

330-02-1996

## RED-NECKED PHALAROPE

*Phalaropus lobatus*

**Location:** Presque Isle State Park, Erie County, Pa

**Date:** September 7, 1996

**Time:** 7:45 AM

**Weather:** cloudy (stratus), moderate rain showers, 35+ mph northeast wind (passage of Huirricane Fran)

**Observer:** Jerry McWilliams

**Optics:** Kowa TSN 4 Spotting Scope at 30X

**Viewing distance:** about 200 feet away

**Details of sighting & description:** Ed Kwater and I were standing at the end of Gull Point Trail at the fence that overlooks region 1 of Gull Point when I saw a phalarope fly in and land on the water at a patch of floating vegetation. I immediately recognized the bird as a Red-necked Phalarope and alerted Ed who also got on the bird. It sat on the water for less than a few seconds picked at the vegetation a couple of times and then flew about 50 feet. It landed again on some floating vegetation near the shoreline for a few seconds and then flew off towards region 2 and was not seen again. I observed the bird for the entire duration through my spotting scope and could clearly see the following field marks that identified the bird as a Red-necked Phalarope. In flight it appeared to be slightly smaller and slimmer than a Sanderling. The entire upperside, including the wings, appeared blackish with whitish stripes running down the back and a distinctive white stripe on each wing. The center of the rump was blackish as well as the inner rectrices. The entire underside of the phalarope was white from the breast to the undertail coverts. It flew perhaps a foot or two above the water in a manner similar to a small peep, fast, irregular and twisting. When the bird was on the water it held its head pointed downward, its neck stretched out, and its rear end held above the horizontal riding on the water much the same way that a gull rides on the water. The bill was entirely black, straight, needle thin, and was about the same length as the head. There was a prominent black patch on the otherwise white face that covered the eye and extended to the ear coverts. The entire crown was blackish which extended down the back of the neck where it joined the blackish mantle. The rest of the neck was white with a pinkish-buff smudge at the lower side of the neck. The whitish stripes on the back could be seen as clearly on the water as in flight.

330-52-199d

Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicaria*) was ruled out because they have thicker bills with a pale base to the lower mandible, grayer on the back and wings without the contrasting whitish streaked back and wing stripes. The flight of Red Phalarope is less irregular with less twisting and is more direct, like that of a Sanderling. Wilson's Phalarope (*Phalaropus tricolor*) is much larger with a longer bill, longer than the length of the head, paler overall with a less distinctive eye patch, has a white rump, and no wing stripes. I have seen many of all three species in various parts of the U.S. including Pennsylvania.

W. G. K. W.

330-02-1996

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE IN ERIE COUNTY, 9/7/96

Ed Kwater.

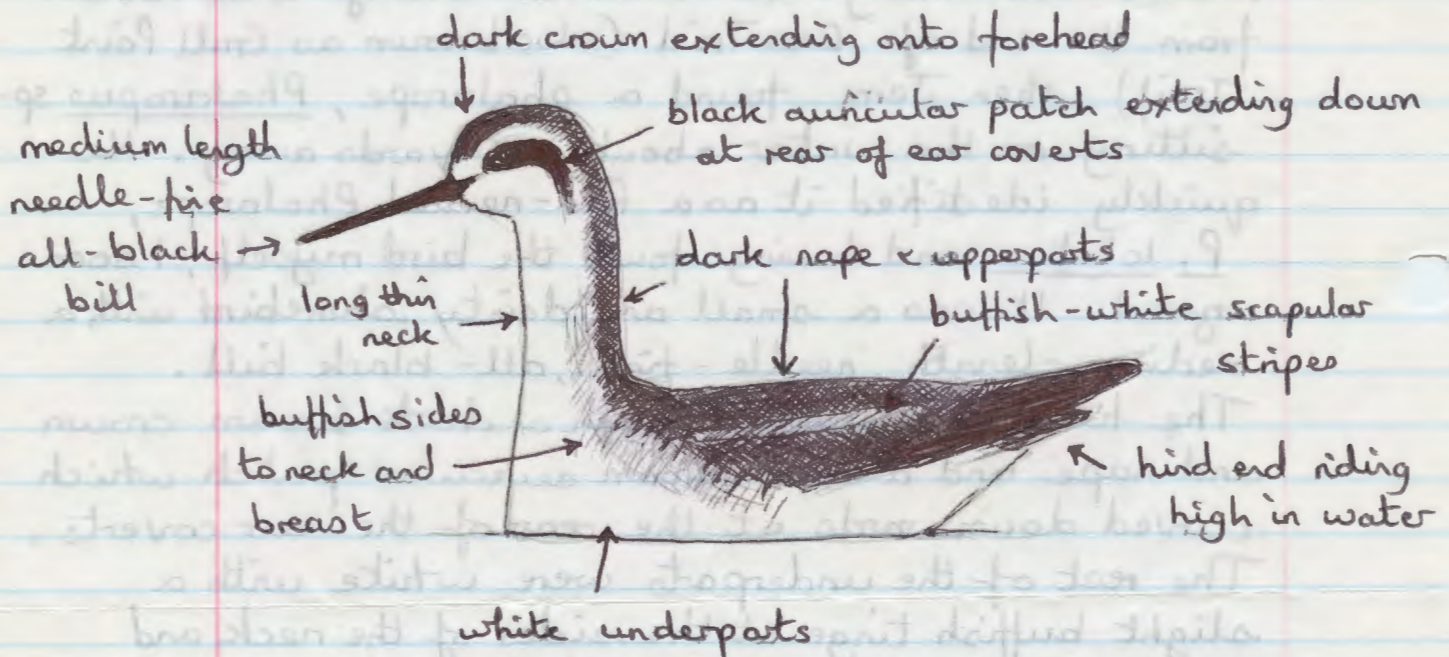
Saturday September 7<sup>th</sup> 1996 was a very stormy day in Western Pennsylvania. Jerry McWilliams and I were birding at Presque Isle State Park, Erie County in the hope of seeing some storm-driven sea birds as a result of the passage of Tropical Storm (formerly Hurricane) Fran. At approximately 7:30 am we were scanning the southern end of Gull Point from the end of Deer Trail (also known as Gull Point Trail) when Jerry found a phalarope, Phalaropus sp. sitting on the water about 100 yards away. He quickly identified it as a Red-necked Phalarope, P. lobatus and having found the bird myself, I soon agreed. It was a small and dainty shorebird with a medium-length, needle-fine, all-black bill.

The head was white with a dark brown crown and nape and a dark brown auricular patch which curved downwards at the rear of the ear coverts. The rest of the underparts were white with a slight buffish tinge at the sides of the neck and breast. The upperparts were dark brown with at least one pair of buffish-white stripes forming a "V" on the scapulars. In flight the bird appeared dark above except for the scapular stripes and narrow white wing stripes at the base of the flight feathers. The tail and center of the uppertail coverts were dark. The sides of the uppertail coverts were white. Judging by the plumage and its general freshness the bird was still in full juvenile plumage. No pale gray feathers were present in the upperparts. It was observed for several minutes on the water

330- -1996

and twice in flight, the second time disappearing round the northern end of Gull Point.

The light was relatively dull throughout the observation. Optical equipment used was a x10 binocular and x30 spotting scope. I have seen 100's of Red-necked Phalaropes before, in Britain; CA; NY; NC; DE and AK.



Red-necked Phalarope, Presque Isle PA 9/7/96

## Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

### Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*)

Date of Sighting: 7 September 1996 to 7 September 1996

Location: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

County: ERIE

Observer(s): Ed Kwater

Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 1996

Submitted by: Ed Kwater

Written Description: YES

Photo: NO

Specimen: NO

Recording: NONE

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V			Abstain
					A	B	C	
F. Haas		X						
N. Pulcinella		X						
E. Kwater		X						
R. Ickes		X						
G. McWilliams		X						
P. Schwalbe		X						
S. Feldstein			X					
TOTALS		6	1					
DECISION		X						

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

*J C Haas*

Date:

*8-16-97*