

Swainson's Warbler
Dave Kreuzer



7/8/89
756-01-1989
Bear Run Nature Reserve
Fayette Co.

756 -01-1989

SWAINSON'S WARBLER in Fayette County, PA.

On 10 June 1989, after listening to a report on the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania's telephone hotline, I visited Bear Run Nature Reserve in Fayette County. I arrived there before 7 A.M., in hopes of locating the Swainson's Warbler which had been reported there the previous week-end. Since I had no further directions, I decided to walk south along Route 381 from the Bear Run Parking Lot. As I approached closer to the stream (called Bear Run), I heard a warbler song which I immediately knew was different. The bird was still distant, and I wanted to get closer - since the stream noise was fairly loud. My first thought was, that it was either Swainson's Warbler, or an unusual Hooded Warbler. As I approached more closely, I realized it was not a Louisiana Waterthrush, because it did not end with the usual "twittering". This song was loud and ended rather abruptly, like that of a distant Hooded Warbler. After following the voice of what I became convinced was a Swainson's - I finally saw the bird perched in the bare top of a rhododendron bush. It was indeed, a singing Swainson's Warbler! I observed it in fairly good light, at about 9 A.M. and was using 7x binoculars at a distance of less than 200 feet. Subsequently, on later visits, I recorded its song - often at relatively close range. I was also able to get several recognizable photographs, later in the Summer, using a 300 mm lens. After I was certain of my own identification, I called Robert Leberman and Robert Mulvihill, at Powdermill Nature Reserve, to help verify the identification. Although they did not see the bird, they did hear it about a week later.

The bird was basically dull brown above; with a pale, but noticeable eyebrow line. Its underparts were a pale buff color. Its bill appeared sharply pointed. Its crown was a rust-brown color, and it had dark lores. It generally stuck close to the rhododendron when not singing, and used perches 10 to 20 feet above the rhododendron for singing. Although I had never seen nor heard a Swainson's Warbler before, I made myself very familiar with its song prior to visiting Bear Run. Since working with the Atlas Project, I had been specifically aware of the potential occurrence of this species and had been looking for it in likely locales for several years. Further details can be found in the July - September 1989 issue of PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS.

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756-01-1989

PREPARED BY

DATE

Swainson's Warbler, Fallingwater, June 4th 1989

Ed Kwater

On June 4th 1989 I located the Swainson's Warbler which had been found several days previously along Bear Run near Fallingwater in Fayette County. After a long search I found the bird at 4:00 p.m. and obtained excellent views as it sang from an area of small dead branches below canopy level and within 25 feet of the ground. The habitat was deciduous forest with scattered hemlocks and an understorey of dense rhododendron scrub. The bird's movements were rather slow & deliberate, more reminiscent of a vireo than a warbler. It was a large sandy brown warbler with paler buffish white underparts, and a distinctly rufous-tinged cap. It also had very pronounced buffish-white supercilia extending well behind the eye. There was a sandy-brown tinge at the sides of the breast. The tail was short and sandy brown. The bill was long for a warbler, sharply pointed and broad based. The song was loud, being heard clearly over the noise of Bear Run. It was slow and deliberate "tew.... tew..... tew..... which yow... wee ooo".

Total observation time approx. 15 minutes, x 10 binoculars, lightly overcast conditions.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # of

Species: **Swainson's Warbler**

Date of Sighting: **June 2, 1989 - Aug 6, 1989**

Observer(s): **Ed Kwater, Dove Kreuzer**

Date of Submission: **1990**

Submitted by: **Ed Kwater**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater	X						
B. Haas	X						
F. Haas	X						
R. Leberman	X						
G. McWilliams	X						
S. Santner	X						
P. Schwalbe			X				
TOTALS	6		1				
DECISION	X						

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

Bruce Haas

Date:

11-10-90