

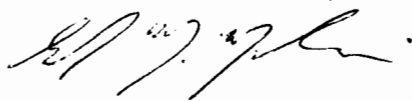
269-01-1989

AMERICAN AVOCET (Recurvirostra americana)

At approximately 7:30 AM on May 7, 1989 while standing at the south end of Gull Point on Presque Isle State Park during a snow storm I saw a large shorebird suddenly appear out of the storm. I alerted Ed Kwater, who was standing several feet from me, to the approaching bird, and we both readily identified it as an American Avocet by the time it landed along the edge of the water within 50 feet of us.

The bird was large - larger than the Willets we had seen in this same area the day before. The bill was long and upturned and quite thin. The entire head and long neck were orange-brown with a distinctive white eyering and white around the base of the bill. The bold black and white pattern on the folded wings was diagnostic, contrasting sharply with the neck. The underside was white. The legs were long (as long as the neck) and were blue-gray. When the bird flew the pattern of the black scapulars on a white back and the black primaries with black greater coverts separating the white lesser coverts from secondaries were clearly visible. The bird called once at it flew away into the snow storm a very loud and clear "wheet" or "whit". The Avocet was present for less than 5 minutes. Visibility was good at less than 75 feet and poor to zero at more than 200 feet. 10 X 40 Zeiss Dyalyt Binoculars were used for observing the bird.

Jerry McWilliams



Description also submitted by Jerry M'Williams
and published in PA Birds Vol 3 no.2.

PREPARED BY	
DATE	

American Avocet, Presque Isle, Erie County, May 7th 1989
Ed Kuater.

Early in the morning of May 7th 1989, Jerry M'Williams and I were standing at the southern end of Gull Point, Presque Isle State Park. It was snowing heavily. Jerry spotted a large shorebird flying towards us low across the water. It alighted on the sandy shore within 30 yards of us and revealed its identity as an American Avocet in full alternate plumage.

The bird was about the size of a whimbrel and had a striking plumage pattern. The head, neck and breast were all bright orange with the exception of a whitish area around the eye and between the eye and the bill base. The upperparts were boldly marked black and white, this pattern being most evident in flight. The mantle, rump and tail were white bordered by 2 broad black stripes down the scapulars. The wings were black except for white inner secondaries and lesser wing coverts. The bill was long and strongly upturned along the distal half. The color was black, and it was very thin. The legs were long and pale blue-gray. The belly was white.

The bird did not feed and after several minutes it flew off to the north. Visibility was good at the range the avocet was observed although poor at longer range, due to the weather conditions. It was observed through x10 binoculars.

Previous experience - several dozen in California and Arizona, several hundred in Delaware.

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Record No.: 269-01-1989

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # of

Species: American Avocet

Date of Sighting: 05/07/89

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 1989 Erie

Submitted by: Jerry McWilliams

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater			X				
B. Haas		X					
F. Haas			X				
R. Leberman		X					
G. McWilliams			X				
S. Santner			X				
P. Schwalbe			X				
TOTALS		2	5				
DECISION							

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

Bruce Haas

Date:

12-26-89