

388-01-1999

RARE BIRD REPORT

Species: Black Guillemot Date of this Observation: 12/01/1999

Date Found: 12/01/1999 Last Date Seen: 12/01/1999

Location: Lake Ontelaunee

Township/City: Ontelaunee Twp County: Berks

Person Writing this report: Franklin C. Haas

Address: 2469 Hammertown Rd., Narvon, PA 17555

pabirds@redrose.net Phone: 717-445-9609

Other Observers: Barbara Haas, John Puschock, Peter Robinson, and others.

Who found the bird first: John Puschock

Other documentation Included: *(Circle all appropriate items)* (Make sure all attached items are fully labeled)

Photograph

Audio Recording

Video Recording

If a Specimen, where is it stored? \_\_\_\_\_

Description: *(Attach additional pages as needed—Please do not write on back of this form)*

The bird was found by John Puschock. We received a call and arrived at about 4:15PM. We spotted the bird flying from the eastern part of the lake towards the western cove of the lake. It sat there for several minutes, then took off, circled around several times at distances ranging from 100 to several hundred yards and then gained altitude and flew off to the southwest. This all took place in about 10-15 minutes.

The bird was shaped like an alcid, like a long football with wings. It was in "winter" plumage. It had a white head and neck, mottled back, black wings with large white patches on the upper coverts (shoulder) on the top of the wings. The underwings were white with a dark trailing edge. (This ruled out Pigeon Guillemot.) It had a thin bill that was a little less than the length of the head. The size of the bird was smaller than the Mallards nearby.

I have seen several Black Guillemots on the New England coast in winter.

Peter Robinson took video of the bird before we arrived.

When the bird was sitting in the cove, I observed it through a Questar at 50X. When in flight, it was observed through 8X binoculars.

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P. O. Box 482  
124 N. Stephen Place  
Hanover, PA 17331  
15 August 2000

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee  
c/o Nick Pulcinella  
210 Welcome Avenue  
Norwood, Pennsylvania 19074

Dear PORC:

The following report is based upon my own notes made at the time observation:

Species: Black Guillemot (juvenile or winter plumage)

Date/Time: 1 December 1999.

Location: Lake Ontalaunee, north of Reading, Berks County, PA

Weather: 40 degrees F., partly cloudy, wind 10>15 mph.

Optics: Leica Ultra 12 X 50 binoculars. Questar scope @ 40 and 65 power.

Video Camera: Cannon ES3000 high resolution 8 mm with 20 power optical zoom.

Observations:

Thanks to John Puschock, he and several others of us got to see a Black Guillemot at Lake Ontelaunee late in the afternoon on 1 December 1999.

I arrived at about 3:10 PM to look for a Pacific Loon that had been there. John (who I'd not met before) walked over to the car and asked "are you a birder"? "I'm one of them", I said. He said "good -- either I've just seen a Black Guillemot fly by, or I'm going crazy". John said he'd recently been in Quebec, where he saw a total of about 80 of them, but wanted someone else to see this one for confirmation. (My lucky day.)

We spent 5-10 minutes looking at the bay on the west side of the dam where John had seen the bird fly, then John saw it fly back out, headed east. We watched it fly across, about 100 to 150 yards away, in front of us, and out of sight, both pretty certain that the bird was a Black Guillemot. The bird was generally a dingy or "dirty" white in color. It was "smallish", shorter in length than a Ring-billed Gull, and had a very "stout" or "chunky" shape. As it flew, it flapped its wings steadily, with a very quick wing beat. **The under side of the wing was white, with a black trailing edge.**

John went to call Arlene Koch, to get a message posted to PA Birds. I went looking for the bird. Driving across the dam on Rt. 73, I saw a smallish, "chunky", white bird on the water, close to the shore, and stopped at the first pulloff on the left. After a brief look at it with the binoculars from about 25 yards, I

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got the video camera, and was about to press the record button when the bird took off again. I did get a few seconds of the bird flying away -- hopefully enough to be of benefit to the records committee.

After another 15 - 20 minutes of scoping the lake unsuccessfully, I returned to the bridge about 4:15 PM and found John Puschock, whose telephone efforts had resulted in the arrival of Katrina Knight, Harold and Joan Silagy, Frank and Barb Haas, and Deuane Hoffman. After some more searching, the bird was seen flying back into the bay west of the bridge, where it stayed out of sight for a few minutes before flying out again for everyone there to get a good look at it. It flew by headed east, turned, then flew away from the lake towards the south west.

Please see the enclosed video tape of the bird flying away. The video is not the best, but does show a "smallish", "chunky", "dirty white" bird flying with a very quick wing beat.

Sincerely,

*Peter Robinson*

Peter Robinson

717.632.8462

[peterrobins@hotmail.com](mailto:peterrobins@hotmail.com)

## Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

### Tabulation - Round One

Species: Black Guillemot (Cepphus grylle)

Date of Sighting: 1 December 1999 to 1 December 1999

Location: LAKE ONTELAUNEE

County: BERKS

Observer(s): John Pushock, Frank Haas, Barbara Haas, Peter Robinson,

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: Frank Haas, Peter Robinson

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

Recording: Video

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							
<del>P. Redewald</del> R. Leberman			X					
M. Sharp		X						
TOTALS	4	1	2					
DECISION	X							

Comments:

7/0

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 11/21/01