SIGNATURE: 	DATE: 12-16-03	

PLUMAGE:

- 1) UPPER WINGS WERE GRAY WITH BLACK WING TIPS.
- 2) UNDER WINGS WERE LIGHTER GRAY ON PRIMARIES AND SECONDARIES, COV AND AUXILIARIES WERE DARKER GRAY. WING TIPS WERE BLACK ALSO.
- 3) HEAD WAS LIGHT GRAY WITH A SLIGHT MUSTACHE.
- 4) TAIL WAS LONG WITH SLIGHT BANDING, THE LAST BAND WAS A LITTLE DARKER, THE TIP OF THE TAIL WAS WHITE, MORE DULL WHITE THAN BRIGHT.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round ~~Two~~ ONE

Species: Gyrfalcon (Falco rusticolis)

Date of Sighting: 13 December 2003 to 13 December 2003

Location: HAWK MT. SANCTUARY

County : BERKS

Observer(s): David Hughes

Date of Submission: 2004

Submitted by: David Hughes

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
R. Wiltraut			X					
D. Heathcote <i>Guerrate</i>			X					
P. Guris			X					
J. Stanley				X				
E. Witmer			X					
R. Leberman			X					
M. Sharp				X				
TOTALS			5	2				
DECISION								

Comments: 5/2 GO TO 2ND Round

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

6/24/04

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round Two

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County : BERKS

Observer(s): David Hughes

Date of Submission: 2004

Submitted by: David Hughes

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

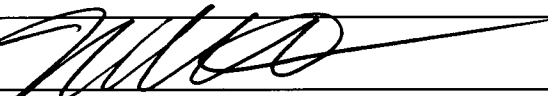
Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut			X					
A. Guarente			X					
T. Johnson				X				
J. Stanley				X				
E. Witmer			X					
J. Heller			X					
G. Malosh			X					
TOTALS			5	2				
DECISION				X				

Comments:

5/2

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

1/29/07