

261-01-2000

PIPING PLOVER (BASIC PLUMAGED ADULT?)

CONEJOHELA FLATS, LANCASTER COUNTY

AUGUST 27, 2000

OBSERVERS: ERIC WITMER, TOM GARNER, JERRY BOOK,
BOB SCHUTSKY, RANDY MILLER

OBSERVED OVER A 7-8 HOUR PERIOD UNDER
EXCELLENT CONDITIONS, SOMETIMES AS
CLOSE AS 35 YARDS.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: ABOUT SIZE OF SEMIPALMATED
PLOVER BUT 'PUDGIER' LOOKING WITH A LARGER
HEAD AND NECK. BILL STUBBIER AND HEAVIER,
COMPLETELY BLACK. DARK EYE APPEARED LARGE
ON VERY PALE FACE. LEGS LIGHT ORANGE.

UPPERPARTS, FACE, & CROWN VERY PALE, SANDY
COLORATION. DARK AREA AT BEND OF WING
SIMILAR TO THAT OF SANDERLIN. FOREHEAD,
SUPERCILIUM, AND LORAL AREA WHITISH.

BREASTBAND ABOUT SAME COLOR AS UPPERPARTS
AND RESTRICTED TO SIDES OF BREAST ONLY.

WING COVERTS ONLY WITH PALE FEATHER EDGINGS.

LONG PRIMARY PROJECTION ON FOLDED WING
APPEARED TO BE ABOUT SAME LENGTH AS TAIL.

IN FLIGHT HAD OBVIOUS WHITE WING STRIPE
CONTRASTING WITH BLACKISH "FLIGHT" FEATHERS.

DARK TAIL BAND WITH VERY PALE RUMP. TWO-

NOTED FLIGHT CALL WITH SHORT SECOND SYLLABLE
VERY DIFFERENT FROM SLURRED CALLS OF SEMI-

PALMATED PLOVER. (HEARD IN DIRECT COMPARISON)

ELIMINATION OF SIMILAR SPECIES:

SNOWY PLOVER HAS "DARKISH" LEGS AND THINNER
BILL

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER: SEEN IN DIRECT COMPAR-
ISON WITH SEVERAL ^{JUV.} SEMIPALMATED PLOVERS,
SEMI'S WERE OBVIOUSLY MUCH DARKER ABOVE
WITH AN EVEN DARKER, COMPLETE BREASTBAND.
SEMI'S BREASTBAND "WRAPPED" AROUND BACK OF

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LOWER NECK, SEPARATING WHITE COLLAR FROM UPPER BACK. ON PIPING PLOVER SINCE THE PARTIAL BRESTBAND WAS ABOUT THE SAME COLOR AS BACK, THE WHITE COLLAR MET WITH THE UPPER BACK. HYPOTHETICALLY A VERY PALE, ABERRANT SEMIPALMATED PLOVER COULD APPROACH THE GENERAL COLORATION OF A PIPING PLOVER. THE PIPING PLOVER WE SAW IN DIRECT COMPARISON TO THE "TYPICAL" SEMI'S WAS PUGGIER WITH A LARGER HEADED APPEARANCE, HAD A STUBBIER, HEAVIER, ^{ALL BLACK} BILL, AND IT'S FLIGHT CALL WHICH WAS HEARD ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS WAS OBVIOUSLY DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF A SEMI, AS MENTIONED ABOVE.

THANKS,
TOM Garner

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On Sunday, August 27, 2000 Tom Garner and myself found a Piping Plover on the Conejohela Flats, Washington Boro, Lancaster County, PA. Observations were made under clear skies with 10x42 binoculars and a 20x77 wide angle spotting scope at distances of 40- 250 yards. The plover was observed on drier sand bars and mudflats. Observations include:

Obvious shorter legged/ smaller stockier plover. The same size as a Semipalmated Plover (direct comparisons of the two species were able to be made) All of the upper parts were sandy gray, considerably lighter than a Semipalmated Plover. The crown was sandy gray extending down to the nape. A thin white supercilium was noted. A small white neck collar separated the nape and sandy gray back. All of the under parts were white.

The eye was dark and prominent. The neck was short.(big eyed and bull headed look) The breast band was sandy gray and incomplete in the center. The bill was black, short and stubby similar in shape to a Semipalmated Plover. Not thin as in Snowy Plover. The legs were orange.

At rest the wing and tail projection was about equal. At closer views some light (not buffy)scalloping was noted on the sandy gray wing coverts and scapulars.

In flight a thin white wing stripe was noted . The rump and tail was white. There was a small incomplete dark terminal band with several of the outer tail feathers being completely white. A two noted call was heard several times with the first note longer than the second note.

Several other observers were able to see the Piping Plover later in the day including Jerry Book and Bob Schutsky (photographs made). Many other observers were able to find the Piping Plover for the next week . I observed it again on September 1st and 3rd. This is about the 6th Lancaster County record, the first since 1961.

All the above observers are familiar with Piping Plover from the Atlantic Coast populations

J. Eric Witmer
230 Mason Drive
Ephrata PA 17522.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round One

Species: Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*)

Date of Sighting: 27 August 2000 to 27 August 2000

Location: WASHINGTON BORO

County: LANCASTER

Observer(s): Eric Witmer, Tom Garner, Jerry Book, Randy Miller
Bob Schutsky, Devich Farbotnik

Date of Submission: 2001

Submitted by: Eric Witmer, Tom Garner, Devich Farbotnik

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

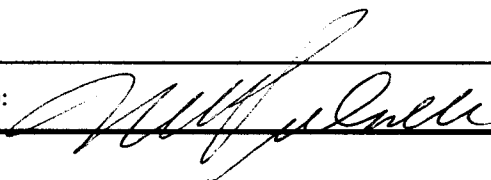
Specimen: No

Recording: Video

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. Jokes J. Stanley	X							
B. Reid	X							
R. Leberman P. Rodewald	X							
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 10/27/01