





756-02 - 1998

Swainson's Warbler, heard and seen 5/7/98, in State Game Land 211 near Dauphin PA  
Submitted by Grace Randolph, 5/18/98

This bird's song is probably its most outstanding characteristic, and that's what caught my attention. Such a loud, clear, ringing song! I had stopped on State Route 325 in Clark's Creek Valley, to check on a Pine Warbler song heard the previous day, when I heard this other song which started like a Louisiana Waterthrush but had a different ending. As I listened I remembered I had heard this song in the same place the previous day (May 6) but had been unable to see the singer. My friend Vivian Johns helped me look for the bird, and it was Vivian who first spotted it. The bird was on a small branch, just above some dense shrubbery at the edge of the road. We observed it for about 10 minutes from across the road while the bird continued to sing vigorously.

Description: The bird was small, about the size of a Chipping Sparrow, and very dull. The head, back, wings, and tail were solid brown, with no field marks except for a dullish eye-stripe. Under parts were light olive-gray, unstreaked, with a yellow tinge extending from throat back almost to the undertail coverts. I particularly noted the top of the head had no stripes, it was solid dark brown. I could not see the color of the bill, but the shape was very straight, narrow and pointed, much longer than any other warbler I know.

This observation was made between 9:30 and 10:00 am. Temperature was 62deg F, wind light, sky cloudy and overcast. The sun was behind us as we looked across the road at the bird. My binoculars are Zeiss 10x40.

Exact location: Dauphin County, north of Harrisburg near the borough of Dauphin on SR 325, 4.5 miles east of intersection with SR 225. Clark's Valley is in the Ridge and Valley province, between Stony Mountain on the south and Peters Mountain to the north. Clark's Creek is a tributary of the Susquehanna River.

Habitat: dense hedge at the edge of mixed decid/conif forest, next to a bottomland small stream. Across the road southward is an open gameland field then a forest edging along Clark's Creek.

Grace Randolph  
5/18/98

756-02-1998

P. O. Box 482  
1336 Broadway  
Hanover, PA 17331  
17 March 1999

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee  
C/O Frank Haas  
2469 Hammertown Road  
Narvon, PA 17555-9726

Dear PORC:

The following belated report is based upon my own notes, made at the time of the observation, offered now in case no one else submitted documentation, or in case the additional documentation is of some benefit.

Species: Swainson's Warbler

Date/Time: 12 May 1998. 10:15 AM - 11:20 AM.

Location: Dauphin County, PA. State Game Lands #211, Route 325.

Weather: 50 degrees F., overcast, calm.

Observer: Peter Robinson

Camera: Canon ES 3000 High Resolution 8 MM, with 20X optical zoom lens.

Observation: Please see video film. The bird is not shown, but the camera microphone picked up the singing quite well.

Comments: The bird was found and identified by Grace Randolph, then was seen by many others.

Sincerely,



Peter Robinson  
717.632.8462  
peterrobins@hotmail.com

Nick Pulcinella

756-02-1998

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10 May 1998

Overcast, continuous rain throughout the day

Glen Morgan Lake @ Carr Rec. Area, Morgantown, Berks Co.

there was an Arctic Tern reported from here yesterday during the rainstorm. The bird was present most of the day seen as late as 1600. Unfortunately, this bird was not seen by me today or by others (T. Gerner, D. Hoffman, J. Fedak) who were there for about 2-3 hrs other birds found

PB Grbc ±10, DC Lorn ±20, GBTA 4, CAGO, Mall, Ruddy Duck ±20, MO DO, CHSW, NOFL, EAKWBAD, TRSW, BANSW, A. Crow, BGGAT, AMROB, GLCAT, NOND, STARLING, REVIC, Yell W, Myrtle W, Biv Wood, AMROST, NOCA, OHSP, SOSP, RWSB, COGL, BHCB, AMGF.

Clark Valley, about 1 mi. W of Dauphin, Dauphin Co.

There had been a Swinson's Warbler present here for about 3 days the location was 4.6 mi. W of the intersection of RT 225 + 325.

The bird was easily found as it was singing about 10 yds off the road when I arrived. It was sitting <sup>in a tree</sup> in the open about 20 ft from the ground. I was able to see the bird clearly through my 7x42 ~~scope~~ scope. The sky was overcast with a steady drizzle, but when the bird was at eye level the visibility was good. Other birders present during my stay were D. Hoffman, J. Fedak & R. Wiltschko.

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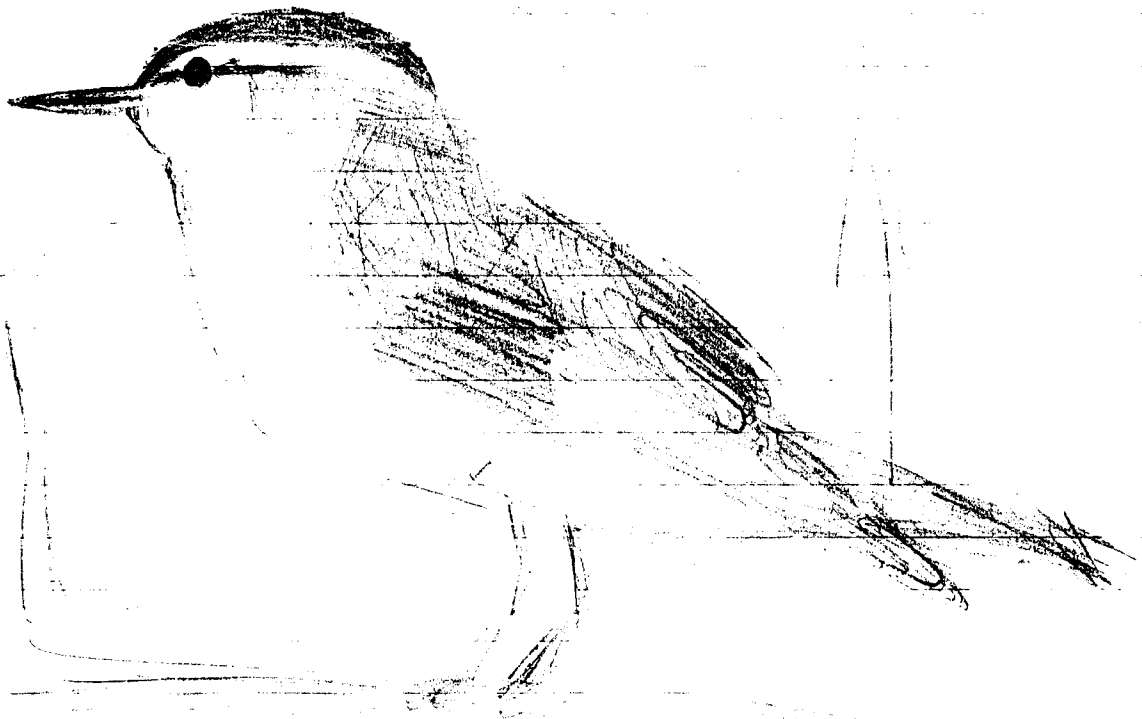
36

10 May  
COST

Swainson's Warbler - description

Medium sized warbler all brown above and grayish white below.  
Large bill.

Head had a dark brown crown & forehead. The upper parts were a plain brown including the wings & Tail. The face was generally buffy-white with a dark line extending from the lore to ~~the~~ behind the eye. The ear coverts were a brownish-grey. A wide buffy white supercilium was distinctive. No crown stripes. The underparts (breast, belly & etc) were grayish white. The bill was long & dark appeared large for a warbler.



26 May 1998

Nick Pulcinella  
Apt. 6, 201 Elm Ave.  
Swathmore, PA 19081

Dear Nick:

I was privileged to see both Swainson's Warblers that were found in Pennsylvania this May. I also was able to get some reasonably decent pictures of them and videotape them calling. I have enclosed slides of both birds and a videotape of both of them calling to support this rare bird report.

Swainson's Warbler, *Limnothlypis swainsonii*, 15 May 1998, observed along PA Route 325 in Clark's Valley at the west end of State Game Lands 211 from about 6:50 am to 8:10 am EDT (note: time stamp on videotape is an hour behind since it is still set on EST for both birds).

756-02-1998  
This bird was constantly singing a Swainson's Warbler call (videotape captured the call) and was flying around some trees above some honeysuckle. It was smaller than the catbirds that were also singing nearby but not as small as an American Redstart or Kinglets. The bird had a noticeably long bill for a warbler and the bill appeared to be yellowish in color. It was thicker at the face and tapered to a sharp point at the end of the bill, unlike the slight hook-like end of a vireo. The head was topped with a reddish-brown cap. There was a pale yellow "eye-brow" and a dark line that ran through the eye of the bird. The bill of the bird was almost as long as the eye-line. The back and wings of the bird were grayish-brown. The throat, breast and belly were a pale white with very little gray below the wing edges. The underside was rather clean-looking in this bird (the breast view of the bird in the slides and on tape show this as well). The legs were yellow in color.

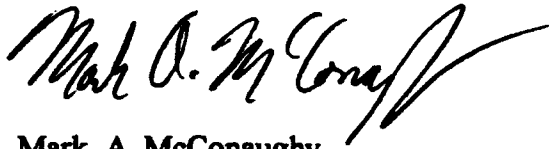
Swainson's Warbler, *Limnothlypis swainsonii*, 18 May 1998, Loyalhanna Wetlands, Westmoreland County, roughly 2:30 pm to 3:05 pm.

756-03-1998  
This bird was also constantly singing a Swainson's Warbler song (again, captured on the videotape) in the trees and brush of the area. It was smaller than a catbird, but not as small as an American Redstart or Kinglets. The bird had a noticeably long bill for a warbler and the bill appeared to be yellowish in color. It was thicker at the face and tapered to a sharp point at the end of the bill, unlike the slight hook-like end of a vireo. The head was topped with a reddish-brown cap. There was a pale yellow "eye-brow" and a dark line that ran through the eye of the bird. The bill of the bird was almost as long as the eye-line. The back and wings of the bird were grayish-brown. However, unlike the previous bird, the throat of this specimen was noticeably yellow and the breast and belly

were a "dirty yellow." It was a much darker or dirtier-looking breast and belly than that of the Clark's Valley bird. The legs on this specimen tended to an orangish hue.

Let me know if you need any other information from me concerning these birds. The Dauphin County specimen was a life bird for me and seeing a second, and somewhat different, specimen only three days later was a real bonus for me.

Sincerely yours,

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

Mark A. McConaughy  
3787K Logans Ferry Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15239-3901  
(724) 527-5585 x103 (day)  
(724) 733-5299 (night)  
[mcconaughy@delphi.com](mailto:mcconaughy@delphi.com)



**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Ballot- Round One**

Species: Swainson's Warbler (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*)

Date of Sighting: 7 May 1998 to 24 May 1998

Location: STATE GAME LAND 121

County: DAUPHIN

Observer(s): Mark McConaughy, Grace Randolph, Peter Robinson, Rick Wiltraut  
Nick Pulcinella

Date of Submission: 1998

Submitted by: Mark McConaughy, Grace Randolph, Peter Robinson, Rick Wiltraut, Nick Pulcinella

WRITTEN DESCRIPTION YES PHOTO YES SPECIMEN NO RECORDING VIDEO

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Ab sta in
					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	6							1
DECISION	X							

Comments: 6/0/1

Signature (Secretary):

Date:

9/18/00