

Submission Date	2012-11-02 15:21:53
Observer's Name	Ian Gardner
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Observer's Address	Street Address: 1128 W Beaver Ave Street Address Line 2: Apt A City: State College State / Province: PA Postal / Zip Code: 16801 Country: United States
Names of additional observers	Dave Kyler, Trudy Kyler, Mike Dreibelbis
Species (Common Name)	Cave Swallow
Species (Scientific Name)	Petrochelidon fulva
Number of individuals	1
Have you submitted this to eBird?	Yes
Observation Date and Time	10-31-2012 3:30 PM
County	Huntingdon
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Marklesburg
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Aitch Boat Launch, Lake Raystown
GPS coordinates of sighting	N 40.37371, W -78.158585
Habitat	Open water near steep forested hillside on inland freshwater lake
Distance to bird	800 feet
Viewing conditions	overcast day with light rain and moderate wind
Optical equipment used	Leupold Wind River 10x50 binoculars and Kowa TSN 77 spotting scope with 20x-60x objective lens
Description	The bird was flying with 4 tree swallows which provided a great comparison/contrast for identification. It was obviously smaller than the tree swallows. The dorsal side of the bird was dark blue except for an orangish rump patch and dark orange patch between the forehead and bill. The shape was consistent with the tree swallows: long wings, short squared-off tail, long body but not as long as the tree swallows, very short bill, feet were not seen. The belly, underwings, vent,

and breast were all off-white. The throat and part of the lower cheek was orangish, while the neck was off-white entirely around the head, with the thinnest section behind the head. There were also some faint whitish streaking on the back.

Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)

The bird was in flight the entire time I observed it. It would fly back and forth along the water and lift up when it turned around. I did not see it feeding or perched.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

The bird was long winged with a short bill and tail, which would rule out all birds except for swifts and swallows. Since the bird was bending its wrists as it flew and had a noticeable tail, I could rule out Chimney Swift. The bird had a squared off tail so I could rule out Barn Swallow. The bird had orange on the throat and rump, so I could rule out Violet-green Swallow, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, and Bank Swallow. The only other similar species was Cliff Swallow. Because the bird had a dark orange forehead patch and was smaller than the Tree Swallows, I could rule out this last species. Therefore, I concluded Cave Swallow.

Discussion - anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

Several other cave swallows were seen in the state in similar habitats at the same time. Two other experienced, reputable birders came to the same conclusion, independent of my identification.

Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)

Yes, I have seen this species several times previously and had the chance to consult a field guide while viewing the bird.

During

Sibley's Field Guide to Eastern Birds

After

Crossley's ID Guide to Eastern Birds

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