

PENNSYLVANIA RARE BIRD REPORT FORM

This form is presented as a convenience and guide. It can be used if desired, but is not necessary for submitting a report. Species requiring documentation are those on the Review List or not on the Official List of Birds of Pennsylvania. Send documentation to:

Nick Pulcinella, Secretary
Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee
210 Welcome Ave.
Norwood, PA 19074.
nickpul@bellatlantic.net

360-01-2002

SPECIES (common and scientific name) SABINE'S GULL Xema sabini
Subspecies (if known)

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 1 SEX(ES) ?

AGE(S) AND PLUMAGE(S) (e.g. immature; adult in breeding plumage; year for gulls; basic or alternate if you prefer those terms; state of molt if applicable): immature

DATE OF OBSERVATION Sept 22, 2002 TIME 12:30-1:30 (Approximate)

LOCATION (city, borough, township) WASHINGTON BORO, LANCASTER COUNTY, PA

EXACT SITE (e.g. name of park, lake, road) Conejshela Flats, Avocet Pt + downriver.

OBSERVER REPORTING:

Name J. ERIC WITMER
Address 230 MASON DRIVE
City EPHRATA State PA ZIP 17522
e-mail (optional) ermwitt@dejazz2.com phone (optional) (717) 733-1138

OTHER OBSERVERS (only those who saw and identified the bird with you):

TOM GARNER, BRUCE CARL Jerry Book From Shore

HABITAT (e.g. mowed field, woodland edge, any other details) Shallow river just downriver from sandbars with other Gulls and Terns resting.

DISTANCE TO BIRD about 100-150 yds +

VIEWING CONDITIONS (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you) partly cloudy, occasional sunlight primarily overhead or to slightly toward right.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED 10x42 Leica primarily KOWA 77mm w/ 30x Wide Angle

DESCRIPTION (Include as much detail as you observed - size relative to other species present; "jizz"= e.g. posture, body shape, and proportions; colors and patterns of plumage; bill, eye, and leg characteristics; other features relevant to this individual): Smaller Gull about Bonapartes size. Considerably smaller than Ringbilled Gull. Scapulars and wing coverts grayish brown with pronounced white edged scalloping. upper back and sides of breast brownish-gray extending up thru the nape and crown. base of bill, throat, center of breast and belly white. The primaries were black with distinct white edges/tips. The Tail was white, squared off with a thin dark Tail Band. The bill was thin short and black. The eye was dark. No leg color was observed. In the 5 or so short flights the distinctive wing pattern was seen. The last 6 or so primaries were black. The rest of the primaries and secondaries were white and the wing coverts and scapulars were grayish brown. (defined M pattern on wing)

(Please use an additional page if necessary.)

**BEHAVIOR** (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing) Bird was primarily resting on the water in close proximity to other Gulls (R-billed and 1 Gr. Black Backed Nearby) A lot of Com. Forsters and Caspian Terns nearby. It made several short flights. Occasionally would swim and lunge forward with one peck into the water submerging its head + neck.

**VOCALIZATIONS**

NONE

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IF ANY:**

Photograph N/A Video recording N/A Audio recording \_\_\_\_\_ Drawing \_\_\_\_\_

**Photographer/recorder/illustrator:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ phone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Please include a copy of the photograph or recording with your report, and accompany it with a complete written documentation if the identification is obvious to you. If you made a drawing, please include it.

**IF THIS IS A DEAD BIRD:**

General condition N/A  
If collected (by permit), location and number of specimen if known \_\_\_\_\_

**SEPARATION FROM SIMILAR SPECIES** (how you eliminated others)

Bold wing pattern distinctly different from Little + Blackheaded Gull, + Ross' Gull tail wedge shape not saved off

**DISCUSSION** – Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it

Incredible Tern (Common + Forsters) Activity in the Area. We were chumming (old bread) and noticed the SABINES out on the water where we had been observing for an hour or more. I suspect all the activity brought the bird in. The Gull flew low down river (Jerry Brook from stream) while we were carefully checking all the Terns.

(Please use an additional page if necessary)

**PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND/OR SIMILAR SPECIES**

I have seen two other Imm Sabine's Gulls in the past 15-20 yrs. 1 near Sunbury and another on the Conejohela Flats.

**ARE YOU POSITIVE OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION?** (why or why not) yes, This is a very distinctive species

which I instantly recognized when I first observed it on the water.

**REFERENCES CONSULTED:**

During observation NONE  
After observation SIBLEY (To eliminate other species)

**DATE OF THIS REPORT:** 9/23/02

**SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER** J. L.

360-01-2002

SPECIES: IMMATURE SABINE'S GULL

WHERE: CONEJOHELA FLATS, LANCASTER CO. PA.

WHEN: SEPTEMBER 22, 2002

OBSERVERS: TOM GARNER, ERIC WITMER, BRUCE CARL, JERRY BOOK

NOTES: VIEWED FOR ABOUT AN HOUR UNDER VERY FAVORABLE CONDITIONS THROUGH A KOWA TS824 20x-60x SCOPE AND SWAROVSKI 8.5x42 EL BINOCULARS

SIZE: SWIMMING IN WATER IN DIRECT COMPARISON WITH A BONAPARTE'S AND RING-BILLED GULLS, THE SABINE'S WAS MUCH SMALLER THAN THE RING-BILLED'S AND ABOUT THE SAME SIZE AS BONAPARTE'S.

DESCRIPTION: BILL SMALL AND BLACK. FACE AND UNDERPARTS WHITE. SIDES OF FACE, CROWN, NAPE, AND UPPERPARTS DUSKY BROWN WITH NOTICEABLE PALER FEATHER EDGINGS ON WINGS AND BACK GIVING A "SCALLOPED" APPEARANCE. TAIL WAS WHITE AND NOTICEABLY FORKED WITH BLACK BAND AT END. WING PATTERN IN FLIGHT VERY BOLD AND OBVIOUS AS BELOW -



NOTE: THREE OF THE OBSERVERS INCLUDING MYSELF HAVE PREVIOUSLY SEEN IMM. SABINE'S GULL AS DOCUMENTED BY PHOTOS FROM THE FLATS IN THE 90'S.

SUBMITTED 9/29/2002  
BY TOM GARNER

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Tabulation - Round One**

Species: Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*)

Date of Sighting: 22 September 2002 to 22 September 2002

Location: WASHINGTON BORO

County: LANCASTER

Observer(s): Eric Witmer, Tom Garner, Bruce Carl, Jerry Book

Date of Submission: 2002

Submitted by: Eric Witmer, Tom Garner

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

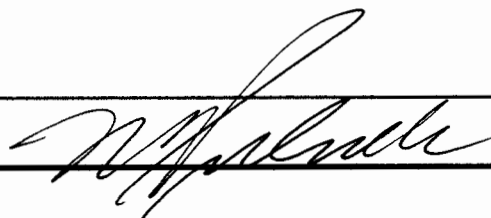
Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead		X						
D. Heathcote		X						
P. Hess		X						
J. Stanley		X						
E. Witmer		X						
R. Leberman		X						
M. Sharp		X						
TOTALS		7						
DECISION		X						

Comments: 7/0

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 1/12/03