

# 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**  
 613 Howard Ave.  
 West Chester, PA 19380  
 nickpul@bellatlantic.net

375-03-2003

\*\*\*\*\*

**SPECIES** (common and scientific name) SOOTY TERN (STERNA FUSCATA)  
**Subspecies** (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS** 2 **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): Adult Breeding

**DATE OF OBSERVATION** 9/19/03 (Fri) **TIME** 1145-1150

**LOCATION** (city, borough, township) WASHINGTON BORO, LANC-CO. PA LANCASTER COUNTY RELOD  
OVER CONEJOHIA FLATS

**EXACT SITE** (e.g. name of park, lake, road) viewed from lower boat LAUNCH, LONGLEVEL, YORK Co. PA

## OBSERVER REPORTING:

**Name** J. ERIC WITMER  
**Address** 230 MASON DRIVE  
**City** EPHRATA **State** PA **ZIP** 17522  
**e-mail (optional)** \_\_\_\_\_ **phone (optional)** \_\_\_\_\_

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

DAN HEATHCOTE, TOM GARNER, JASON HORN, JERRY BOOK, DAVE WILTON, D. HOFFMAN

**HABITAT** (e.g. mowed field, woodland edge, any other details) OVER SUSQUEHANNA RIVER

**DISTANCE TO BIRD** ABOUT 1/2 mile

**VIEWING CONDITIONS** (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you) PARTLY CLOUDY, WINDY/SE Upriver.  
SUN WAS OUT FOR PORTIONS OF OBSERVATION (OVERHEAD)

**OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED** QUESTAR @ 54X

**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): A larger Tern very dark backed (Black) with striking white underparts  
The Tail was long, forked and dark. The crown was dark along with the nape continuing  
to the back (No lighter collar) There was dark line from the bill to the eye. There was a small  
white forehead. The bill was dark and long.

(Please use an additional page if necessary.)

**BEHAVIOR** (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing) Flying 75' + Above river into the strong wind. The birds descended to 5-10' above river and disappeared downriver toward Safe Harbor DAM. The birds labored flying downriver with deep powerful wingbeats.

**VOCALIZATIONS**

N/A

**SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IF ANY:**

**Photograph** \_\_\_\_\_ **Video recording** \_\_\_\_\_ **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) BRIDLED TERN IS THE ONLY BIRD SIMILAR IN PLUMAGE. THE STRIKING BLACK/WHITE COLORATION WAS QUITE DISTINCTIVE GIVING THE UPPERPARTS A BLACK LOOK. The dark head continuing through the nape and back with no lighter collar should eliminate BRIDLED TERN.

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

OBSERVATIONS MADE SEVERAL HOURS AFTER THE PASSAGE OF HURRICANE ISABELLE. BIRDS WERE flying obviously downriver into strong winds. The birds showed no interest in resting / feeding with the hundreds of Gulls and Terns on the mudflats nearby.

(Please use an additional page if necessary)

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

I have seen SOOTY TERNS SEVERAL TIMES @ THE DRY TORTUGAS. I have seen the similar Bridled Tern on pelagic trips in the warmer months on NC Gulf Stream.

**ARE YOU POSITIVE OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION?** (why or why not) YES. I realize the possibility of BRIDLED TERN But the distinctive distant looks I had were not right for Bridled Tern.

**REFERENCES CONSULTED:**

**During observation** \_\_\_\_\_

**After observation** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF THIS REPORT:** 11/28/03

**SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER** JGL

# Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

## Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*)

Date of Sighting: 19 September 2003 to 19 September 2003

Location: WASHINGTON BORO

County : LANCASTER

Observer(s): Eric Witmer, Dan Heathcote, Tom Garner et al.

Date of Submission: 2003

Submitted by: Eric Witmer

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

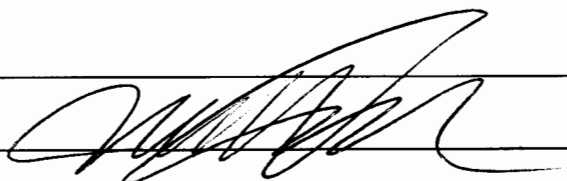
Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut			X					
D. Heathcote			X					
P. Guris			X					
J. Stanley			X					
E. Witmer			X					
R. Leberman		X						
M. Sharp		X						
TOTALS		2	5					
DECISION			X					

Comments:

7/0

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

9/16/08