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BOHEMIAN WAXWING

Bombycilla garrulus

Location: Roderick Wildlife Reserve

Date: November 7, 1993

Time: approx. 2:15 to 2:45 PM

Weather: Cloudy (stratus) wind westerly to less than 10 mph, viewing conditions fair.

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Viewing distance: from about 100 to 200 yards away always perched near the top of a tree.

Details of sighting and description: I was unsuccessful in locating the Bohemian Waxwing that Frank and Barb Haas found two days ago, so I joined Joyce Hoffmann, Mike Fialkovich, and Rob ? in search for the bird again. There were no waxwings when we first arrived in the area where the Bohemian Waxwing had been found on Friday. After waiting for about 10 minutes a small flock appeared and then additional flocks began flying in and landing near the tops of the highest trees. The flocks seemed unsettled and would often fly off only to reappear again several hundred feet away. When the small flocks finally condensed to form a flock of about 150 to 200 birds they began to settle down and start to feed. While scanning through a group in a distant tree top I discovered a bird facing me that was noticeably larger than the surrounding Cedar Waxwings (*B. cedrorum*). It had a grayish rather than a buffy breast with a thin pale line down the center of the breast which none of the Cedars showed. Even with just these field marks I was convinced that this was a Bohemian Waxwing. When it turned its head the face markings looked very much like the Cedars, but there was no white border on the upper part of the black mask only along the bottom of the mask. The white line became a reddish-orange wash below the eye which the Cedars did not show. Since the wind was blowing the branch that the bird was sitting on, the bird continually moved its tail in order to stay balanced. Whenever the tail was pulled down the dark maroon undertail coverts were seen. I only observed the back and side of the bird for a couple of minutes. When perched, the narrow white bar crossing the base of the primaries was distinctive as was the white secondary tips and pale edges to the outer tips of the primaries. Because of my distance from the bird, the pale primary tips looked whitish or cream colored instead of yellow and appeared to form a narrow straight line from the base of the secondaries to the tip of the outer primary. The mantle was also gray, but this wasn't as noticeable as the breast. The tail was relatively short and blackish with a thin yellow band at the tip. We lost the bird 4 or 5 times in the confusion of feeding

birds, but were always able to relocate it in 5 or 10 minutes. The larger size made it fairly easy to pick out of the Cedars even with a binocular. I took 5 or 6 photographs through my scope with the Bohemian facing me. Even though the bird was back-lit the larger size compared to the nearby Cedars should be evident in the photos.

I saw the Bohemian Waxwing again on Nov. 30 and was able to study it at leisure for about 1 1/2 hours at a distance of about 100 feet away. This time I had excellent views of the back and wings. The primary tips were clearly edged in yellow and the white bar crossing the wings and the white trailing edge to the secondaries with the red wax projections could easily be seen especially when it stretched its wings. A reddish-orange patch above and in front of the eye was seen, a field mark that I did not notice the first time I saw the bird. None of the Cedar Waxwings show this mark. Whenever the waxwings flew and then gathered at the top of a tree the Bohemian always liked to perch higher than the Cedar Waxwings, a habit that Steve Farbotnik also mentioned when he saw the bird a couple of days ago. I took this opportunity to photograph the Bohemian Waxwing again. I have no experience with this species since this was a life bird for me.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Bohemian Waxwing (Bombycilla garrulus)**

Date of Sighting: **5 November 1993 to 7 November 1993**

Location: **RODERICK WILDLIFE RESERVE**

County: **ERIE**

Observer(s): **Jerry McWilliams; Frank Haas**

Date of Submission: **1993**

Submitted by: **Jerry McWilliams; Frank Haas**

Written Description: **YES** Photo: **YES** 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							
J. Skinner	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

F. C. Haas

Date:

9-25-94