
SEP 19 2003


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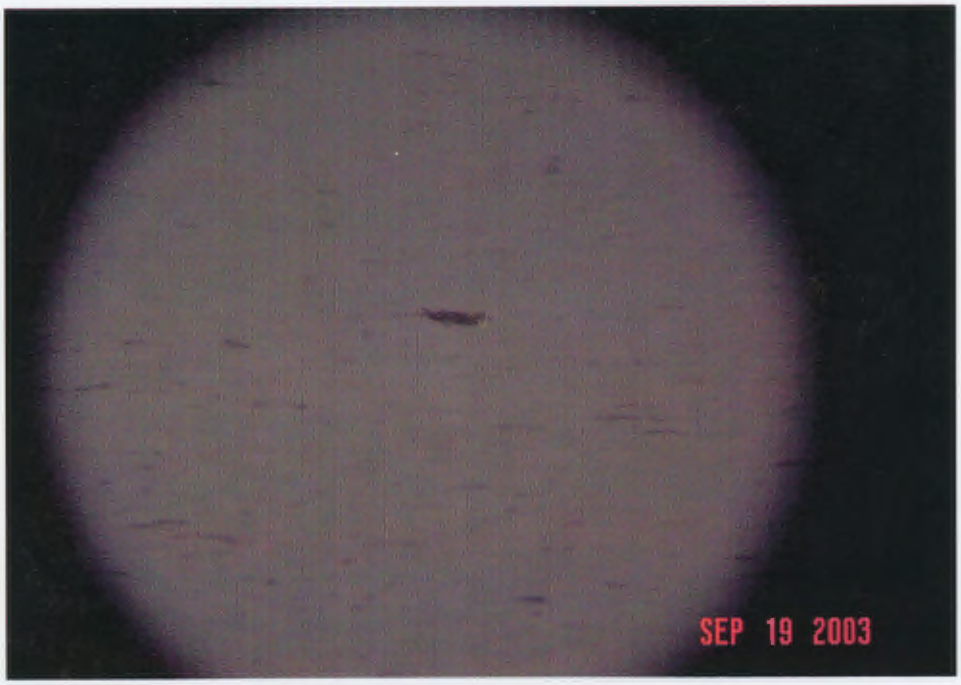
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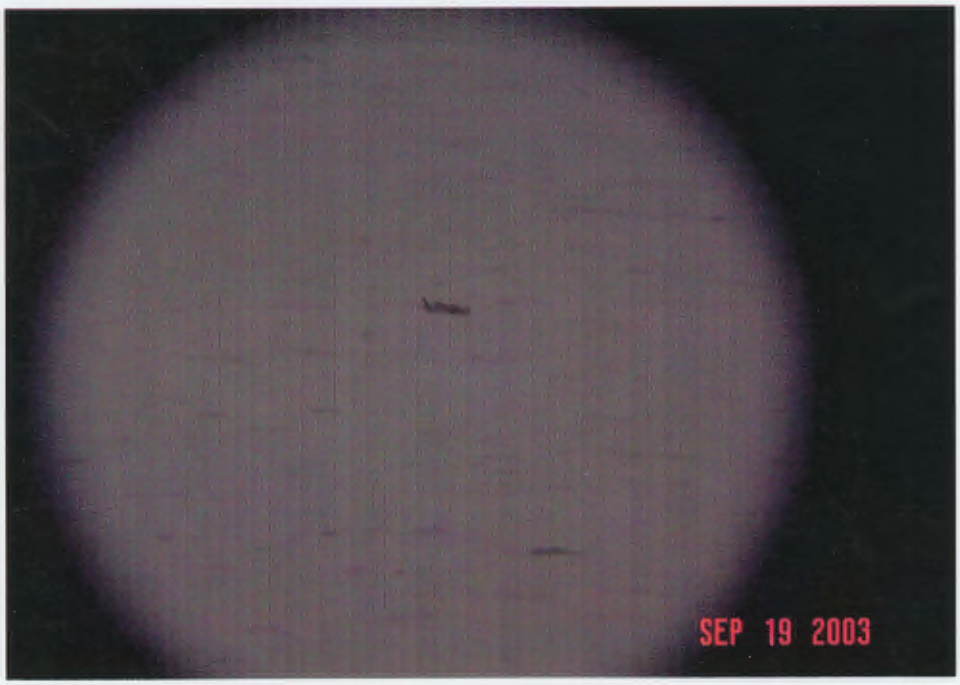
SEP 19 2003

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 in Pennsylvania. Send documentation to:

Nick Pulcinella, Secretary
Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee
613 Howard Ave.
West Chester, PA 19380
nickpul@bellatlantic.net

332-01-2003

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SPECIES (Common and Scientific Name): Pomarine Jaeger, *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Subspecies: Light morph

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS: 1 **SEX(ES):** probably female

AGES(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):
Light adult in non-breeding plumage

DATE OF OBSERVATION: 9/19/2003 **TIME:** 11:00 AM to 12:15 PM EST

LOCATION (city, borough, township): Somerset (town and county)

EXACT SITE (e.g., name of park, lake, road): Somerset Lake (or Lake Somerset)

OBSERVER REPORTING:
Name: Mark A. McConaughy
Address: 3787K Logans Ferry Road
City: Pittsburgh State: PA Zip: 15239-3910
Email (optional): TimeTraveler@msn.com
Telephone (optional): 724-527-5585 (day, work), 724-733-5299 (evening, weekends, home)

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

HABITAT (e.g., mowed field, woodland edge, any other details):
Lake

DISTANCE TO BIRD: approximately 250 yards

VIEWING CONDITIONS (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you):
Remnants of Hurricane Isable were providing drizzle and rain and the temperatures provided some light fog. My eye glasses would also periodically fog up while viewing the bird.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED: Leica APO Televid 77 mm scope with a 32X wide angle eyepiece and Leica 10x42 binoculars; A Sony DSC-707 digital camera with a 5X optical and up to 10X digital zoom lens was attached to the scope to take the accompanying photographs.

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):
The bird was sitting on the water the entire time I was there. Others, including Scott Bastian, saw it flying around the lake earlier in the day. However, all I could see in the 32X scope was a gull-like bird sitting in the water. It had a dark grayish back and wings. The tail did not appear to extend beyond the wing tips as it was seated. The head of the bird had a darker gray-black cap that extended from the top of the head to its beak. I could not be certain about the extent of the cap down onto the face at that time due to rain and the motion of the bird as it road the waves caused by the storm. The bill appeared in the scope to be small and dark. The neck of the bird was light cream in color and did NOT display a darker complete breast band (i.e., neck and breast were light cream). The nape of the neck (rear portion of the head) also appeared light and I could not distinguish any color in it in the rain. Other birds were seen flying around the lake including 1 Caspian, 1 Common, 6 Forster's and an immature Black Tern. The bird in question was smaller than the Caspian Tern, but larger than the other terns present. It was sitting in the water with its head erect. At the time of the actual visit, the bird had been initially identified as a Parasitic Jaeger by Scott Bastian. I didn't see anything that would dispute that identification at the time of the visit, but viewing conditions were not the best. Fortunately, I did take a lot of shots of the bird with my digital camera (and I can't do much more than see a small bird in the view finder when I'm taking the actual shots). The pictures were taken with the camera mounted on the scope and the lens set at approximately 4X to provide an effective magnification of 128X (4X x 32X = 128X) in the photographs (although I did take some a few shots at lower and higher zoom settings on the camera). After downloading the shots onto my computer, it became clear that the identification as a Parasitic Jaeger was erroneous. With a still picture I could better see the extent of the cap on the bird's head. It extended down into the cheek area and below the bill in a characteristic Pomarine Jaeger form. The bill also was clearly a two-toned bill with it being lighter closer to the face and the tip a darker black color. The two toned bill in an adult non-breeding bird is also characteristic of Pomarine Jaegers and not that of adult Parasitic Jaegers. The bird also lacked any long, pointed tail feathers extending beyond the wing extensions that would be expected with a Parasitic Jaeger. I concluded after seeing the photos that the bird actually was a Pomarine Jaeger.

BEHAVIOR (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing):
While I was there it did very little except sit on the water and ride the waves caused by the storm.

VOCALIZATIONS: None heard.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE, IF ANY:
Photograph ☒ **Video recording** ☐ **Audio recording** ☐ **Drawing** ☐
Photographer/recorder/illustrator:

Name: Mark A. McConaughy
Address: 3787K Logans Ferry Road
City: Pittsburgh State: PA Zip: 15239-3910
Email (optional): TimeTravler@msn.com
Telephone (optional): 724-527-5585 (day, work); 724-733-5299 (evenings, weekends, home)

Some of the photos are up on my web site @
http://people.delphiforums.com/MCCONAUGHY/birding/isabelbirds.htm
Others, including those on the web site are included on the accompanying CD.

IF THIS IS A DEAD BIRD:
General condition: NA
If collected (by permit), location and number of specimen if known:
NA

SEPARATION FROM SIMILAR SPECIES (how you eliminated others):
The bird in question clearly was a seabird, but not one of the species of terns that were also seen at Lake Somerset on the same day (i.e., it wasn't a Caspian, Common, Forster's or Black Tern), because it was not light enough and the wrong size to match any of them. As for other darker tern species, the cap on the specimen bird was not oriented correctly to be one of them. The cap covered the top of the head and extended over the forehead down to the bill. For darker terns, the cap usually displays a white or lighter forehead area and extend to the back of the head. Gull species that display hooded heads also did not conform to the type of hood seen on this specimen. Either the entire head is hooded or in non-breeding plumage, there usually is a ligher forehead, unlike that seen on this bird. One gull species has a cap that extends from near the top of the head to the bill in breeding plumage and does not cover the entire head. It is the Black-headed Gull. However, Black-headed Gulls also have red beaks which the specimen bird clearly lacked. Black-headed Gulls would also have displayed contrasting ligher mantle and dark wing tips which are not present on the specimen bird. Thus, it wasn't a gull or tern. That left Skuas and Jaegers. The bird was initially identified as a Parasitic Jaeger, but as noted above, the photos show that it was not a Parasitic Jaeger due to cap form and bill color. It also was not a Long-tailed Jaeger since it lacked the long tail feathers characteristic of that species. Long-tailed Jaegers also have totally dark, short bills which is not the case with this specimen. The head cap of Long-tailed Jaegers does not extend into the check area as seen in the specimen bird. Skua's could be eliminated since they

don't really have capped heads or lighter napes, necks and breasts. Thus, the bird had to be a light morph Pomarine Jaeger in non-breeding plumage. The lack of a breast band suggests this was a female bird (according to Sibley).

DISCUSSION – Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:
See above descriptions.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND/OR SIMILAR SPECIES:
This is a life bird for me, but I had seen a Parasitic Jaeger on a whale watch/pelagic trip off of New Jersey. However, I am certainly not an expert at identifying Jaegers and had to rely on the photos and field guides to make the identification.

ARE YOU POSITIVE OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION? (why or why not):
Reasonably so since I do not have a lot of experience with Jaegers. However, based on the field guides I have, it is the best identification I could make.

REFERENCES CONSULTED:

During observation: *The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Eastern North America.*

After observation: *The Sibley Guide to Birds; National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America; Peterson Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern North America; Seabirds: an Identification Guide* by Peter Harrison.

DATE OF THIS REPORT: 9/26/2003

SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER: Mark A. McGee

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nickpul@bellatlantic.net

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SPECIES (common and scientific name) Pomarine Jaeger Stercorarius pomarinus
Subspecies, if known

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 1 SEX(ES) unknown

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 - light morph - basic plumage

DATE OF OBSERVATION 9-19-03 TIME 8:45 a.m first, also ~12:00 pm

LOCATION (city, borough, township) Somerset

EXACT SITE (e.g. name of park, lake, road) Somerset Lake

OBSERVER REPORTING:
Name Jeff Payne
Address 9755 Glades Pike
City Berlin State PA ZIP 15530
e-mail (optional) paynemt@msn.com phone (optional) 814 267 5718

OTHER OBSERVERS (only those who saw and identified the bird with you): Ross Gallard - found bird, Laurth Payne, Mark Vass, Don Snell + Regina R-?, Larry Lewis, Scott Bastin, Ed Richards,

HABITAT (e.g. mowed field, woodland edge, any other details) middle of Somerset Lake just after passage of eye of Hurricane Isabelle somewhat to west

DISTANCE TO BIRD at first 400yds, flew by at 100-150yds.

VIEWING CONDITIONS (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you) windy, rainy

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED Swarovski 10x42 binocs, Swarovski 65mm scope

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): Swimming, a gull sized generally ~~light~~ dark bird with lighter nape and ventral neck and dark cap. In flight a direct powerful bird appearing mostly dark with bright white wing flashing at base of primaries. ~~Head~~ Bill, tip dark with larger portion of base light. Dark cap starting below bill and angling up behind eye to rear of crown. Hind neck light with this extending to fore neck in nonbreeding bird. Front of breast dark but belly light with some darker feathers ~~on~~ making belly appear somewhat mottled. Mantle and all dorsal aspect of wing dark, wing tips and tail fairly equal in length

(Please use an additional page if necessary.)

BEHAVIOR (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing) mostly sitting on water in middle of lake when flew did fly through terns but no chasing noted (they didnot have any food) flight powerful, made several swoops in wind in vicinity of flying Great Blue Heron) before landing in middle of lake again

VOCALIZATIONS none

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IF ANY:
Photograph____ Video recording X Audio recording____ Drawing____
Photographer/recorder/illustrator:
Name Ross Gallardy
Address
City State ZIP
e-mail (optional) phone (optional) 814 266 5967
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 —
If collected (by permit), location of specimen if known

SEPARATION FROM SIMILAR SPECIES (how you eliminated others) at first we felt the bird was a parasitic as had seemed relatively small and rounded while watching it on water at 300-400yd distance when later flew by a group of Forster's Common Terns (and a GBH) it appeared much more massive than parasitics chasing terns at Cape May & Cape Cod, bicolored bill and extensive dark cap very visible on video

DISCUSSION – Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:
Ross Gallardy found the bird at about 8:00 and called me. We observed it swimming in the middle of the lake for awhile and Ross videotaped before leaving to look for other windblown waifs. Late morning/noon we came back and saw it flying - other observers present then. This was when our earlier thoughts of parasitic were starting to waffle and Pomarine seemed more likely. Viewing the videos in a calm, dry house away from the excitement of other possible hurricane birds show the necessary field marks
(Please use an additional page if necessary)

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND/OR SIMILAR SPECIES Have seen Pomarines on a couple pelagic trips. Have watched Parasitics chase terns near shore at Cape May and Cape Cod

ARE YOU POSITIVE OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION ? (why or why not) After seeing bird flying and reviewing videotape I feel we were watching a Pomarine

REFERENCES CONSULTED:
During observation
After observation Sibley

DATE OF THIS REPORT: 1/18/04

SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER [signature]

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332-01-2003

SPECIES (common and scientific name) Pomarine Jaeger Stercorarius pomarinus
Subspecies (if known)

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 1 **SEX(ES)** Unknown

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 light phase non breeding

DATE OF OBSERVATION 9/19/03 **TIME** First seen at 8:50 a.m. - 10:10 a.m also seen later in the day around 12:30 p.m.

LOCATION (city, borough, township) Somerset, Somerset Township

EXACT SITE (e.g. name of park, lake, road) Lake Somerset

OBSERVER REPORTING:
Name Ross Gallardy
Address 306 Kim Lane
City Windber State PA ZIP 15963
e-mail (optional) Hornrow7@aol.com phone (optional) (814) 266-5967

OTHER OBSERVERS (only those who saw and identified the bird with you):
I found the bird and called Jeff Payne and Scott Busitan. They came and observed the Jaeger with me. Also an other people saw it throughout the day.

HABITAT (e.g. mowed field, woodland edge, any other details) On Lake Somerset

DISTANCE TO BIRD Anywhere from about 50 - 150 yards away.

VIEWING CONDITIONS (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you) Cloudy with rain. It was during Hurricane Isabel.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED Celestron Ultima 10 10×50 Binoculars Orion 60x Spotting Scope with a 20-60 zoom

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): When I first found the Pomarine Jaeger it was the closest. I quickly noticed that it had a bi-colored bill. The bill also seemed pretty heavy. After looking at the bird for about 5 minutes it took off from the water and started chasing some terns. In flight the bird had a very chunky appearence to it. The birds tail seemed pointed in flight, but the tail feathers weren't long enough for Long-tail Jaeger or Parasitic Jaeger. After flying for about 10 minutes it landed again. Now the light was after it landed you could no longer tell that it had a bi-colored bill. The cap was very dark and extended down and included the malar. I saw the Pomarine Jaeger fly two more times thoughout the day. Every time it flew you could tell how chunky it looked.

BEHAVIOR (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing) During my observations of the bird I got to see it fly a total of three times. The first time I saw it fly was the longest flight I saw. During the time it was flying it went around chasing the nearby terns. The other two times it flew it was just going to another part of the lake. While sitting on the water it didn't do much. At one time it preened some but that was all that it did on the water.

VOCALIZATIONS

No vocalizations heard.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IF ANY: *see note

Photograph ✓ **Video recording** ✓ **Audio recording** ____ **Drawing** ____

Photographer/recorder/illustrator:

Name Ross Gallardy

Address 306 Kim Lane

City Windber State PA ZIP 15963

e-mail (optional) Hoss Ross7@aol.com phone (optional) (814) 266-5467

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 ____

If collected (by permit), location and number of specimen if known ____

SEPARATION FROM SIMILAR SPECIES (how you eliminated others) I eliminated long-tailed Jaeger by the chunkiness of the bird, the bi-colored bill, and the cap which extended to the malar. Parasitic Jaeger was more difficult to eliminate. I eliminated Parasitic by the bi-colored and heavyness of the bill, the cap which extend to the malar, and how chunky the bird was.

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

I expected to find something rare that day. It was on 9/19/03 which was the day Isabel came through. This gave a good reason to why the bird was there.

(Please use an additional page if necessary)

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND/OR SIMILAR SPECIES

I have had no previous experience with any of the Jaegers.

ARE YOU POSITIVE OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION ? (why or why not) I am positive that my ID is correct. I saw the bird for a very long period of time. All field marks I saw checked right. Many other people saw it that day and agreed with the ID.

REFERENCES CONSULTED:

During observation Sibley's Guide to birds

After observation Sibley's Guide to birds

DATE OF THIS REPORT: 9/25/03

SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER Ross P. Gallardy

Pomarine Jaeger note. I am sending pictures of the jaeger along. These pictures are of the jaeger both flying and sitting on the water. The video I got of the jaeger is much better then the pictures but I don't have an extra copy of it. If the acceptance of the Pomarine Jaeger depends on the video I will send it in. There are a few people that I want to show the video to and don't want it gone for the time period that it takes to accept a record. But as I said I will send it to you if it is neccesary.

Sincerely, Ross Gallardy

Record No: 332-01-2003

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Pomarine Jaeger (Stercorarius pomarinus)

Date of Sighting: 19 September 2003 to 19 September 2003
Location: LAKE SOMERSET
County : SOMERSET
Observer(s): Ross Gallardy, Mark McConaughy, Jeff Payne et al.

Date of Submission: 2003
Submitted by: Ross Gallardy, Mark McConaughy, Jeff Payne, Scott Kinzey

Written Description: Yes Photo: Yes Specimen: No Recording: Video

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								
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	5							
DECISION	X							

Comments: 5/0

Signature (Secretary) Date: 2/27/06