



Richard Humbert
1090 Canal Rd EXT
Manchester, PA. 17345
GM1266-1964

332-01-1993

SEPT. 3, 1993

BIRD SEEN SEPT. 2, 1993

Dear Jerry:

Thanks for calling me about the Jaeger, we had a exciting day. I will try to describe to you the best I can what I SAW.

I AND Bill DeGrande from York were birding on the Conestoga flats heading down river almost to the sand bar ABOVE Turkey Point when this Ring-billed Gull crossed in front of the boat about 25-30 FT high AND APPROX 50 FT AWAY. Several yards back of the gull came this dark bird, AS IT WAS CROSSING in front of us, my first impression was big dark gull, but different.

We immediately put out glasses on it, AND THEN IT MADE a sharp TURN AT THE GULL. AS SOON AS IT TURNED we yelled Jaeger. AFTER MAKING TWO PASSES AT THE RING-BILLED GULL IT FLEW DOWN RIVER AND HEADED TOWARD THE MIDDLE OF THE RIVER WHERE IT SAT ON THE WATER TWICE, THEN FLEW OFF.

MY REASON FOR CALLING IT A POMARINE JAEGER IS THIS! THE BIRD LUMBERED ALONG GULL LIKE, WING BEAT WAS NOT FALCON LIKE. WHEN IT CROSSED THE BOW OF THE BOAT IN FRONT OF US, IT LOOKED HEAVY CHESTED, DARK, REMINDED ME AT FIRST IMPRESSION JUVENILE HERRING GULL. WHEN HE MADE HIS TURN THE TAIL LOOKED EXACTLY LIKE THE POMARINE JAEGER IN THE BOOK, Golden Guide - BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA BY SINGER. EXCEPT THE TAIL WAS ONLY ABOUT HALF AS LONG, OR LESS. WHEN THE BIRD MADE HIS TURN AT THE GULL, IT WAS APPROX 50-75 FT AWAY. IT ALSO HAD BARRING ON THE CHEST AND WHEN THE BIRD WAS CLOSE TO THE RING-BILLED GULL, THE JAEGER WAS AS BIG OR BIGGER THAN THE GULL.

rick Humbert

of any juvenile Jaeger and should therefore be disregarded completely. The estimated projection of $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2" is too long for any of the 3 species in juvenile plumage (The range is 12-22 mm in Parasitic and 7-22 mm in Pomarine, so less than an inch in both spp.).

- ② The overall tone of the plumage is a rich brownish buff with paler flanks < belly (belly partly in shadow) slightly darker breast band and most significantly a pale buff nape which contrasts with the rest of the head < breast. Pominies are usually darker than this, colder gray-brown and virtually never show a contrasting pale nape. A better photograph may have shown the dark streaks on this buff which are characteristic of Parasitic Jaeger.
- ③ There is no dark feathering around the bill base which tends to be characteristic of Pomarine Jaeger.
- ④ There is relatively ~~very~~ little white in the upper sides of the primaries. It would appear that there are maybe only about 3 white-shafted primaries although this is difficult to judge on the partially closed primaries. This is not a very reliable character, just an indication. Poms usually show more white-shafted primaries in the upper wing than Parasitics.
- ⑤ To me the bill looks too narrow for Pomarine although this is difficult to judge from the photographs.
- ⑥ The bird does look relatively heavy bodied although I would expect most Poms to show a deeper chest. Interestingly Jerry Book said the bird did not seem particularly heavy chested. Dick Humbert said the bird was heavy chested < dark yet it does not really appear so in the photographs. It is certainly paler than an average juvenile Pomarine.
- ⑦ Size and flight behavior can be difficult to judge on a lone jaeger. Even Parasitics can look larger and heavier than they are, ~~especially~~ probably because even pale morph juveniles are darker than all adult small < medium gull species.
- ⑧ The white crescent on the greater underwing coverts is present but relatively indistinct. I would expect this to be much more prominent on a Pomarine.

CONEJO HOLA FLATS

SEPT. 1, 1993



Tail looked to be APPROX
1/2 TO 2" LONG,
ALSO LOOKED BLUNT.

Drawing of tail of what I believe to
be POMMARINE JAEGER

DICK HUMBERT

332-01-1993

TO: Pennsylvania Birds
FROM: Jerry Book
SUBJECT: Jaeger, Susquehanna River, August 29 to September 6
DATE: November 3, 1993

On August 29, Tom Garner and I observed a juvenile jaeger species attack a small flock of Ring-billed Gulls. After the attack, the bird sat on the water at about 200 yards for several minutes. When the bird later flew down river, its flight style was reminiscent of a Herring Gull. Its wing beat was unhurried, rhythmic, and steady, and its body did not rise or fall with each wingbeat. Our impression of the flight style suggested Pomarine Jaeger. Although the bird did not seem particularly heavy chested, its wing span was the same or slightly greater than that of the Ring-billed Gull it had been chasing. The jaeger and gull were bill to tail during the chase, and both banked simultaneously, allowing a good wingspan comparison. According to Kauffman (Advanced Guide), Pomarine Jaeger and Ring-billed Gull have a similar wingspan. Parasitic Jaeger has about a six inch smaller wing span than Ring-billed Gull. On the basis of flight style and wing span, we felt the juvenile jaeger might be Pomarine.

The jaeger remained on the Lake Clark area of the Susquehanna River until September 6. During that time it was seen by many observers. Pictures were taken and shown to Ed Kwater in early September, but he was not able to positively identify it to species from the photos in the time he had to examine them.

On three separate days, Tom Garner and I observed about a dozen attacks on Ring-billed Gulls, and one each on Herring Gull, Great Blue Heron, and Forster's Tern. After each attack, when the bird resumed its normal flight, the style of flight was similar to that of a Herring Gull, as described above. In normal flight, it never displayed the falcon-like flight associated with Parasitic Jaeger. In addition to the approximately fifteen attacks that were observed, the jaeger was also seen in unhurried flight numerous times. Also, the jaeger never shrug-preened after any of the attacks. Additionally, the jaeger rarely glided, never during normal flight, and only occasionally during a low-level attack, and then for only a couple of seconds.

On the basis of plumage and structural characteristics alone, the jaeger may remain unidentified. On the basis of wingspan and its normal flight-style observed numerous times on three separate days by Garner and Book (also by E. Witmer and R.M. Schutsky), the jaeger was Pomarine.

It is noteworthy that on September 6, an adult Pomarine Jaeger was seen by Schutsky and others in the same area of the Susquhanna River. Also, a juvenile jaeger was seen by D. Heathcote on the same day in the same area that he thought was a different bird than the original one referred to in this letter.

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE
2469 Hammertown Road
Narvon, PA 17555

July 1, 1996

Jerry Book
164 Warren way
Lancaster, PA 17603

Dear Jerry,

Thank you for submitting details on the Pomarine Jaeger you saw at Washington Boro, Lancaster County on 29 August to 6 September 1993 to P.O.R.C. The record circulated the committee for two rounds and then again discussed at this year's annual meeting. After careful review, much discussion and further research on Stercorarius species, we regret that we are unable to accept this record. A few committee members felt very strongly in favor of Pomarine Jaeger based on the descriptions of the bird's "heavy chested" body size and the "unhurried steady" flight characteristics. The argument in favor of it not being a Pomarine were that the elongated central tail feathers looked blunt, the pale buff nape which contrasts with the rest of the head and breast is not consistent with the nape color of a Pomarine, which usually shows a dark colder gray-brown color and very rarely show a contrasting pale nape. There was also some argument that Pomarine should show more of a white crescent on the greater underwing than is present on this bird. As a result, it could not be determine if the bird was a Pomarine or Parasitic Jaeger, therefore, the record did not receive the needed six votes for acceptance.

This of course, does not mean the bird was not a Pomarine Jaeger, merely, that the record is not beyond reasonable doubt for acceptance.

We hope that this does not discourage you from submitting documentation on any rare birds you find in the future. Please be encouraged to send as much detail as possible.

Sincerely,

Nick Pulcinella
Chairman

Record # 332-01-1993

P.S. If is any consolation, I personally voted for acceptance.

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE
2469 Hammertown Road
Narvon, PA 17555

July 1, 1996

Richard Humbert
1090 Canal Road
Manchester, PA 17345

Dear Richard,

Thank you for submitting details and drawings on the Pomarine Jaeger you saw at Washington Boro, Lancaster County on 29 August to 6 September 1993 to P.O.R.C. The record circulated the committee for two rounds and then again discussed at this year's annual meeting. After careful review, much discussion and further research on Stercorarius species, we regret that we are unable to accept this record. A few committee members felt very strongly in favor of Pomarine Jaeger based on the descriptions of the bird's "heavy chested" body size and the "unhurried steady" flight characteristics. The argument in favor of it not being a Pomarine were that the elongated central tail feathers looked blunt, the pale buff nape which contrasts with the rest of the head and breast is not consistent with the nape color of a Pomarine, which usually shows a dark colder gray-brown color and very rarely show a contrasting pale nape. There was also some argument that Pomarine should show more of a white crescent on the greater underwing than is present on this bird. As a result, it could not be determine if the bird was a Pomarine or Parasitic Jaeger, therefore, the record did not receive the needed six votes for acceptance.

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Sincerely,

Nick Pulcinella
Chairman

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE
2469 Hammertown Road
Narvon, PA 17555

July 1, 1996

Rick Wiltraut
205 Washington Street
Nazareth, PA 18064

Dear Rick,

Thank you for submitting slides on the Pomarine Jaeger you saw at Washington Boro, Lancaster County on 29 August to 6 September 1993 to P.O.R.C. The record circulated the committee for two rounds and then again discussed at this year's annual meeting. After careful review, much discussion and further research on Stercorarius species, we regret that we are unable to accept this record. A few committee members felt very strongly in favor of Pomarine Jaeger based on the appearance of the bird's robust appearance and the "heavy" appearance of the bill. The argument in favor of it not being a Pomarine were that the elongated central tail feathers looked blunt, the pale buff nape which contrasts with the rest of the head and breast is not consistent with the nape color of a Pomarine, which usually shows a dark colder gray-brown color and very rarely show a contrasting pale nape. There was also some argument that Pomarine should show more of a white crescent on the greater underwing than is present on this bird. As a result, it could not be determine if the bird was a Pomarine or Parasitic Jaeger, therefore, the record did not receive the needed six votes for acceptance.

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Sincerely,

Nick Pulcinella
Chairman

Record # 332-01-1993

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE
2469 Hammertown Road
Narvon, PA 17555

July 1, 1996

Eric Witmer
230 Mason Drive
Ephrata, PA 17522

Dear Eric,

Thank you for submitting slides on the Pomarine Jaeger you saw at Washington Boro, Lancaster County on 29 August to 6 September 1993 to P.O.R.C. The record circulated the committee for two rounds and then again discussed at this year's annual meeting. After careful review, much discussion and further research on *Stercorarius* species, we regret that we are unable to accept this record. A few committee members felt very strongly in favor of Pomarine Jaeger based on the appearance of the bird's robust appearance and the "heavy" appearance of the bill. The argument in favor of it not being a Pomarine were that the elongated central tail feathers looked blunt, the pale buff nape which contrasts with the rest of the head and breast is not consistent with the nape color of a Pomarine, which usually shows a dark colder gray-brown color and very rarely show a contrasting pale nape. There was also some argument that Pomarine should show more of a white crescent on the greater underwing than is present on this bird. As a result, it could not be determine if the bird was a Pomarine or Parasitic Jaeger, therefore, the record did not receive the needed six votes for acceptance.

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Sincerely,

Nick Pulcinella
Chairman

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of 2

Species: Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Date of Sighting: 29 August 1993 to 6 September 1993

Location: WASHINGTON BORO

County: LANCASTER

Observer(s): Jerry Book; Eric Witmer; Rick Wiltraut
Richard Humbert

Date of Submission: 1993

Submitted by: Jerry Book; Eric Witmer; Rick Wiltraut

Written Description: YES Photo: YES 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	3	1	1				1	1
DECISION								

Comments:

Send for second Round.

Signature (Secretary):

J. C. Haas

Date:

3-31-95

332-01-1993

POMARINE JAEGER

THIS RECORD IS BEING RECIRCULATED BECAUSE THE PHOTOS GOT SEPARATED FROM THE WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION. YOUR ORIGINAL BALLOTS ARE INCLUDED FOR YOU TO MODIFY OR CONFIRM YOUR ORIGINAL DECISION.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 2 of 2

Species: Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Date of Sighting: 29 August 1993 to 6 September 1993

Location: WASHINGTON BORO

County: LANCASTER

Observer(s): Jerry Book; Eric Witmer; Rick Wiltraut
Richard Humbert

Date of Submission: 1993

Submitted by: Jerry Book; Eric Witmer; Rick Wiltraut

Written Description: YES Photo: YES 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								
DECISION	1			1			X	

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

F. C. Haas

Date:

9-19-95