



PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE  
210 Welcome Ave. Norwood, PA 19074

12 February 2002

Dale L. Gearhart  
P.O. Box 155  
Shady Grove, PA 17256

Dear Dale,

Thank you for submitting documentation on the following two species. After careful review, the Committee regrets that it has not accepted these records.

**King Rail at Hopewell Township on 13 June 1999:** The Committee's opinions were divided, and the balloting went two rounds (which partly explains our delay in informing you of the decision). The final vote was five in favor and two not in favor of accepting the record. The Committee's bylaws require a minimum vote of 6-1 for acceptance.

As a result, the record was placed in Class IV-A: "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."

The five members approving it had no doubt about the identification, but the other two expressed disappointment that a written report did not accompany the photograph describing all of the plumage in detail including portions that are not visible in the photograph.

The two expressed particular concern that a hybrid King x Clapper Rail or a Clapper Rail of the equally bright Florida subspecies *scottii* were not ruled out conclusively. The latter is indeed quite unlikely in geographical terms, but the dissenters felt that it needed to be eliminated because a Spotted Rail from the tropics was previously found dead in western Pennsylvania.

The Committee's bylaws provide for re-evaluation of a record if new information is received. We will welcome a detailed description including measurements if the specimen is still available, and an explanation of how a hybrid or a *scottii* can be separated conclusively.

**Red-necked Phalarope at Greencastle Reservoir September 7-16, 1999:** The vote was one in favor of acceptance and six not in favor. Those who voted against acceptance felt that the brief description was not sufficient to eliminate Red Phalarope conclusively.

Of course non-acceptance does not mean that either of these birds was identified incorrectly, but rather that the Committee felt that alternatives had not been ruled out conclusively. We hope that these results will not discourage you from submitting reports on any future rarities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul".

For the Committee:  
Paul Hess, Chairman

Record #235-01-1999 (King Rail), 330-03-1999 (Red-necked Phalarope)

235-0-1999

RARE BIRD REPORT


Species: King Rail Date of this Observation: June 1, 1999

Date Found: 5-13-99 Last Date Seen: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: Rt. 696 approximately 1/2 mile from 997 toward Newburg

Township/City: Hopewell Twp. County: Cumberland

Person Writing this report: Dale L. Gearhart

Address:  Dale Gearhart  
P.O. Box 155  
Shady Grove, PA 17256 Phone: 717-597-3979

Other Observers: Ken Gabler, Kathryn + Richard Lauer, William Greenawalt

Who found the bird first: William Greenawalt

Other documentation Included: (Circle all appropriate items)(Make sure all attached items are fully labeled)

Photograph  ~~Map~~ Audio Recording  Video Recording

If a Specimen, where is it stored? Greencastle-Antrim Environmental Center

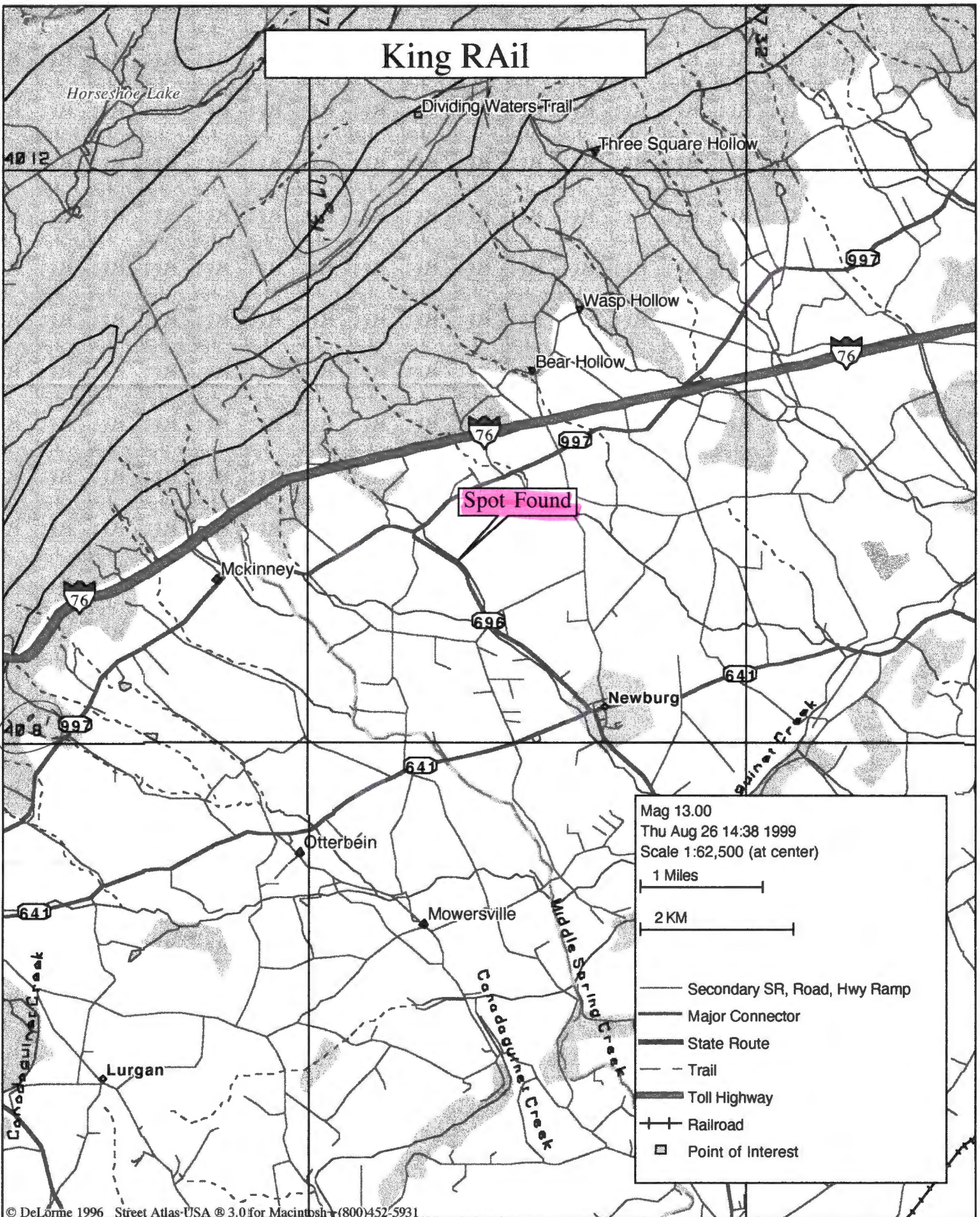
Description: (Attach additional pages as needed —Please do not write on back of this form)

This King Rail was found by Mr. Greenawalt near his residence on Rt. 696. He gave it to the Lauvers who called me (Dale Gearhart). It is in very good condition which is seen by the enclosed photo (in a frozen state). It was apparently hit by a vehicle in an area near a wetland + stream. No one had reported seeing any rails prior to this time. Mr. Greenawalt is not a bird watcher but did recognize this rail as being different + thus told the Lauvers who live nearby.

Mr. White is hoping to get the rail mounted soon. Mr. White is the Director of the Environmental Center. The center is located next to the Greencastle-Antrim School District Campus at 500 E. Leitersburg Street in Greencastle.



# King Rail



Mag 13.00  
Thu Aug 26 14:38 1999  
Scale 1:62,500 (at center)

1 Miles  
2 KM

- Secondary SR, Road, Hwy Ramp
- Major Connector
- State Route
- Trail
- Toll Highway
- Railroad
- Point of Interest

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Ballot - Round One**

Species: King Rail ( Rallus elegans )

Date of Sighting: 1 June 1999 to 1 June 1999

Location: CUMBERLAND

County: HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP

Observer(s): Dale Gearhart, Ken Gabler, Kathym Lauver, Richard Lauver, William Greenawalt

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: Dale Gearhart

Written Description: No

Photo: Yes

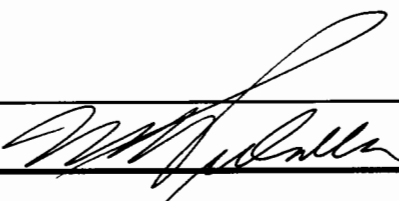
Specimen: No

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. Ickes     | X       |          |           |            |            |            |         |         |
| M. Sharp     | X       |          |           |            |            |            |         |         |
| B. Reid      |         |          |           | X          |            |            |         |         |
| P. Rodewald  | X       |          |           |            |            |            |         |         |
| TOTALS       | 5       |          |           | 2          |            |            |         |         |
| DECISION     |         |          |           |            |            |            |         |         |

Comments: (5/2) 2ND ROUND

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 2/26/01

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Tabulation From - Round Two**

Species: King Rail (*Rallus elegans*)

Date of Sighting: 1 June 1999 to 1 June 1999

Location: HOPWELL TOWNSHIP

County: CUMBERLAND

Observer(s): Dale Gearhart, Ken Gabler, Kathryn Lauver, Richard Lauver, William Greenwalt

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: Dale Gearhart

Written Description: No

Photo: Yes

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. Ickes     | X       |          |           |            |            |            |         |         |
| B. Reid      |         |          |           | X          |            |            |         |         |
| P. Rodewald  | X       |          |           |            |            |            |         |         |
| M. Sharp     |         |          |           |            | X          |            |         |         |
| TOTALS       | 5       |          |           | 1          | 1          |            |         |         |
| DECISION     |         |          |           | X          |            |            |         |         |

Comments: 5/2

Signature (Secretary):

Date: