

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE  
210 Welcome Ave. Norwood, PA 19074

8 February 2001

Lawrence Brown  
RR 2 Box 187  
Millerton, PA 16936

Dear Lawrence,

Thank you for submitting documentation on the Black-backed Woodpecker at Millerton on 28 November 1998. After careful review, the committee regrets that it cannot accept this record. One member voted to accept it, but the majority declined because they felt that much more plumage detail was needed for certainty, including the exact appearance of a moustache stripe, the flanks, and the face. They also were troubled by the description of its size as "slightly larger" than a Downy Woodpecker (Black-backed is quite a hefty-appearing bird even larger than a Hairy), and "gray sides" (not typical for a Black-backed, which would show heavily barred sides). Some of the members felt that it might have been one of the very dark, i.e. melanistic, Hairy Woodpeckers which sometimes occur.

The committee emphasizes that non-acceptance does not mean that the bird was not the species reported, but rather that the committee believes the documentation submitted does not support the identification conclusively.

We hope that this will not discourage you from submitting documentation on any rarities you may find in the future.

Finally, the committee apologizes for the unacceptably long delay before all members were able to vote on the record. Circumstances beyond our control caused the problem, and we believe that we are back on a timely track.

Sincerely,

For the Committee:  
Paul Hess, Chairman

P.S. Beginning this year observers will receive postcards acknowledging that the committee has received their documentation. In addition, whereas observers formerly were notified only when reports were not accepted (in disappointing or irritating letters like this one), they will now receive cards announcing that their records *have* been accepted.

Record #521-01-1998

521-01-1998

TIOGA COUNTY  
LAWRENCE BROWN  
RR 2 BOX 187  
MILLERON, PA. 16930  
717-537-2730

11-28-98 BLACK BACKED THREE TOED WOODPECKER POSS. IMM. FEMALE

NO YELLOW ON HEAD, DID APPEAR GLOSSY IN BRIGHT SUN,  
CLEAR 56°F LIGHT BREEZE 11:15AM WHEN LEFT HOUSE  
HEADED FOR DRIVEWAY, RANGE 490 FT. AT FIRST NO FIELD  
GLASSES. BIRD APPEARED SLIGHTLY LARGER THAN DOWNY NO  
WHITE ON BACK, WAS WORKING A PARTLY DEAD CHERRY TREE  
AT CORNER OF GARAGE. 6 OR MORE WHITE BREASTED  
NUTHATCHES WORKING SAME TREE + GARAGE (EAVES). BROWN  
CREEPER ON SPRUCE TREE 20 FT. FROM HOUSE. BIRD WAS  
WORKING UNDER SCALES OF BARK LIKE NUTHATCHES WERE.  
WITH 10X40 GLASSES BIRD APPEARED TO HAVE GRAY  
SIDES, WHITE NEAR OR ON THROAT. I'M STANDING LOOKING  
UNW, HOUSE BETWEEN ME + SUN, EXCELLENT LIGHT. WENT  
FOR CAMERA. BIRD LEFT. THIS IS THE SECOND TIME  
I HAVE SEEN THIS BIRD FROM OUR HOUSE, FIRST TIME  
WAS OUT ON SSE FACING WINDOW. BIRD WAS ON AN  
OLD CHERRY TREE USED BY NESTING WOODPECKERS,  
SAPSUCKERS, STARLINGS - THAT SIGHTING WAS BRIEF  
BUT WITH 8X22'S AT 25 FT. BEHAVIOR A CROSS BETWEEN  
NUTHATCHES + DOWNY.

LATER BOTH ARLENE + I HEARD BIRD - ONE NOTE PAWK!  
I SAW IT 40' 8X22'S CLEAR

P.S. <sup>11-28-98</sup> I only heard the bird, but we immediately went  
in + played woodpecker on tape + the black backed three  
toed was the only one that sounded like the call we heard.

Adlene Brown

Larry tried to show me the bird both times he saw  
it, but I never did see it.

## Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

### Voting Tabulation - Round One

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

Date of Sighting: 28 November 1998 to 28 November 1998

Location: MILLERTON

County: TIOGA

Observer(s): Lawrence Brown

Date of Submission: 1998

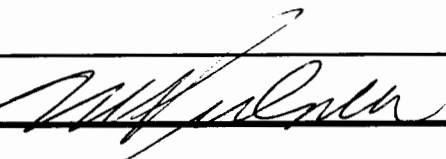
Submitted by: Lawrence Brown

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	
D. Couchman					X			
T. Floyd								X
P. Hess			X					
R. Ickes					X			
J. McWilliams				X				
B. Reid				X				<del>X</del>
P. Rodewald					X			<del>X</del>
TOTALS			1	2	3			<del>1</del>
DECISION					X			

Comments: 1/5/98

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

9/24/00