

FORC

371-01-1991

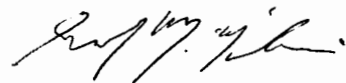
FORSTER'S TERN
(Sterna forsteri)

Date: Jan. 13, 1991 (remaining until Jan. 19, 1991)
Location: Dobbin's Landing at the foot of State Street in Erie
Viewing time: 12:30 PM to 1:00 PM and brief periods thereafter
Weather: cloudy (stratus), light westerly wind, temperature about
35 F

Optical equipment: Zeiss Dyalyt 10 X 40 Binocular and 25X Bush-
nell Spacemaster Spotting Scope.

Observers: Jerry McWilliams, Jim Baxter, Ed Kwater, Joyce Hoffmann,
Walt Schaeffer, and many others.

Description: I discovered the bird sitting on the ice among Bonaparte's Gulls (Larus philadelphia). The smaller size than Bonaparte's, slim body, long thin primaries, short legs, and very pale overall identified it as a small sterna. I identified it as a Forster's Tern initially by the black facial patch. Beginning at the front of the eye, the dark patch extended behind and curved slightly below the eye and ended abruptly not extending around the head as in Common Tern (Sterna hirundo) or Arctic Tern (Sterna paradisaea). The nape was lightly flecked with grey. The bill was dagger-like and all black and longer than the neighboring Bonaparte's. The folded primaries were pale grey not frosty, indicating basic I plumage or primary wear. The outer rectrices extended to the tip of the primaries. In flight the inner fork of the ^{white} tail was bordered in dusky grey or brown. In Common or Arctic Tern the inner fork is white and the outer rectrices are black. Ironically, a Forster's Tern was at Dunkirk Harbor in New York a week or two prior to this sighting. Dunkirk Harbor is about 1 hour northeast of Erie. I am very familiar with this species since I have seen thousands of them in many areas of the United States in all plumages. This is the first winter record of this species in Erie Co.. I am not aware of any winter records elsewhere in PA.



Gerald M. McWilliams

Record No.: 371-01-1991

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # of

Species: **Forster's Tern**

Date of Sighting: **January 13, 1991**

Observer(s): **Jerry McWilliams**

Date of Submission: **1991**

Submitted by: **Jerry McWilliams**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater			X				
B. Haas			X				
F. Haas			X				
R. Leberman			X				
G. McWilliams			X				
S. Santner			X				
P. Schwalbe			X				
TOTALS			7				
DECISION			X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

B. Haas

Date:

8-15-91