

BOHEMIAN
WAXWING

694-01-1994

Jan 20, 1994

phone 899-7369

Dear Jerry

I'm sorry I've taken so long to give you my observations of the Bohemian Waxwing I had in my yard. I hope it is sufficient to be officially accepted as being recorded in Erie County. It is the first one I had ever seen.

I participated as a feeder counter for the Christmas Bird Count. I was very pleased to have 31 waxwings show up at my crabapple tree on that Saturday (Jan 1-1994) to be included in the count. I hadn't seen waxwings in a couple months which was normal. Showing up then was not unexpected as they frequent this one particular crab in our backyard every year in either Dec. or Jan.

There was a fair amount of snow on the ground at the time and the day was very windy and it "misted"

2.

here off & on till late afternoon when it started snowing. It kept snowing as the week started. Having seen robins a flock away on Jan 1., I wasn't surprised to also see them at the crab tree on Tues., Jan 4 and also 50 waxwings. The temp was 20° and we were having another snow fall.

Then on Wednesday, Jan 5 when it was 18°, snowing & windy (I got these down on the calendar along with my daily bird sightings in our area) They said our chill factor was minus nine degrees. Twelve robins were at the crab. Many other species in numbers showed up at the feeders and suet, also 20 starlings. At approximately 9:30 AM 30 waxwings came in, then more came. I counted 79 and jokingly told my husband "I think I'd check them for a Bohemian. After all I'd read in the Nature Trail they'd been seen here

#3

This fall. I didn't look up the description to refresh my mind. All I remembered was they were similar but larger. So at the time they were all together in the top of a silver maple, just behind the crab tree. They were all facing west into a brisk wind. As I swept the binoculars over them I tried to see if any one looked larger - longer than the rest. One particular one did so I zeroed in on it. I noticed on the wing I could see (I was looking north and getting only a profile) two rather long, oval white patches in that wing. Now I could see most of the wings of the other 78 also and there were no patches like these. Also, as I said, this bird was larger than the others. So I got my "Birds of N. Am." book out + sure enough the Bohemian had wing patches. I saw it should have a "cinnamon" under tail coverts too.

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So back to the birds in the tree. They were all still there like sentinels and still facing west. Finally they started flying to the crab & back to their perches in the maple. When my "larger" bird turned I saw the "reddish" undertail coverts and knew I had a Bohemian Waxwing. A first for me and quite a thrill. But I would not call him "cinnamon". The bird I had was a reddish rust - not quite as bright as fresh blood but more of drying blood. At least that is how I would describe it. It's much redder than even the robin's breast - which is orange to me.

I think that's when I called Evelyn to tell her. Because I know I didn't have too many waxwings at the time I talked to her. Then they flew off, startled away by something. At 3 or 3:30 they were back and this time I counted 186. I kept

#5

checking to find the Bohemian. After an hour searching I was about ready to quit looking when I found it again. This time the birds were very active going in and out of the crab and up to the silver maple plus flying to another silver maple in a yard west of mine. I watched him for a half hour before they left. But at 5:00 they were all back for @ 1/2 hour.

On Thursday Jan 6 at 8:00 AM I counted 180 waxwings back in the maple behind the crab tree. It only took me 5 or 6 minutes and I found my rusty bottomed bird again. They were here about 1/2 hour. Again at 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM about 38 to 40 waxwings were here but I did not find the Bohemian with them. I got a good look too. At 3:00 PM around 86 waxwings came in. I found the Bohemian again and got a good look at his grey belly.

#6

The cedars all had yellow breast & bellies. The Bohemian was not bright - on the belly - just greyish. The birds were all scared off by a hawk. I have ~~not~~ seen ⁴⁰ ~~any~~ waxwings at the tree - that was on Friday Jan 7 but the Bohemian doesn't seem to be with them when it's a smaller group. So I saw it on several occasions in the two day period of Jan 5 & 6, 1994. I expect to see it again if the robins, starlings and house finches don't strip the fruit first. But it's still loaded with apples so they'll be back. Right now with our frigid below 0° temperatures, I haven't see the robins there. The house finches are staying at the feeders right now too and I don't have starlings at the present. Hopefully the fruit will stay until all the waxwings return.

Sincerely yours
Mildred S. Nodes
over

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

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

Date of Sighting: **5 January 1994 to 6 January 1994**

Location: **?**

County: **ERIE**

Observer(s): **Mildred Nodes**

Date of Submission: **1994**

Submitted by: **Mildred Nodes**

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 | | | | | |
| J. Skinner | | | X | | | | | |
| TOTALS | | | 7 | | | | | |
| DECISION | | | X | | | | | |

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

J. C. Haas

Date:

9-25-94