



261-01-1995

PIPING PLOVER

Charadrius melodus

Location: Presque Isle State Park

Date: July 29, 1995

Time: 7:15 to 7:30 AM

Weather: Variably cloudy, wind westerly to about 10 mph, temp. about 76 F

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Zeiss 10 X 40 Binocular and Kowa TSN 4 Spotting Scope at 30X

Details of sighting and description: Ed Kwater and I were walking out into Region II of Gull Point to conduct a shorebird survey when we stopped to look at several shorebirds feeding along the edge of the water. There were three birds that were about 100 to 150 feet away from us, one was an adult Killdeer, one was an adult Sanderling, and the other was a juvenile Piping Plover. In a few minutes the Piping plover left the other two birds and began walking along the beach in our direction and approached us to within 100 feet. While I was trying to set up my camera for a photograph the bird flew and called about five or six times. The call might be described as sounding like a whistled pee-po. Before it flew the following details were noted; it was about the same size and shape as a Semipalmated Plover and was nearly equal in size to the nearby Sanderling. The bird's behavior was similar to that of the Semipalmated Plover's behavior, a slow deliberate walk-a few-steps and then pause, repeated over and over with an occasional peck at the ground. The entire underside of the plover was pure white. The bill was entirely black and was short and stubby like a Semipalmated Plovers bill. The mantle, wing coverts, head and cheeks were pale gray. The mantle and wing covert feathers were narrowly edged in white, which was indistinct but visible. The color of the gray on the Piping Plover was nearly equal to the gray of the basic mantle feathers on the nearby Sanderling. The forehead was white as well as the supercillium. The eye was jet black standing out quite prominently against the pale unmarked face. There was a pale gray bar that extended down each side of the breast and was separated from the pale gray head by a narrow white collar. The folded primaries were black and the legs were dull yellow.

I saw and photographed another, or perhaps the same, Piping Plover on August 10th & 11th.

261-01-1995

V9/3

Juvenile Piping Plover in Erie County, PA
by Ed Kwater.

On Saturday July 29th 1995, Jerry McWilliams and I were birding at Gull Point, Presque Isle State Park, Erie County, PA. At approximately 7.00 a.m. we walked out onto the Point in an area known as Region 2, close to the observation platform. Raising my binocular I saw 3 shorebirds at the water's edge.

I hastily identified them as a Killdeer, Charadrius vociferus and 2 Sanderlings, Calidris alba despite the fact that one of the birds had it's back to me and looked uniformly pale. Immediately afterwards, Jerry said "I've got a Piping Plover" (Charadrius melodus). Looking back at the shorebird group I quickly realised that the pale bird I had seen was the Piping Plover and I kicked myself for being so careless. We identified the bird as a juvenile based on the following characters:

Overall the bird was extremely pale ^(and in very fresh plumage). The crown, ear coverts, mantle, scapulars and wing coverts were pale sandy brown, almost the color of seashore sand. The forehead, supercilium and nape were white. There were large sandy brown patches on each side of the breast but these did not form a complete breast band. The rest of the underparts were white. The legs were medium length for a shorebird and bright orange. The bill was very short and black. The eye was black and very prominent on the pale face. In flight the primaries and secondaries were dark with white bases forming prominent wing bars and the tail looked very pale, almost white. The bird was observed to within 20 yards for approximately 5 minutes through x10 binocular and x30 spotting scope. It

then flew down to the southern tip of Gull Point and was not seen again. When compared to a Sanderling the Piping Plover had a very distinctive feeding behaviour. It would run a few paces, stop and pick at the sand, wait a few seconds, run a few paces, and so on. ^{The call was a double whistle, the first note higher than the second.}

Although I have ~~seen~~ seen 3 adult Piping Plovers of the inland "race", circumcinctus (this is not recognised as a well differentiated race by Hayman 1986) this is the first juvenile I have seen. All the above sightings have occurred at Gull Point.

Reference:

Hayman, P. 1986 - Shorebirds pp 287-288
Croom Helm, London.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Piping Plover (Charadrius melodus)**

Date of Sighting: **29 July 1995 to 11 August 1995**

Location: **PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK**

County: **ERIE**

Observer(s): **Jerry McWilliams**

Ed Kwater

Date of Submission: **1995**

Submitted by: **Jerry McWilliams**

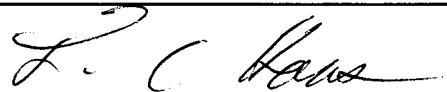
Written Description: **YES** Photo: **YES** Specimen: **NO**

Recording: **NONE**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V			Abstain
					A	B	C	
F. Haas	X							
N. Pulcinella	X							
E. Kwater	X							
R. Ickes	X							
G. McWilliams	X							
P. Schwalbe	X							
S. Feldstein	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

5-1-96