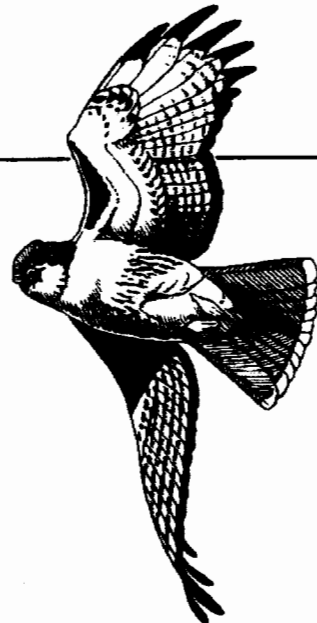


650-01-1995

# Scott Weidensaul

778 Schwartz Valley Road, Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972  
(717) 739-2874



Oct. 14, 1995

Mr. Frank Haas  
Pennsylvania Birds  
2469 Hammertown Rd.  
Narvon, Pa. 17555-9726

Dear Frank,

First, let me introduce myself (or reintroduce myself, since we met many years ago at Hawk Mountain). I'm a natural history writer based in Schuylkill County, and I run a raptor banding station on the Kittatinny Ridge about six miles east of Hawk Mountain -- in fact, I helped found the station in 1988 with Dr. Jim Bednarz when he was still with the sanctuary.

This past week we had a Townsend's solitaire drop in for a few minutes, and I've enclosed a rare species report; I've also mentioned the sighting to Laurie Goodrich and to Tom Clauser, the new Schuylkill County compiler.

Interestingly, this is the second western rarity at the station this autumn. On Sept. 15 I had a possible rock wren at the site, which is a large boulder field similar to North Lookout. The bird was about the size of a Carolina wren, but quite gray, with a pale, indistinct supercilium and an strikingly energetic "bouncing" behavior. However, I couldn't get a good look at its tail, and after much agonizing I decided not to file a report, although I again mentioned it to Laurie and Tom.

There were no doubts, however, with the solitaire, a species I'm familiar with from many western trips. If you have any questions about the report, please don't hesitate to call.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Weidensaul". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Scott Weidensaul



**RARE SPECIES REPORT**

<b>SPECIES:</b> Townsend's solitaire		<b>NUMBER SEEN:</b> 1
<b>SIGHTING DATE:</b> 10/10/95		<b>SIGHTING TIME:</b> 8:25 am
<b>LOCATION:</b> Bandaging station on boulder field near Tri-County Conner (Schuylkill/Berks/Lehigh Cty) on Kittanning Road.	<b>COUNTY &amp; STATE-</b> Along Schuylkill/Lehigh County line, Pa, on Game Lands 106. <b>DISTANCE &amp; DIRECTION FROM NEAREST TOWN-</b> Approx. 3 miles NW of Steinsville, Pa., and 6 m. east Hawk Mt. Sanctuary. <b>DIRECTIONS, IF APPLICABLE-</b> About 300 yards east of boundary marker at Tri-County Conner, where Schuylkill/Berks and Lehigh County meet, at raptor bandaging station.	
<b>HABITAT:</b> Large (300 x 50 yards) boulder field, interspersed w/ mt ash, birch, and surrounded by oak forest.		
<b>SIGHTING CONDITIONS:</b> Clear, light SW winds, 55°F	<b>LIGHTING-</b> Clean side and frontal lighting. <b>DISTANCE-</b> 35 feet or less (several perches) <b>EQUIP. USED-</b> Zeiss 10x40B <b>LENGTH OF SIGHTING-</b> About 4 minutes	
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b> First impression was small, slim, mockingbird-like bird. Tail and wing markings quickly noted, along with large eye and short bill. Vertical proflite when perched. Longish tail.	<b>VOICE-</b> No vocalization <b>SIZE-</b> Roughly that of a catbird. <b>PLUMAGE-</b> Smooth gray with a hint of brown wash. Tail darker with white outer flash marks. Wings w/ faint wing bar, and indistinct buff wing patches (not as bold as in spring/summer solitaires I've seen in West). Thin, pale eye ring; eye appeared large in proportion to head <b>ANATOMY (BILL LENGTH, LEG COLOR, ETC.)-</b> Bill quite short, which (combined with eye) made head appear very round. Tarsi dark gray. Eye dark. <b>BEHAVIOR-</b> Perched on mist net tannin, dead snags. Fly-catching forays once or twice. <b>OTHER FEATURES-</b> Tail seemed to "droop" when perched, as though loosely attached.	
<b>FAMILIARITY WITH THIS &amp; SIMILAR SPECIES:</b> Seen many solitaires on breeding grounds in northern Kochies, and on wintering grounds in Chisos Mts, TX.		
<b>COMPARISON TO SIMILAR SPECIES:</b> Dark eye and stubby bill (as well as lack of white wing patches) eliminate northern mockingbird. Long tail w/ flash marks eliminates oven thrusters, esp. ♀ eastern blackbird.		
<b>HAS A PHOTOGRAPH BEEN TAKEN?</b> No		
<b>HAS ANY ADDITIONAL OBSERVER(S) FILLED OUT A RARE SPECIES REPORT? IF SO WHO?</b> No. (2 other observers from Bureau of Forestry, but neither is experienced birdwatcher).		
<b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:</b> Hard to say what county sighting occurred in; the Schuylkill/Lehigh line literally runs right down the middle of our stations. The bird was undoubtedly in both counties at one point or another.		
<b>SIGHTING &amp; REPORT BY:</b> Scott Weidensaul		
<b>ADDRESS:</b> 778 Schwank Valley Rd. Schuylkill Haven Pa 17972		<b>PHONE NO.:</b> (717) 739-2874
<b>SIGNATURE:</b> Scott Weidensaul		<b>DATE:</b> 10/12/95

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Townsend's Solitaire (Myadestes townsendi)**

Date of Sighting: **10 October 1995 to 10 October 1995**

Location: **SGL# 106**

County: **SCHUYLKILL**

Observer(s): **Scott Weidensaul**

Date of Submission: **1995**

Submitted by: **Scott Weidensaul**

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					
S. Feldstein			X					
TOTALS			7					
DECISION			X					

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

*F. C. Haas*

Date:

5-1-96