

8 June 1994

Peter Hill
50 Newton Street
Philadelphia, PA 19118

Dear Mr. Hill,

Thank you for sending documentation on the Black-backed Woodpecker to P.O.R.C. We regret that we are unable to accept this record at the present time. Several committee members felt that the details submitted did not rule out the possibility that the bird may have been a melanistic (or juvenile) Hairy Woodpecker. This does not of course mean that the bird was not a Black-backed Woodpecker, but merely that the evidence presented was not sufficient for a concrete determination to be made. You mention that photographs of the bird were taken, but that the whereabouts of these were unknown at the time of your submission. We would be extremely grateful if you could locate these and re-submit the record to P.O.R.C. for further review.

We encourage you to document and submit details of any rare birds you may find in the future.

Sincerely,

Ed Kwater
Chairman

Record # 521-01-1993

521-01-1993

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE) - use other side if necessary

PORC
rec'd 10/13/93

SUPPORTING DETAILS: UNCOMMON OR RARE SPECIES AND/OR SPECIES IN HIGH NUMBERS

Observer writing this account and date written: Peter Hill 1/22/93

SPECIES Black-backed Woodpecker NUMBER, AGE, SEX 1, (pos. imm. male)

Distance from bird(s) 40-60 ft. Relative size of bird (compare to known species) size of med. lg. hairy

HEAD & NECK (Describe forehead, crown, auricular, malar region, median line, etc.)
Black head with white line from bill under eye, to back of head. Black malar streak. White throat. Possible trace of yellow on crown.

EYE & LORES (Describe supercilium, ^{eye} ring, ^{eye} stripe, ^{eye} color, etc.) Black eyes, no rings or stripes

UPPER & LOWER MANDIBLES Totally black bill.

LEGS & FEET unnoticed

UPPERPARTS (Describe nape, back, rump, upper tail coverts, etc.) Totally black.

UNDERPARTS (Describe throat, belly, side, flanks, crissum, etc.) White throat and belly with faint but noticeable barring on flanks.

RECTRICES (Describe inner, middle, outer tail feathers, color pattern, shape, etc.)
Medium length black tail w/white outer tail feathers.

WING (Describe color, length, shape, linings, bars, coverts, leading and trailing edges, etc.) Totally black rounded wings and back.

VOCALIZATION call: loud "kick!"

BEHAVIOR Stayed on pretty much the same area of tree (alway facing us) pecking and occ. calling (that's how we noticed it). It stayed about 40 ft. away for 15-20 min. + then flew to a tree about 60 ft. away and stayed there for 5-10 min.

Date of observation 5/2/92 Time 9:00 AM Weather clear Sky cover none (small Cuth. Fract. later)

Duration of observation 20-30 min. Bird - Sun orientation 90° apart

Exact location S.C.E.E. Founder's Grove on side of trunk facing us always

Habitat Mixed deciduous Other observers (see over) 6 total

coniferous woods Optical equipment 6 pairs of binocs, 7 telephoto lens

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS SEE OTHER SIDE.

AN ACCOMPANYING SKETCH OR PHOTOGRAPH CAN BE AN EXCELLENT FURTHER DOCUMENTATION

Photograph taken, whereabouts unknown.

(over)

521-01-1993

Other observers, if known (at least two if possible):

Dick James, (he's trying to remember the name of the camera lady)

What field guides did you consult?

Audubon Soc. Master Guide to Birding, Aud. Soc. Field Guide to N.A. Birds,

Peterson's Field Guide to Birds of N. Am. + Guide to Eastern Birds

Did you take field notes prior to consulting your field guide? Not on paper. Most of the field guides were with us at the time.

Your address: 50 Newton St. Phila, Pa. 19118

Phone number: (215) 242-0432

(from 40' w/SWIFT 8x403)

Dick says that another group of birders saw the bird the next day. I would contact him anyway since he might have remembered the name of the lady with the camera. In my mind there is no doubt as to the bird's identity and I think that anyone who saw it would agree. It almost perfectly resembled the photos and drawings in the field guides. People have suggested many other birds it could have been everything from melanistic Hairy Woodpecker to immature sapsucker but upon seeing pictures of these birds it is obvious that they could not be the bird and some don't even show a vague resemblance to it. I truly believe that this really was a Black-backed Woodpecker, and that it could not have been anything else. It was quite distinctive. I stand behind the identification fully. Here is a drawing from memory of the bird.



521-01-1993

Other observers, if known (at least two if possible):

Dick James, (he's trying to remember the name of the camera lod)
What field guides did you consult?
Audobon Soc. Master Guide to Birding, Aud. Soc. Field Guide to Wild Birds,
Peterson's Field Guide to Birds of N. Am., + Guide to Eastern Birds
Did you take field notes prior to consulting your field
guide? Not on paper. Most of the field guides
were with us at the time.

Your address: 50 Newton St. Phila, Pa. 19108

Phone number: (215) 242-0132

(from 46' w/SW + 8x40)

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Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Black-backed Woodpecker (Picoides arcticus)**

Date of Sighting: **2 May 1992 to 2 May 1992**

Location:

County: **PHILADELPHIA**

Observer(s): **Peter Hill**

Date of Submission: **1993**

Submitted by: **Peter Hill**

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			3	4				
DECISION				X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

F. C. Haas

Date:

2-28-94