





261-01-2005

Documentation for the PORC

Species: Piping Plover

Number: 1

Sex, age, plumage: Adult, probable male

Date: Saturday, 02 April, 2005

County: Bucks

Location: The Penn-Warner tract, Falls Twp, near Tullytown.

Observer:

Bill Etter

1030 Old Bethlehem Road #2

Perkasie, PA 18944

etter@netcarrier.com

215-964-3613

Additional observers: Devich Farbotnik, Ian Baldoch. A few others saw the bird prior to my arrival.

Habitat:

The bird was seen on a mudflat between Van Sciver Lake and the Delaware River. Water level on this floodplain is managed...sometimes flooded, sometimes dry, often muddy, as it was on this day.

Conditions:

Horrible weather...it's amazing that the bird was found at all! There were storms all day, producing excessive rainfall and severe local flooding across the region. The plover was no doubt a storm-related 'fallout' bird. Fortunately, it spent the afternoon very close to a roadside, and was easily viewed at very close range, despite the terrible weather.

Distance + Optics:

The bird was as close as 40 feet, viewed with 10x24 binoculars and 78mm scope at 30x.

Description:

I got a call from Devich Farbotnik, the finder, and made my way through the storm to the southeastern corner of the county. His four-wheel drive vehicle got us out to the bird's location. From atop a dike crossing the floodplain, we could see a small, very pale plover below us at very close range. There was no brown coloration to the bird. The small, orange, dark-tipped bill was easily visible, even in the rain. Orange legs, thin dark stripe across the forehead, pale 'eyebrow', and a thin dark collar were also easily visible. The plover was running around on the mudflat below us, never straying more than 100 feet from the vehicle.

Differentiation from similar species:

Snowy Plover is also small and pale, but would not have any bright orange on the bill or on the legs. Semipalmated Plover *does* have an orange bill of similar structure. It also has superficially similar forehead markings and collar, but is much darker overall, especially around the face. The plover we saw that day had a pale back, crown and supercilium. The dark forehead stripe was thin, and there was no further black around the face or eye.

Behavior:

The plover ran around feeding on the mudflat in the rain, in the company of a single Dunlin. In exceptional gusts of wind, it would hide out behind pieces of driftwood, along with its Dunlin friend. It probably chose to spend the afternoon close below the north side of this particular dike because it offered some protection from the extreme south wind that day.

Vocalizations: None

Supporting evidence: Two pictures submitted with report. They're blurry due to the rain, but indicative of Piping Plover. Hopefully Devich Farbotnik will submit better images.

Previous experience:

I've seen dozens of Piping Plovers in NJ, DE, MD, VA, and NC. This was my first for PA!

Certainty of identification: I am 100% confident in my identification of this bird.

References consulted: I looked at my Sibley guide and a few websites later to review any possible sexual dimorphism.

Date of report: 26 May 2005.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Piping Plover (Charadrius melodus)

Date of Sighting: 2 April 2005 to 2 April 2005

Location: PENN WARNER TRACT

County : BUCKS

Observer(s): Devich Farbotnik, Bill Etter

Date of Submission: 2005

Submitted by: Bill Etter

Written Description: Yes

Photo: Yes

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>Greene</i>	X							
P. Guris	X							
J. Stanley	X							
E. Witmer	X							
R. Teberman <i>Heller</i>	X							
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments: *7/0*

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

6/15/06