

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

8 February 2001

Jack Downs  
789 Grand Manor Dr.  
Wrightsville, PA 17368

Dear Jack,

Thank you for submitting documentation on the Kirtland's Warbler at Wrightsville on 8 October 1998. After careful review, the committee regrets that it cannot accept this record. The members felt that the description did not conclusively rule out a Magnolia Warbler. The absence of Kirtland's black streaking on the back and the lack of Kirtland's indistinct light wingbars were troubling. In addition we felt that the details were too sketchy, because they did not include such crucial features as the exact appearance of the wing, the eye ring (in Kirtland's it is split) and the tail (lack of the Magnolia's white bar). Through no fault of yours, the observation was too brief to enable absorbing all the characters needed for a fully convincing identification.

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.

Record #746-01-1998

746-01-1998



JACK DOWNS  
789 Grand Manor Dr.  
Wrightsville, PA 17368

10/9/98

DEAR FRANK AND BARBARA,

THE PURPOSE OF THIS LETTER IS TWOFOLD:

1. TO DESCRIBE TO YOU THE BIRD THAT I OBSERVED
2. TO INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF THIS BIRD BEING

ACCEPTED INTO THE PENNSYLVANIA RECORDS

DATA:

DATE: OCTOBER 8, 1998

TIME: EARLY AFTERNOON

WEATHER: 70 DEGREES-OVERCAST-RAINY

OBSERVANCE: I WAS OBSERVING FROM MY DECK DOOR WINDOW.

THE BIRD FLEW INTO AN EVERGREEN (DISTANCE- 20 FEET FROM THE DECK WINDOW). NEXT IT FLEW 6 FEET TO A MARBLE SLAB WHICH CHANNELS WATER TO THE POND BELOW IT. FOLLOWING THIS THE BIRD FLEW TO MY LEFT INTO A BUSH AND WAS NOT SIGHTED THEREAFTER EVEN THOUGH I MAINTAINED A CONSTANT VIGIL. THE TOTAL VIEWING WAS ABOUT 4 SECONDS, 2 SECONDS EACH PER LOCATION.

DESCRIPTION: UPON FIRST SIGHTING THE BIRD I THOUGHT WARBLER BECAUSE OF ITS SIZE AND THE YELLOW ON THE UNDERSIDE. THE HEAD, BACK, AND WINGS WERE A DARK GRAYISH COLOR. NOTICEABLE IN THE HEAD WAS A WHITE EYE RING. BELOW THE GRAY IT WAS TOTALLY YELLOW. IN THE FIELD OF YELLOW IT HAD BLACK STREAKING ON THE SIDE ONLY. THE STREAKING APPEARED TO BE CONTINUOUS WITH ABOUT ONE-FOURTH INCH SEPARATING THE TWO STREAKS. THEY EXTENDED FROM THE UPPER BREAST TO ABOVE THE LEGS.

CONCLUSION: IN MY OPINION THIS BIRD COULD ONLY BE THE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER.

(OVER)

746-01 -1998

FIELD MARKS THAT I DID NOT OBSERVE BECAUSE OF THE QUICK GLIMPSES ON WHICH I FOCUSED ON THE YELLOW BOTTOM AND THE EYE RING:

1. NO TWITCHING OF THE TAIL
2. NO BLACK STREAKING ON THE BACK
- 3, NO THIN WHITE WING BARS

SIMILIAR SPECIES:

CANADA WARBLER: I RULED THIS OUT BECAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCE IN THE UNDERNEATH BLACK STREAKING.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER: AGAIN THE LOWER PARTS OF STREAKING DIFFER. ALSO OTHER FEATURES ON THE MAGNOLIA ARE INCONSISTENT TO WHAT I OBSERVED.

THANK YOU FOR PONDERING OVER THIS.

GOOD BIRDING!

*Jack Downs*

JACK DOWNS

## Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

### Voting Tabulation - Round One

Species: Kirtland's Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*)

Date of Sighting: 8 October 1998 to 8 October

Location: WRIGHTSVILLE

County: YORK

Observer(s): Jack Downs

Date of Submission: 1998

Submitted by: Jack Downs

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

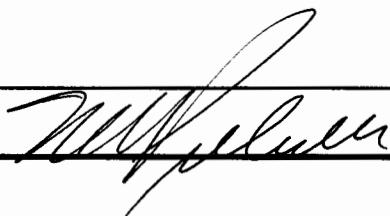
Specimen: No

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				1	4	1		1
DECISION								

Comments: 0/6/1

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

6/14/01