

333-021999

PARASITIC JAEGER

Stercorarius parasiticus

Location: Presque Isle State Park, Erie County, Pa

Date: November 4, 1999

Time: 8:08 to 8:12 AM

Weather: Variably cloudy winds westerly to about 10 mph

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Kowa TSN 4 Spotting Scope at 35 X

Viewing distance: several hundred yards

Details of sighting & description: I had been counting waterbirds passing Sunset Point when at 8:08. I spotted a very blackish falcon-like bird with white wing flashes. I immediately identified it as a jaeger as I watched it racing towards a Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*). When it caught up to the gull it came within a foot or two of the bird as it forced it skyward and then the jaeger left the gull and continued in a southeastern direction. I identified the jaeger as an immature Parasitic by the following characteristics: It was not a heavy bird and it was about the same size as the Ring-billed Gull, but the shorter angled wings of the jaeger made it look smaller. Pomarine Jaegers are much larger with broader wings and their flight behavior is less falcon-like with fewer abrupt twists and turns. When it glided it would hold its pointed wings below the horizontal and angled back. The plumage of the bird looked very similar to the jaeger(s) I saw last week. The entire upper back, wings (except for the white patches at the bases of the primaries) and tail were dark brown. A distinctive white patch was present at the bases of the outer primaries, especially noticeable on the underside. The entire underside looked pale brown (darkest on the upper breast) with heavy barring on the belly, breast, underwing and tail coverts. The tail was wedged shaped, but the bird was too far away to see any tail projections.

I have seen many jaegers at Presque Isle State Park and they always strike me as powerful falcon-like birds that, except in bright sunshine, look very black not brown. Distant basic I plumaged Herring Gulls can look dark, but they never look black and their flight is more labored and leisurely. The Herring Gulls flight is less powerful than jaegers even when they are pursuing other gulls. Even when a jaeger is flying into 40 mph winds their speed and agility is unmatched by any gull.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Ballot - Round One

Species: Parasitic Jaeger (Stercorarius parasiticus)

Date of Sighting: 4 November 1999 to 4 November 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

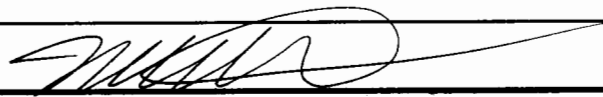
Specimen: No

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