

332-01-1999

POMARINE JAEGER

Stercorarius parasiticus

POMARINUS

Location: Sunset Point at Presque Isle State Park, Erie County, Pa

Date: December 2, 1999

Time: 8:00 TO 8:45 AM

Weather: Mostly cloudy, windsouthwesterly to about 10 mph. Visibility good.

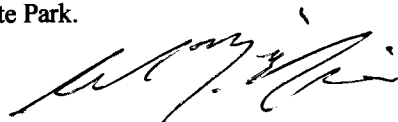
Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Zeiss 10 X 40 Binocular and Kowa TSN 4 Spotting Scope at 35X

Viewing distance: as close as ¼ mile and as far away as 1/2 mile

Details of sighting & description: While conducting the waterbird count I spotted a very dark gull-like bird at the horizon heading south towards Budney beach. It was flying so low that it frequently disappeared behind the waves. As it got closer I could clearly identify it as a jaeger by the overall darkness of the plumage, the falcon-like flight, and the white flashes in the primaries. At this point I was not sure whether it was a Pomarine or a Parasitic Jaeger until it got closer and mingled with a flock of feeding gulls. The following characteristics helped me determine that it was most likely a Pomarine Jaeger. The entire upperside and underside of the bird, except the wings, were black. The underwing coverts were dark brown with black barring. The white flash at the base of the primaries was rather extensive even on the uppersides and from a distance it appeared as if there was a hole in each wing. When the bird banked and showed the entire underside of the wing the white base of the primaries and a smaller white patch in the area of the primary coverts could be seen clearly. There were no tail projections and when the jaeger spread its tail it looked slightly wedged shaped. The size and shape of the bird became more apparent when it chased a Ring-billed Gull. Compared to the Ring-billed Gull it had broader wings, a heavier body, and a thicker neck. Parasitic Jaegers have slighter builds, reminiscent of Peregrine Falcon, and are about the same size as Ring-billed Gulls. This jaeger flew more like a gull, soaring frequently with a more labored wing beat and few quick turns, unlike the agile moves of Parasitic Jaeger. It spent a lot of time sitting on the water, but when it flew it did more soaring than flapping. Looking at the jaeger head on when it was gliding, it held its wings in an arch below the horizontal and when it flapped its wings the wing beats were shallow and slow. Its wings were broad at the base and angled back at the wrist.

This is the fourth Pomarine Jaeger I have seen at Presque Isle State Park.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Ballot - Round One

Species: Pomarine Jaeger (Stercorarius pomarinus)

Date of Sighting: 2 December 1999 to 2December 1999

Location: ERIE

County: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: Jerry McWilliams

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. Couchman			X					
P. Hess			X					
R. Ickes			X					
B. Reid			X					
P. Rodewald			X					
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			7					
DECISION			X					

Comments: 7/0

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 2/26/01