

756-01 - 1999

**Swainson's Warbler**  
***Limnothlypis swainsonii***

A Swainson's Warbler was observed and heard calling in the Loyalhanna Wetlands in Westmoreland County on 8 May 1999 during the NAMC. The bird was first heard calling in the distance. I made a videotape to record the song more than to record the image. The bird was not particularly cooperative and I did not get a good video picture of it. Nevertheless, the song was decidedly that of a Swainson's Warbler. A copy of the videotape is being submitted to PORC with the following description.

Eventually, we did manage to see the bird sitting in a tree while it was singing. It was a rather drab warbler-sized (between 5 and 6 inches in length) bird with a disproportionately large beak (for a warbler). It was larger than a pair of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and slightly larger than a Black-throated Green Warbler that were the only nearby birds we could use for comparison. The back was a kaiki-color, a dark stripe through the eye was noticeable with a lighter eye-brow line. The cap was drab-brown/kaiki and only slightly darker than the back (it was seen in shadows, though, making exact color determination difficult). The breast and belly of the bird was lighter than the back, sort of a dirty off-white.

This bird was found in the same location as the Swainson's Warbler seen during the Spring of 1998 at Loyalhanna wetlands and probably is the same bird. I cannot conceive of two different birds randomly selecting the exact same location two years in a row. On the other hand, why would it come back after an unsuccessful attempt at finding a mate? The only thing I can figure is last year's bird must have been a first year adult that imprinted on the location and has returned.

Directions to find the bird: From US Route 22 and east of Delmont, Pennsylvania, take route PA 819 north. Turn right onto Kaufman Drive (road has sign with this name) or T927 (as it is marked in the DeLorme Gazetteer). Take that road to a stop sign. Go straight across that road (which is SR 1063 in DeLorme Gazetteer) and the road becomes Wolfes Lake Road, or T929 in the DeLorme Gazetteer. Follow Wolfes Lake Road (T929) until there is a Y and bear left at the Y (still is T929, but I don't know if the road changes name there). Continue on for about 2 miles (not exact measurement), you will pass the Hearts Content Farm on the left, until the road makes an abrupt left turn at a house with a big gazebo in the backyard. The entry to Loyalhanna wetlands is a dirt road that is a right-hand turn at the bend in T929. Last year this road was badly rutted and terrible to drive without four-wheel drive vehicle. They have regraded the road, but it rained heavily during the early morning of 8 May and the road was a quagmire when we were there. If it is still wet, I would not take it even with a four-wheel drive vehicle. We walked in and sunk to our ankles in spots along the road. It may be a good road to drive after it has dried out, though. Either walk or drive down that dirt road, around the left-hand bend it makes, and all the way back to a Y, where one branch goes uphill, the other straight. Go straight at the Y to a gate which is not far past the Y in the road. The Swainson's Warbler was singing in the bushes and trees past this gate. Be careful, Spring

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Gobbler season runs through the end of May and wear blaze orange if you go into this area during hunting days (hunting is not permitted on Sundays).

On Saturday, May 8, during the migration count, Mark McConaughy found a SWAINSON'S WARBLER in the same location one was seen for several weeks in 1998. The bird is at Loyalhanna, a gameland/army corps property south of Saltsburg and east of Slickville.

Directions:

from Delmont (Routes 66 & 22) take 22 east to 819 (the BP gas station on the left). Turn left onto Route 819. At 1.3 miles turn right onto Kaufman Drive. Continue on Kaufman to a crossroads, proceeding through the crossroads. The road becomes Wolfes Lake Road. Continue on Wolfes Lake until you come to a Y. Veer left onto a tar and chip road. Follow this approx 2 miles passing a blue metal gate on the right, Hearts Content Farm on the left, continuing to a point where the road makes a 90-degree turn to the left (you will be looking straight towards a house with a gazebo). Make a very sharp turn onto an unpaved road. It is NOT advisable to drive down the road which is being worked on and is very muddy. Continue down the hill 1/2 mile to a Game Commission brown metal gate with a parking area just on the right. Proceed through the metal gate. Bird is on the left approximately 15 feet down the path from the gate.

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**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Ballot - Round One**

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

Date of Sighting: 8 May 1999 to 8 May 1999

Location: LOYALHANNA WETLANDS

County: WESTMORELAND

Observer(s): Mark McConaughy

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: Mark McConaughy

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

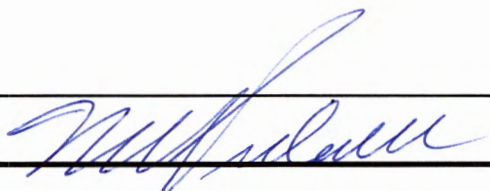
Specimen: No

Recording: Video

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Recording: Video			Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead	X							
D. Couchman	X							
P. Hess	X							
R. Ickes			X					
B. Reid	X							
P. Rodewald	X							
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	6		1					
DECISION	X							

Comments: 7/0/0

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 12/3/00