

PARASITIC JAEGER

*Stercorarius parasiticus*

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Location: Sunset Point, Presque Isle S.P., Erie, Pa.

Date: November 8, 2018

Time: 8:10 AM

Weather: Cloudy, wind WNW to 15 mph, temp. 44 F

Viewing distance: about 3/4 mile from shore

Optics: Kowa TSN 884 Prominar spotting scope from 30X to 60X

Details: While conducting the waterbird count from a high hard pan sand dune just east of Sunset Point I spotted an immature Parasitic Jaeger flying west fast and low. The bird was shaped like a large falcon with pointed wings strongly bent at the wrists. It appeared to be all dark with just a small amount of white showing at the base of the under primaries. Because of the distance of the bird, details like the central tail feather shape and face and head pattern could not be discerned. At one point it rocked skyward to pursue a Ring-billed Gull at which point I was able to see that it was the same size as the gull ruling out Pomarine Jaeger which is slightly larger and more robust than a Ring-billed Gull. The fast wingbeats and snappy aerial movements is also characteristic of Parasitic Jaeger. I am fairly familiar with both Pamarine and Parasitic jaegers, since I have observed and photographed both for many years, especially during my waterbird counts that I have been conducting for over 25 years.