

455-01-1993

V7/2 + POC ✓

**Breeding season record of a Short-eared Owl, *Asio flammeus*,
in Clearfield Co., Pa.**

By Glenna & Paul Schwalbe

About 8:00 p.m. on 21 June 1993, while driving near Keewaydin in northeastern Clearfield Co., Pa., we spotted an owl sitting on a road sign at the side of the road. We could not detect any ear tufts on the large roundish head. It flew at our approach and from the characteristic bat-like flight, we knew instantly that it was a Short-eared Owl. It flew for some distance before crossing the road in front of us, went down into a depression in the terrain and finally through some small evergreens and out of sight. It was in view for about 60 - 80 seconds. With our binoculars we were able to see the buffy patches on the upper wing near the wing tips.

The area where we saw it is a reclaimed strip-mine, mostly open, but with groves of young coniferous and black(?) locust trees from about two to 14 feet or so in height. Other birds seen in the area include many Grasshopper Sparrows, Vesper Sparrow, Horned Lark, Killdeer and Common Nighthawk.

This area is about 68 miles due east of the Curllsville, Clarion Co. site where this species was found breeding in 1988 (Buckwalter 1988; Brauning 1992), and about 54 miles east of the atlasing block in Jefferson Co., where it was recorded as a "possible" breeder (Brauning 1992).

This may be an eastern extension of the previously known summering/breeding range of the Short-eared Owl in Pennsylvania.

Brauning, Daniel W., 1992. Editor, Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania. University of Pittsburgh Press.

Buckwalter, Margaret, 1988. Short-eared Owls in Clarion County. *Pennsylvania Birds* 2:55-56.

455-01-1993

REPORT OF AN UNCOMMON OR RARE SPECIES AND/OR HIGH NUMBERS

SPECIES: Short-eared Owl, *Asio flammeus*

OBSERVER(S) WRITING ACCOUNT: Paul & Glenna Schwalbe

OTHER OBSERVERS: None

DATE: 15 July 1993

DATE OF OBSERVATION: 21 June 1993

LOCATION: Keewaydin, Clearfield Co., Pa.

SIGNIFICANCE OF OBSERVATION: Time of year (breeding season) bird was seen. This area is about 68 miles due east of the Curllsville, Clarion Co. site where this species was found breeding in 1988 (Buckwalter 1988; Brauning 1992), and about 54 miles east of the atlas block in Jefferson Co., where it was recorded as a "possible" breeder (Brauning 1992). This may be an eastern extension of the previously known summering/breeding range of the Short-eared Owl in Pennsylvania.

HABITAT: Reclaimed strip-mine.

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH OBSERVATION WAS MADE: About 8:00 p.m. on 21 June 1993, while driving near Keewaydin in northeastern Clearfield Co., Pa., we spotted a medium sized owl sitting on a road sign at the side of the road. It flew at our approach off to the left, then flew for some distance before crossing the road in front of us, went down into a depression in the terrain and finally through some small evergreens and out of sight. It was in view for about 60 - 80 seconds.

DESCRIPTION: This was a dark, medium sized owl. While sitting on the sign, we could not detect any ear tufts on the large roundish head. As it flew we knew instantly that it was a Short-eared Owl from the characteristic bat-like wing-beat. The buffy patches on the upper wing near the wing tips were very noticeable with binoculars.

ELIMINATION OF OTHER SPECIES: Neither Barn, Great Horned, Long-eared nor Barred Owls have buffy patches on the upper wings as this one did. The Barn is very light above and below, almost white underneath. Both the Long-eared and Great Horned have large ear tufts, and the Barred and Great Horned are larger, with bulkier bodies and larger heads. Immature Red-shouldered Hawks have similar buffy patches on the wings, but have small heads with obvious bills, and do not have the same type of wing beat or body shape.

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EXPERIENCE (with this and similar species): Both observers are familiar with the species, having seen many in winter in the east (Delaware, Massachusetts, New Jersey as well as Pa.) and in summer in the western states.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: B & L, 8 X 42 Elite binoculars were used.

REFERENCES/LITERATURE CITED:

Brauning, Daniel W., 1992. Editor, Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania. University of Pittsburgh Press.

Buckwalter, Margaret, 1988. Short-eared Owls in Clarion County. *Pennsylvania Birds* 2:55-56.

Signed

Daniel W. Brauning Anna P. Schwalbe

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Short-eared Owl (Asio flammeus)**

Date of Sighting: **21 June 1993 to 21 June 1993**

Location: **NEAR KEEWAYDIN**

County: **CLEARFIELD**

Observer(s): **Paul & Glenna Schwalbe**

Date of Submission: **1993**

Submitted by: **Paul & Glenna Schwalbe**

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
J. Skinner			X					
TOTALS		1	6					
DECISION			X					

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

F. C. Haas

Date:

2-23-94