

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

8 February 2001

Peter Robinson  
P. O. Box 482  
1336 Broadway  
Hanover, PA 17331

Dear Peter,

Thank you for submitting documentation on the Glossy Ibis near Spring Grove on 29 September 1994, the Gyrfalcon at York on 16 February 1999, and the Sedge Wren at Gettysburg on 6 June 1996. After careful review, the committee regrets that it is unable to accept these records.

The ibis was accepted as a *Plegadis* without species designation. A majority of committee members felt that the bird was most likely a Glossy but that the "lack of noticeable white patch at the base of the bill" is not diagnostic from a White-faced Ibis in the autumn.

Two members voted to accept the Gyrfalcon, but the majority had doubts. Most troubling was a belief that a "decent look" at a gray-morph bird would have revealed dark and light gray bands on the tail and at least a suggestion of a moustachial mark on the side of the face.

Two members also voted to accept the wren, but the majority declined feeling that more details were necessary for conclusive identification. One valuable item would have been a description of the song. In addition the bird was described as not having a white eye stripe and undertail coverts, but the description did not indicate what appearance those portions of the plumage *did* have. Like Marsh Wren, a Sedge Wren does have a whitish though less distinct eyebrow, and both species' undertail coverts appear similarly colored depending on the subspecies and the lighting conditions. As a result, the majority felt that Marsh Wren was not eliminated with certainty.

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.

Records #095-02-1994, 200-01-1999, 625-02-1996

625-02-1996

P. O. Box 482  
1336 Broadway  
Hanover, PA 17331  
17 March 1999

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee  
C/O Frank Haas  
2469 Hammertown Road  
Narvon, PA 17555-9726

Dear PORC:

The following belated report is based upon my own notes, made at the time of the observation, offered now in case no one else submitted documentation, or in case the additional documentation is of some benefit.

Species: Sedge Wren

Date/Time: 16 June 1996. 9:15 AM.

Location: Adams County. Gettysburg Battlefield property on Gregg Avenue (north of Rt. 116, east of Rt. 15), across from the Purnell Legion Maryland Cavalry, and the Michigan Cavalry monuments.

Weather: 72 degrees F., Clear, Calm.

Observer: Peter Robinson

Optics: Bausch & Lomb Elite 8x42

Observation: Just as I got out of the car for stop number 29 of 30 for the grassland bird survey that I was doing, I heard a bird singing what I knew right away was a Sedge Wren "song". I then got a very good look at the bird when it "popped up" about 25 feet away, near the edge of a Timothy hayfield, next to a short grass field that was very wet and soggy from recent rains. The bird was a small wren that did NOT have a white stripe over the eye, DID have some white

625- -1996

streaking on the back, and did NOT have white on the underneath of the tail or on the undertail coverts.

Comments: I called two other Hanover birders as soon as I got home. Jeff Wentz went to the location right away, and did get to see the bird that same morning. No one else got to see it. I returned 2-3 times during the following week's time, but did not find the bird again. I did contact the Gettysburg Battlefield Park people, got the name of the farmer who was about to cut the hay where the bird was, and convinced him to delay cutting for as long as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter Robinson".

Peter Robinson

717.632.8462

peterrobins@hotmail.com

# Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

## Voting Tabulation - Round One

Species: Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*)

Date of Sighting: 6 June 1996 to 6 June 1996

Location: GETTYSBURG

County: ADAMS

Observer(s): Peter Robinson

Date of Submission: 1999

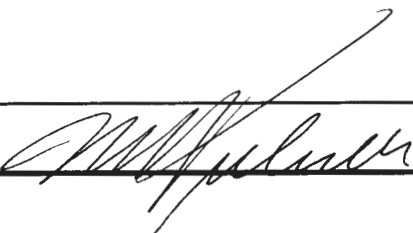
Submitted by: Peter Robinson

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			
P. Rodewald					X			
TOTALS			2	1	3			1
DECISION					X			

Comments: 2 / 4 / 1

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

6/14/01