

333-02-1996

PARASITIC JAEGER

Stercorarius parasiticus

Location: Presque Isle State Park, Erie County, Pa

Date: October 19, 1996

Time: 10:20 AM

Weather: Cloudy (stratus), moderate rain showers, 20+ mph from the north

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Zeiss 10 X 40 Binocular and Kowa TSN 4 Spotting Scope at 30X

Viewing distance: about 200 yards

Details of sighting & description: I was in my car at Sunset Point conducting the waterbird count. There had been a few ducks, mostly scaup and American Wigeon, migrating from west to east over the lake, otherwise migration was a bit slow. I had just finished wiping the water from my scope when through my rain covered window I saw a fast flying blackish Ring-billed Gull-sized bird flying just beyond the breakwaters in a westerly direction. My window was down on the driver's side, so I waited for the bird to fly past the car so I could easily observe it through my open window. When I focused my binocular on the bird I immediately recognized the bird as a jaeger. It was flying rapidly, though doing more soaring than flapping, parallel to the shoreline about 25 feet above the water with the occasional dip down to within a foot or two of the water. Its wings remained angled back at the wrist and when banking away from me, the wings were strongly cupped forming a distinctive arch. The jaeger was rather thin and resembled a narrow-winged Peregrine Falcon in its shape and behavior. Though the light was not especially good and it was only in view for less than a minute, I was able to see the following details. The entire upperside was very dark brown, looking more blackish than basic 1 Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*). I saw wedge-shaped white patches at the base of the primaries on the underside of the wings. The tail was dark brown and wedged shaped. I could not see any central rectrice extensions. The underside of the body was pale and barred dark brown. The head appeared all dark. The undersides of the wings were dusky with heavily barred wing linings. I eliminated the possibility of the bird being a Long-tailed Jaeger (*S. longicaudus*) because the wings were not narrow enough and the bird appeared to be too large and heavy. The flight was strong and direct like a falcon rather than graceful like a tern. The back was brownish black rather than grayish and the white primary patch was too large and prominent to be a Long-tailed. It could not have been a Pomarine Jaeger (*S. pomarinus*), because the bird appeared too small and stream-lined and

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not heavy chested and the wings were not broad-based. There was no double-white patch at the base of the primaries which is typical of Pomarine Jaeger.

Of the 20 or so jaegers I have seen on Presque Isle, I have identified at least 12 as Parasitic Jaeger. Some of these I have documented with photographs.

W. J. L.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)

Date of Sighting: 19 October 1996 to 19 October 1996

Location: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

County: ERIE

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 1996

Submitted by: Jerry McWilliams

Written Description: YES

Photo: NO

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					
S. Feldstein			X					
TOTALS			7					
DECISION			X					

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

8-16-97