

268-01-2011

## Pennsylvania Rare Bird Report

**Species:** Black-necked Stilt ( *Himantopus mexicanus* )

**Number of individuals Sex(es)** one probable female

**Age(s) and Plumage(s):** appeared to be an adult female to to the brownish back.

**Date and Time of Observation:** Wednesday, September 7, 2011. From 9:45 to 10:55 AM

**Location:** Washington Boro, Manor Township, Lancaster County

**Exact Site** Conejohela Flats, Avocet Point

**Observer Reporting:** Timothy Becker, 10283 Jonestown Rd, Grantville, Pa 17028,  
[tjbecker81@aol.com](mailto:tjbecker81@aol.com), 717-919-3716

**Other Observers (Only Those Who Saw and Identified the Bird with You):** none

**Habitat** exposed mud shoreline along the edge of an island in the Susquehanna River

**Distance to Bird** perhaps 250 yards

**Viewing Conditions** overcast with the sun at my back, what little sun there was

**Optical Equipment Used** 10x binoculars and scope set on 25x

**Description:** Very long red legs and a long straight bill. Dark black/brown back sharply contrasting with a white belly, front of neck, and throat. A black line or mask running through the eye. There was a white indentation cutting upward into the rear wing area. A thin black line ran up the back of the neck, leading to a black cap. Noticeably larger than the Lesser Yellowlegs feeding nearby. Body size similar to a Greater Yellowlegs, but up on "stilts".

**Behavior** A very active feeding behavior. Short runs along the shoreline with brief pauses. At one point it appeared to capture something that may have been a minnow. After consuming the prey, it entered the water and swished it's bill side-to-side in Avocet fashion. During the hour of my observation it covered the approximate 50 yards of shoreline several times.

**Vocalizations** none

**Supporting evidence if any:** drawing

**Separation from similar species** Nothing similar that I can think of. An Avocet would have been larger, with an upward curved bill, no black on the neck or face, white longitudinal bar on the wing, thick blue/grey legs

**Discussion** The Stilt was observed on the morning previous to receiving 12 inches of rain, with flash flooding, from the remnants of tropical storm Lee. I left with the approach of a thunder storm. I had the bird posted on the Pa Birds listserve by calling a friend while I was observing it. But the rains and flooding came preventing others from observing it. The one other birder who visited the flats that evening did not report the Stilt.

**Previous experience with this and/or similar species** I have observed Black-necked Stilts in North Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware. I have also seen one in Pennsylvania at Krieders Pond in

Lebanon County, perhaps two years ago when one was reported and observed there by many others.

**Are you positive of your identification ?** Yes. I knew what it was immediately as they are quite unique.

**References Consulted:**

**During Observation** The Sibley Guide to Birds

**After Observation** The Sibley Guide to Birds

**Date of this Report** 9/10/11

## Pennsylvania Rare Bird Report Form

This form is presented as a convenience and guide. It can be used if desired, but is not necessary for submitting a report. Species requiring documentation are those on the Review List or not on the Official List of Birds of Pennsylvania. Fill in all relevant fields and then click on the "Submit by Email" button at the end of the form to send it to the PORC Secretary. Or print the form and mail it to the PORC Secretary (see address below).

**NOTE:** The fields scroll down as you type to permit as much text as needed.  
The **RESET** button clears all of the fields if you wish to start over with a blank form.

Species (Common and Scientific Name):

Black-necked Stilt (Himantopus mexicanus)

Subspecies, if known

Number of individuals Sex(es)

one probable female

Age(s) and Plumage(s) (E.g. Immature; Adult in Breeding Plumage; Year for Gulls; Basic or Alternate If You Prefer Those Terms; State of Molt If Applicable):

appeared to be an adult female to to the brownish back.

Date and Time of Observation

Wednesday, september 7, 2011. From 9:45 to 10:55 AM

Location (City, Borough, Township)

Washington Boro, Manor Township, Lancaster County

Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)

Conejohela Flats, Avocet Point

### Observer Reporting:

Name

Timothy Becker

Address State Zip

10283 Jonestown Rd, Grantville, Pa 17028

E-mail (Optional)

tjbecker81@aol.com

Phone (Optional)

717-919-3716

Other Observers (Only Those Who Saw and Identified the Bird with You):

none

Habitat (E.g. Mowed Field, Woodland Edge, Any other details)

exposed mud shoreline along the edge of an island in the Susquehanna River

Distance to Bird (Specify feet, yards, etc.)

perhaps 250 yards

Viewing Conditions (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you)

overcast with the sun at my back, what little sun there was

Optical Equipment Used

10x binoculars and scope set on 25x

Description (include as much detail as you observed – size relative to other species present; "jizz"= e.g. posture, body shape, and proportions; colors and patterns of plumage; bill, eye, and leg characteristics; other features relevant to this individual):

Very long red legs and a long straight bill. Dark black/brown back sharply contrasting with a white belly, front of neck, and throat. A black line or mask running through the eye. There was a white indentation cutting upward into the rear wing area. A thin black line ran up the back of the neck, leading to a black cap. Noticeably larger than the Lesser Yellowlegs feeding nearby. Body size similar to a Greater Yellowlegs, but up on "stilts".

Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)

A very active feeding behavior. Short runs along the shoreline with brief pauses. At one point it appeared to capture something that may have been a minnow. After consuming the prey, it entered the water and swished it's bill side-to-side in Avocet fashion. During the hour of my observation it covered the approximate 50 yards of shoreline several times.

Vocalizations

none

Supporting evidence if any: (Check all that apply)

Photograph

Video Recording

Audio Recording

Drawing

**Photographer/recorder/illustrator:**

Name

Timothy Becker

Address

10283 Jonestown Rd

City State Zip

Grantville, Pa, 17028

E-mail (Optional)

tjbecker81@aol.com

Phone (Optional)

717-919-3716

**Please send a copy of the photograph, drawing, or recording to:**

Nick Pulcinella, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee  
613 Howard Ave.  
West Chester, Pa 19380  
Nickpulcinella@verizon.net

**If this is a dead bird:**

General Condition

If collected (by permit), location of specimen if known

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

Nothing similar that I can think of. An Avocet would have been larger, with an upward curved bill, no black on the neck or face, white longitudinal bar on the wing, thick blue/grey legs

Discussion – anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

The Stilt was observed on the morning previous to receiving 12 inches of rain, with flash flooding, from the remnants of tropical storm Lee. I left with the approach of a thunder storm. I had the bird posted on the Pa Birds listserve by calling a friend while I was observing it. But the rains and flooding came preventing others from observing it. The

Previous experience with this and/or similar species

I have observed Black-necked Stilts in North Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware. I have also seen one in Pennsylvania at Krieders Pond in Lebanon County, perhaps two years ago

Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)

Yes. I knew what it was immediately as they are quite unique.

**References Consulted:**

During Observation

The Sibley Guide to Birds

After Observation

The Sibley Guide to Birds

Date of this Report:

Sep 10, 2011

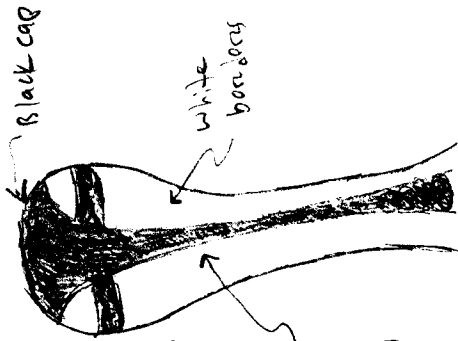
(Click on the box and select date from calendar)

Reset Form

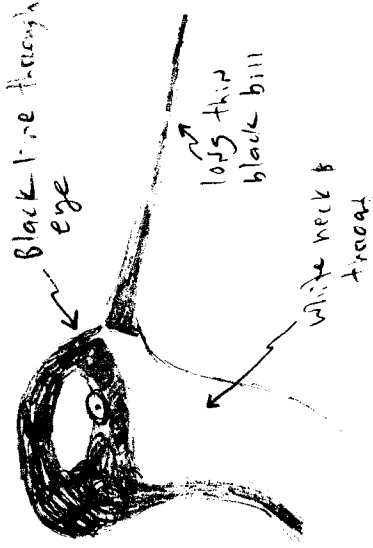
Submit by Email

# Black-necked Stilt, Conejohela Flats, Lancaster Co.

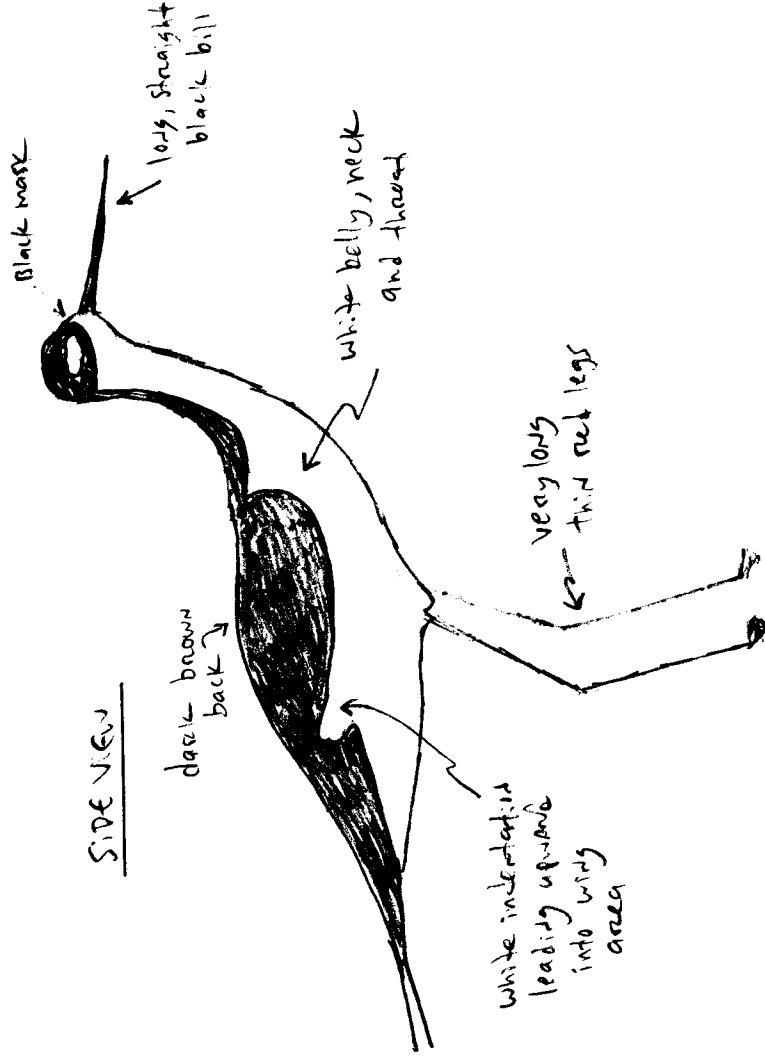
(observed by Tim Becker on 9/7/2011)



View of back of neck  
 thick black line leading up back of neck and expanding to a black cap



View of face:



SIDE VIEW

Drawn by Tim Becker on 9/11/2011 from notes taken on date of observation

## Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

### Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Black-necked Stilt      Himantopus mexicanus

Date of Sighting: 7 September 2011 to 7 September 2011

County : LANCASTER

Location : CONEJOHELA FLATS

Observer(s): Timothy Becker

Date of Submission: 2011

Submitted by: Timothy Becker

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	
D. DeReamus			X					
A. Guarente			X					
T. Johnson			X					
B. Coulter			X					
R. Koury			X					
D. Weber			X					
G. Malosh			X					
TOTALS			7					
DECISION			X					

Comments: 7/0

Signature (Secretary)      Nick Pulcinella

Date: 7/11/12