

Submission Date	2012-12-17 19:35:17
Observer's Name	Matthew Sabatine
E-mail	mattsab12@yahoo.com
Observer's Address	Street Address: 115 B Fox Gap Ave. City: Bangor State / Province: PA Postal / Zip Code: 18013 Country: United States
Species (Common Name)	Red Phalarope
Species (Scientific Name)	Phalaropus fulicaria
Number of individuals	2
Have you submitted this to eBird?	Yes
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	looked like adults in basic (nonbreeding) plumage
Observation Date and Time	10-30-2012 10:34 AM
County	Northampton
Location (City, Borough, Township)	outside of Bangor
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Lake Minsi
GPS coordinates of sighting	40° 54' 48.00", -75° 10' 23.92"
Habitat	man made lake
Distance to bird	approximately 100 feet
Viewing conditions	heavy winds and overcast skies with intermittent rain
Optical equipment used	Nikon 10x42 Monarch
Description	a displacement from Hurricane Sandy; I was scanning the east part of the lake, took my bins down and noticed two medium-sized shorebirds flying low over the water, moving west to east; I got on them with my bins and immediately ID'd them as Phalaropes, due to their overall shape and color; pale gray on the back, clean white underneath, with distinctive straight, dark bill and dark "ear" patch, with the white stripes lining the secondaries(?)
Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)	as noted, they were flying very low over the water, beating their wings rapidly; they circled around a few times, as if possibly to settle on the water, before

continuing to the eastern part of the lake and out of sight

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

since Phalaropes are clearly distinctive from other shorebirds, I felt as though the only possibilities were Red-necked and Red Phalarope. Wilson's Phalarope could be eliminated immediately due to the white linings on the secondaries, among other features such as the short, stout bill and black "ear" spot; since Red-necked and Red can look very similar in basic plumage, I took my time eliminating Red-necked before concluding Red; the bills were all dark and appeared very stout, but for birds in flight and at a reasonable distance, this field mark could possibly be subjective and useless; the uniformly pale back coloration was most distinctive to me in eliminating Red-necked. I understand that they too can appear to be rather uniformly gray-backed, however there was absolutely no streaking and the color, even in the poor lighting conditions, lent itself much more to being a pale gray than a darker color that Red-necked would show.

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

the sighting of these Red Phalaropes is representative of a vast number of sightings in the state of PA during that day, as birds being displaced by Hurricane Sandy. I suppose it is worth noting that of all the scores of Red Phalaropes reported that day, I believe only 1 (possibly 2) Red-necked's were reported as a result of the hurricane (Beltzville Lake SP)

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

yes. Though these were my first Red Phalaropes in basic plumage, I have seen basic plumaged Red-necked Phalaropes on a number of occasions and feel confident in saying that they were Reds.

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