

622-61-1998

NUMBER, SEX, AGE:

1 bird, sex unknown, probably an adult

LOCATION:

The location is in the southwest corner of Clarion County.

It is approximately 2 miles east of Brady's Bend and 5 miles west of Rimersburg on Rt. 68. The overlook is a clearing on the top of a ridge filled with thick young vegetation.

CONDITIONS, TIME, WEATHER, OPTICS, EXPERIENCE:

The bird was seen first by Lisa Swackhamer on 9/29/98 at approximately 5:05 p.m. I originally thought it a juvenile Carolina Wren because I just glanced at the bird. At Lisa's insistence, I took a more serious second look a few minutes later. I still may have blown this bird off as a Carolina Wren except for a trip out west this summer when I saw many Bewick's Wrens, however, this bird was grayer than any of the ones I observed this summer. I should say that Carolina Wren's have been observed singing from lower down the ridge by the river, but this is the first time I have observed them on the ridge top. I was using my Leica 8 x 42 binoculars. It was mostly sunny and about 60 degrees. Wind was slight and from the west. The second sighting was on 10/3/98. steady) with little or no wind. It was raining (not too heavy, but little or no wind. It 7:30 a.m. and the bird was singing when I arrived. I used a Radio Shack (cheap) recorder to record the song. I am not that experienced with the song, but other listeners of the tape have confirmed it as Bewick's Wren.

ANY OTHER OBSERVERS?

Lisa Swackhamer (9/29/98 seen), Deuane Hoffman (10/1/98 heard), Joyce Hoffmann (10/1/98 heard), Jason Horn (10/2/98 heard)

NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL, DATE OF WRITE-UP:

John G. Fedak 221 Washington St.  
New Bethlehem, PA 16242 (814)275-4086 jfedak~rbv.iu6.kl2.pa.us

The original write-up was on 9/30/98 from notes made on 9/29/98. I added to this write-up after my observation on 10/3/98

622-01 - 1998

## Rare and/or Unusual Bird Sighting Documentation Guide

SPECIES: Bewick's Wren DATE SIGHTED: 9/29/98, 10/3/98

### SIZE, SHAPE, and PLUMAGE DESCRIPTION:

It flew into the area with another wren - a Carolina Wren. Both wrens were on a horizontal blackberry stem less than a foot apart - both in the same binoculars. The Carolina Wren was typical, the second wren was not. The bird was totally gray on its back and white on its underparts. The legs were a grayish color compared to the rusty brown (light) color of the Carolina Wren. The bird looked smaller, even though it didn't appear smaller in length than the Carolina Wren. However, the bird did appear slimmer than the Carolina Wren. There was no buff, rust or brown on the bird at all. The bird had a white stripe above the eye (eyebrow line), but it didn't extend as far back on the neck as the Carolina Wren. The top of the tail showed white (almost teardrops) along the outer edges of the tail. The middle of the upper tail was barred with horizontal thin black bars. The underside of the tail showed black bars as well (not too distinct or complete) and the tips of each tail feather ended in white. The bill did not look as long as the Carolina Wren's and was dark.

When seen on 10/3/98, the description is the same as above.

### Why is it not a Carolina Wren?

I have never observed Carolina Wrens that were gray with gray legs. The C. Wrens I have observed have always had some brown, buff or rust to them. I also have never seen a C. Wren that cocked its tail to the side, or for that matter, having a tail pattern like the Bewick's

**BEHAVIOR:** The whole posture of the bird was different. The tail was held cocked upward and the bird was jerking it to the side, usually to one side or the other, but sometimes side to side. We did not have a guide with us (except for raptors) so I made these notes (above). I sent Lisa back to my vehicle for the camera, but when she returned, the bird had gone into the lowest, thickest portion of the briar patch. I saw the bird well for between 5 to 7 minutes and then off and on for the next 30 minutes as I sat there with my camera. The Carolina Wren made many appearances and almost seemed photogenic, but, the Bewick's Wren stayed mostly on the ground in the thick blackberry briars and seemed to run on the ground, almost like a mouse or a rail! The bird made some chip notes which sounded high and flat. It also chattered once in a very high short chatter. The chatter was much higher than a Carolina Wren's. On 10/3/98, the wren was singing from the top part of a honeysuckle thicket and was observed occasionally for 15 minutes as it sang. While singing, the tail did not move, but when the song finished, the bird again cocked its tail to the side, usually one side. The bird must have sung around 15 to 20 renditions of the same song. The song started off like a messed-up Song Sparrow, but ended like a high pitched telephone ringing. No chatter or chip notes were observed until the bird dropped into the thicket. The chatter was of a much higher pitch than a Carolina Wren. The bird continued to skulk and was observed again for mere seconds as it flitted from a broken rhododendron branch into the thicket. Other birds observed in the same thicket were Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets, White-throated Sparrows, Field Sparrows, and a White-eyed Vireo. No Carolina Wrens were observed at this time.

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Ballot - Round One**

Species: Bewick's Wren (Thryomanes bewickii)

Date of Sighting: 3 October 1988 to 3 October 1998

Location: BRADY BEND OVERLOOK

County: CLARION

Observer(s): John Fedak

Date of Submission: 1998

Submitted by: John Fedak

Written Description: No

Photo: No

Specimen: No

Recording: Audio

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					
P. Rodewald								X
M. Sharp					X			
TOTALS	2		1		2			2
DECISION								

**Comments:** Previously submitted with Class III documentation. Resubmitted now with Class I documentation

3/2/2

2ND ROUND

Signature (Secretary):

Date:

12/3/00

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Tabulation Form - Round Two**

Species: Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*)

Date of Sighting: 3 October 1998 to 3 October 1998

Location: BRADY BEND OVERLOOK

County: CLARION

Observer(s): John Fedak

Date of Submission: 1998

Submitted by: John Fedak

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

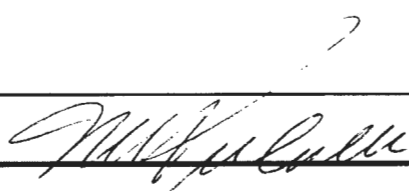
Recording: Audio

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					
P. Rodewald	X							
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS	4		3					
DECISION	X							

**Comments:** This round includes the additional written description.

7/0

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 11/4/01