

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2014-09-15 12:34:50
Observer's Name	Geoff Malosh
E-mail	pomarine@earthlink.net
Observer's Address	Street Address: 450 Amherst Avenue City: Moon Township State / Province: PA Postal / Zip Code: 15108 Country: United States
Names of additional observers	Mark Vass (original finder), dozens of others
Species (Common Name)	Sabine's Gull
Species (Scientific Name)	Xema sabini
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Adult, alternate plumage
Observation Date and Time	09-06-2014 9:30 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S19756037
County	Crawford
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Pymatuning State Park
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Spillway on Hartstown Road
GPS coordinates of sighting	41.630591, -80.439998
Habitat	Lake
Distance to bird	Ranging from inside 30 feet to a few hundred yards
Viewing conditions	Overcast and rain giving way to partly cloudy skies
Optical equipment used	Leica 82mm APO spotting scope, Canon 1D Mark IV with 500mm f/4
Description	Adult in breeding plumage. On the upperwing, distinctive medium gray mantle and lesser coverts, white triangle on the secondaries and inner primaries, and black outer primaries. Black bill with yellow tip. Dark gray head with black collar at the base of the hood. The bird was still in mostly

alternate plumage but had lost the red orbital ring it shows earlier in the spring and summer. The tail was slightly forked.

Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)

The bird spent the whole day alternating between sitting on the water rather far out and giving stunning views very close to the sidewalk rail at the spillway concession area as it came in close to scum with the local Ring-bills and Mallards for thrown bread. Seen exceptionally well.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

The combination of the described upper wing pattern and yellow-tipped bill on a hooded gull is distinctive. Gray mantle (instead of scalloped brown) indicates adult (rather than juvenile) Sabine's Gull.

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

The bird was originally found by Mark Vass on the afternoon of Sept 5. It was still present all day on Sept 6 and I observed it from 9:30 am until 6pm that day. It was present again on Sept 7 and I observed it again from about 3:00pm until 5:30pm. At 5:30pm on Sept 7, the bird flew off toward the lake west of the spillway (previously it had spent nearly all of its time on the east side) and surprisingly was not seen at the spillway again. There was a second hand report that it was seen and photographed a few days later near the Pymatuning causeway but I cannot vouch for this report.

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

Yes

During

none

After

none

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings



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[Gull_Sabines_PymatuningPA_20140906_1D4_6_E9H3722M.jpg](#)



[Gull_Sabines_PymatuningPA_20140906_1D4_6_E9H3821M.jpg](#)

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PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2014-09-09 13:49:29
Observer's Name	Casey Davidson
E-mail	caseyldavidson@gmail.com
Observer's Address	Country: United States
Species (Common Name)	Sabine's Gull
Species (Scientific Name)	xema sabini
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Adult in Breeding Plumage
Observation Date and Time	09-07-2014 9:00 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
County	Crawford
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Linesville
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Pymatuning Spillway
Distance to bird	Varied from 1 foot to 200 yards.
Viewing conditions	Sunny, clear morning.
Optical equipment used	Swarovski Binoculars/Scope provided by other birders present. Snapped a few pictures on iPhone when bird came in close.
Description	Very distinct in both silhouette, dark headed gull, yellow tip on bill.
Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)	<p>When I had arrived the bird was about 200 yards out into the spillway. An older woman had arrived with a loaf of bread in which the Sabine's flew to within several feet of birders present. It would catch bread out of the air as the woman threw it or dive into the water in attempts to snatch it from the carp and ducks.</p> <p>When the bread supply had dwindled, the bird flew back to the location it was spotted at when I arrived, about 200 yards out and could only be observed through a scope.</p>
Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)	Yes, this bird had been identified previously by many, many birders. Field marks and appearance is unique and

unmistakable.

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings



[sabine 2..jpg](#)



[sabine gull.jpg](#)

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PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2014-09-06 05:51:32
Observer's Name	Mark Vass
E-mail	mvas1200@yahoo.com
Observer's Address	Country: United States
Species (Common Name)	Sabine's Gull
Species (Scientific Name)	Xema sabini
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	adult in breeding plumage
Observation Date and Time	09-05-2014 5:40 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Pymatuning Twp.
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	spillway at Pymatuning State Park
Habitat	lake
Viewing conditions	sunny
Description	Adult with gray hood and yellow tip on bill
Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)	Sitting on water and took flight several times
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PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2014-09-06 22:31:12
Observer's Name	Emily Smith
E-mail	emilym4488@yahoo.com
Phone	8144604478
Observer's Address	Street Address: 41501 Highway 27 City: Titusville State / Province: PA Postal / Zip Code: 16354 Country: United States
Species (Common Name)	Sabine's Gull
Species (Scientific Name)	Xema sabini
Number of individuals	1
Observation Date and Time	09-06-2014 8:30 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S19747237
County	Crawford
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Linesville, PA
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Pymatuning Spillway
Description	Distinctively smaller than ring-billed gulls all around. Very bright white, with bold black triangles on upper wings. Head was dark gray and beak had yellow tip. Black border of head briefly noted, but difficult to distinguish in very poor lighting.
Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)	Upon arrival, bird maintained a great distance from spillway. Then a large group of individuals started throwing bread in for birds and carp. Gull immediately took notice and headed straight for large group of mallards/ring-billed gulls battling for bread. Sabine's slightly more aggressive, and quicker, than ring-billed gulls. Very quick to dive into group of mallards for meal. After a few minutes, flew away from commotion and floated for awhile. Repeated this two more times (float, food, float).
Supporting evidence (check all that apply)	Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings



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