

August 26, 2005

Sandra Lockerman

Thank you for submitting the description of the Jaeger you found on the Susquehanna River in Harrisburg on September 19, 2003 after the passage of Hurricane Isabel. The report was unanimously accepted as a Jaeger sp.

Jaeger identification is notoriously difficult. In my experience both Pomarine and Parasitic can impart a fairly distinctive jizz even at distance, or under poor conditions (or both). Often after identifying a bird I find it difficult to explain why I made such an ID. Your description left no doubt that you saw a Jaeger but there was nothing definitive described of the birds plumage. For example, you first sentence said "Bird approximately same size as Ring-billed Gull..". Using the average lengths given by Sibley and not considering the longer tail of a Jaeger a Parasitic Jaeger is 16.5 inches, a Ring-billed Gull is 17.5 inches, and a Pomarine is 18.5 inches. So speaking approximately all three species are the same size.

Isabel produced a unprecedented fallout of pelagic birds. Even without a specific identification your documentation will add to the record of the historic event. Thanks again for sending in the description.

Sincerely

Matt Sharp
Chair: Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee.

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

332-04-2003

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): light morph adult (possible breeding plumage)

DATE OF OBSERVATION Sept 19, 2003 TIME 5:35 PM

LOCATION (city, borough, township) Harrisburg

EXACT SITE (e.g. name of park, lake, road) 2345 N. Front St Riverside Park - Harrisburg

OBSERVER REPORTING:

Name Sandra J. Lockerman
Address 3830 Lexington St
City Harrisburg State PA ZIP 17109
e-mail (optional) lockerman@paonline.com phone (optional) 717 657 0509

OTHER OBSERVERS (only those who saw and identified the bird with you): none

HABITAT (e.g. mowed field, woodland edge, any other details) edge of Susquehanna River downtown Harrisburg, no riparian edge

DISTANCE TO BIRD 1000-1200 yards across the river

VIEWING CONDITIONS (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you) overcast, low clouds, winds 5-10 mph, no sun visible

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED Swarovski 10x42

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): Bird approximately same size as Ring-billed gull but held its wings out from the body more than a gull. The body was bulky and the wingspan was 2x-3x longer than the body. There was a white area underneath, no breast band or belly band that extended from the upper breast to the legs. There was also a light colored area on the back of the ^{head and} nape that was prominent when the bird turned. The silhouette of the bird was more of an elongated cross than of an X. The tail appeared to have a small extension of the feathers, approximately 1/4 of the tail's length. The overall color of the bird was a dark black except for the area's noted above. The wings also had a paleness to the underside in the area of the primaries.

(Please use an additional page if necessary.)

trailing

BEHAVIOR (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing) the bird was gliding and occasionally flapping over the Susquehanna River. It made three turns as it changed its direction of flying. Watched the bird for approximately one hour before it went out of sight downstream. The wingbeats were slow and deliberate, no hurry to them.

VOCALIZATIONS none heard

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 _____

If collected (by permit), location of specimen if known _____

SEPARATION FROM SIMILAR SPECIES (how you eliminated others) The wingbeat of this bird was unlike any raptor species or vulture species. The beat was a slow, hesitating, downbeat and then a slow upbeat. Ospreys were eliminated because of the wingbeat. I eliminated gulls due to the length of the wingspan and the dark coloration of the bird.

DISCUSSION - Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it: This observation was made within 12 hours of the passing of Hurricane Isabel. Hearsay reports were being made that this bird ^{species} had been spotted in this area earlier in the day.

(Please use an additional page if necessary)

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND/OR SIMILAR SPECIES Saw parasitic jaeger at Atlantic Ocean, has seen numerous gannets and gulls

ARE YOU POSITIVE OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION? (why or why not) Yes, I had never saw the wing beats like this bird on any other species of bird, its coloration was different too. The whole jizz of the bird eliminated almost all of PA's bird species.

REFERENCES CONSULTED:

During observation Sibley Guide to Birds, Peterson Field Guide: Eastern Birds

After observation National Geog. Birds of N.A., Thayer's Birding Program

DATE OF THIS REPORT: Nov 30, 2003

SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER Sandra J. Lockerman

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

Date of Sighting: 19 September 2003 to 19 September 2003

Location: HARRISBURG

County : DAUPHIN

Observer(s): Sandra Lockerman

Date of Submission: 2003

Submitted by: Sandra Lockerman

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
G. Armistead R. W. Witmer					X			
D. Heathcote					X			
P. Guris				X				
J. Stanley				X				
E. Witmer				X				
R. Leberman			X					
M. Sharp						X		
TOTALS			1	3	2	1		
DECISION				X				

Comments:

1/6

Signature (Secretary)

Date: