

295-01-1991

V5-3

194 Newcomer Rd.
MT. JOY, PA 17552

Rarities:

Marbled Godwit (2) Aug. 3, 1991

Jonathan Heller

On August third I was exploring an island off Marietta where there was a lot of exposed gravel with patches of mud because of the unusually low water. At 9:00 A.M. I saw two large shorebirds fly in from the north and land on the island. I identified them as Marbled Godwits and observed them for 10-15 min. with good lighting and viewing conditions. The godwits ventured within 100 feet and were still present when I moved on. I viewed them through 8.5X44 Swift binoculars and a 15 to 45 zoom Bushnell scope.

Details: viewed from above in flight these shorebirds appeared buffy, with cinnamon tones and extensive dark brown, almost black mottling. The tail was buffy with fine, dark barring. The underwing was not seen, but the upperwing was buffy with dark mottling and dark brown outer primaries. On the upperwing most of the inner primaries and secondaries appeared to be an unmarked bright, buffy color. The birds had very long and slightly upcurved pink and black bills. At least the first third of the bill was pink. At rest the rather long, dark legs could be seen; and the dark primaries were especially apparent. The breast and flanks were moderately barred with dark brown, and the overall cinnamon tones were especially apparent. Very few species can be confused with Marbled Godwit; but the Bar-tailed Godwit can resemble it, especially in juvenile plumage. I eliminated the Bar-tailed Godwit as a contending species because of the extensive barring below, the long legs, the very long and upcurved bill (shorter legs and bill in Bar-tailed Godwit), and the strong buffy tones including all of the tail and rump (the tail and rump should not have strong buffy tones in the bar-tailed). The cinnamon tones also support Marbled Godwit. Just this past April I saw over a hundred Marbled Godwits at Flamingo in the Everglades National Park, Florida; but I have never seen a Bar-tailed Godwit.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # of

Species: **Marbled Godwit**Date of Sighting: **3 August 1991**Observer(s): **Jonathan Heller**Date of Submission: **1991**Submitted by: **Jonathan Heller**

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			7				
DECISION			X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

Bm Haas

Date:

3/3/92