

8 June 1994

Robert Mulvihill  
Powdermill Nature Reserve  
Star Route South  
Rector, PA 15677

Dear Bob,

Thank you for submitting a description of the Black-legged Kittiwake at Somerset Lake on 21 April 1992. After careful review we regret that we cannot accept this record at this time. The record went to a second round of voting and five out of seven committee members accepted it (not the six needed for official acceptance). All committee members felt that the details submitted were very brief, and for two members were not conclusive enough to clinch the documentation of a Black-legged Kittiwake with absolute certainty. If you have any further details on this bird, the P.O.R.C. urges you to resubmit the record.

We encourage you to submit documentation on any rare bird sightings you may have in the future.

Sincerely,

Ed Kwater  
Chairman

Record # 357-01-1992

P.S. If it's any consolation, I personally voted for acceptance.

357-01-1992

**Possible First Spring Record of  
Black-legged Kittiwake in Western  
Pennsylvania**  
Somerset County  
Robert S. Mulvihill

The Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) was first seen at Lake Somerset Lake on 21 April 1992 by myself and Bonnie Mulvihill. It was in immaculate, full adult plumage. It was seen later that day by Robert C. Leberman and was present through 22 April and seen by several other observers.

The kittiwake was initially studied at close range in excellent light for more than 30 minutes. It was in company of a large flock of mixed gulls [mostly Ring-billed (*Larus delawarensis*) and Bonaparte's (*L. philadelphia*) but also a few Herring (*L. argentatus*)] and Caspian (*Sterna caspia*) and Forster's (*S. forsteri*) terns. Although circulating among dozens of gulls, the kittiwake caught my eye and provided an almost instantaneous "deja vu" experience. (I had seen two adult kittiwakes at Lake Somerset in September about ten years ago).

In addition to all the diagnostic field marks (sharply black-tipped wings, white, slightly wedge-shaped tail, and yellow bill), the kittiwake provided us with direct size comparisons by floating in water alongside both larger Ring-billed and smaller Bonaparte's gulls.

This is probably the first spring record for this species in western Pennsylvania.

*Powdermill Nature Reserve  
Star Route South  
Rector, PA 15677*

@ ? is whether to box this as originally written in Somerset report or to keep as an article?

## Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

## Voting Tabulation - Round # 2 of 2

Species: Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)

Date of Sighting: 21 April 1992 to 22 April 1992

Location: LAKE SOMERSET

County: SOMERSET

Observer(s): Robert Mulvihill

Date of Submission: 1992

Submitted by: Robert Mulvihill

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					
J. Skinner				X				
TOTALS			5	2				
DECISION				X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

*F. C. Haas*

Date:

5-6-94