

> Hi Cliff,

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> I am Jerry McWilliams, senior author of the Birds of Pennsylvania and bird records chairman for the Presque Isle Audubon Society.

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> I just read about your sighting of a Wilson's Plover on Presque Isle State Park, here in Erie Pennsylvania. This is an exceptional record for Presque Isle State Park or anywhere in Pennsylvania for that matter. There are only four modern records of this species in the state, all but one of those records is from Gull Point on Presque Isle S.P. The last one reported was on September 10, 1976 at Gull Point.

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> Could you send me a detailed description of the Wilson's Plover so it can be reviewed by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee? I would also retain a copy of the description for our local records.

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> Thank you,

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> Jerry McWilliams Bird Records Chairman for the PIAS

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Hi Jerry,

Thanks for the reply. I figured this was probably worth reporting, but I did not know it was this rare in PA. Unfortunately I did not have photographic equipment with me.

Two friends and I were walking east along the water's edge from the Sunset Point lot on our way to Gull Point around 11:00 a.m. 4/26/08. We were at the spot on the beach where there is a spit of sand that reaches out and touches the rock jetty closest to the beach just northwest of the No. 10 lot.

I noticed a sandpiper walking quickly away from us about 50 feet away along the water, and at first thought it was a darkish Piping Plover based on size, plain gray-brown back and light-colored legs, its gait, and the habitat (wide sandy beach); but when we stopped, it too stopped and turned and I saw that it was a Wilson's Plover. The bird was quite tame, as it stayed only about 20-30 feet ahead of two other beachwalkers that walked nearby as I observed it; a Spotted Sandpiper would have flushed long before this, but the plover continued walking ahead. I was able to observe the bird with 8x35 binoculars for 10 minutes in this general area.

The bird was between a Piping Plover and a Semipalmated Plover in size, uniform dingy brown on the upperparts, dark brown tail (no red as expected on Killdeer), and uniform white on the throat, chest and belly. No wing markings. It had a single complete, broad dark collar on the lower throat, clearly delineated and dark brown on the front half of the bird and fading into the same dingy brown as the upperparts as it joined the gray-brown area above the scapulars. The white of the upper throat extended back into a partial, somewhat worn/patchy white collar above the black collar, extending partway around the sides of the neck into the dingy brown on the back of the neck. Otherwise the head

coloration was primarily the same as the back, with a white forehead, and a broad white eyebrow (far broader than that of Spotted Sandpiper). The eye was dark, larger than Killdeer or Semipalmated's eye, and was noticeably oval. No visible eye-ring. There were no dark marks in the forecrown as appear on Killdeer or Piping Plover. The bill was uniformly dark gray or black, longer and thicker than Killdeer's or Semipalmated's, half the length of the head, and somewhat chisel-tipped. The head was proportioned overall like a Killdeer's. Legs sand-colored.

Behaviorally, the bird was quite tame but alert, and showed no sign of injury or ill health. It would run at a uniform speed (noticeably slower than a Sanderling's run) with head somewhat lowered and back nearly level with ground, for 10-30 feet if a person approached within about 30 feet, but stop again abruptly and turn its head halfway to look back, remaining stock-still, all while staying within 1-2 feet of the water's edge. During most stops the bird would make a number of head-up movements (momentary tilting back of the body and head), similar to a Killdeer's movements when alarmed, but was silent throughout. When left alone, the bird appeared to hunt sand worms, but would dig at the sand in a brief flurry, then stand entirely still for a longer period, much more like a Killdeer or Robin in feeding habits than a Sanderling or Semipalmated Plover.

When we returned from a hike out to Gull Point, at around 1:00, the bird was not re-found despite some searching and a binocular scan of the beach and beach edge.

# Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

## Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Wilson's Plover Charadrius wilsonia

Date of Sighting: 26 April 2008 to 26 April 2008

County : ERIE

Location : PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

Observer(s): Cliff Miller

Date of Submission: 2008

Submitted by: Cliff Miller

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

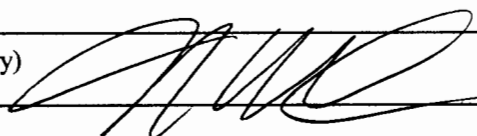
Specimen: No

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				
B. Coulter			X					
E. Witmer			X					
J. Heller					X			
G. Malosh			X					
TOTALS			5	1	1			
DECISION								

Comments: 5/2 GO TO 2ND ROUND

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

8/24/08

# Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

## Voting Tabulation – Round Two

Species: Wilson's Plover Charadrius wilsonia

Date of Sighting: 26 April 2008 to 26 April 2008

County : ERIE

Location : PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

Observer(s): Cliff Miller

Date of Submission: 2008

Submitted by: Cliff Miller

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

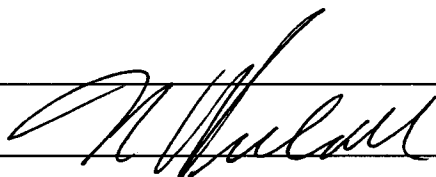
Recording: No

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				
B. Coulter				X				
<del>C. Rutt</del> K. Feyberger			X					
J. Heller				X				
G. Malosh			X					
TOTALS			3	4				
DECISION				X				

Comments:

3/4

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

7/1/09