

756-01-2001

**Swainson's Warbler**  
*Limnothlypis swainsonii*  
8-18 May 2001  
by Mark A. McConaughy

I found a singing Swainson's warbler at Bushy Run Battlefield Park on a forested northern-facing hill slope on 8 May 2001. The forest in this section of the park has a dense understory, and the bird spent much of its time on or near the ground. I have an office at Bushy Run and usually walk around the park on my lunch hour (but I am not a park employee, I work for the same commission that runs the park and that is the reason my office is there), and it was during one of these lunchtime walks that I found the bird. The weather was turning bad and it later rained that evening. I suspect the oncoming bad weather may have been the reason the bird originally set down in the park. It was not in this location the previous day when I walked around the park. Unfortunately, the only recording equipment with me that day was a small, portable cassette tape recorder. I made a short cassette recording of the bird calling on 8 May, but the recording isn't of the best quality. The tape recorder does not have a high quality built-in microphone. Nevertheless, the tape would have provided proof of the call if the bird had left after the storm. Fortunately, it decided to stick around and park visitors or I have seen or heard it call every day through 18 May, except for 11 May when it was not heard or seen. On 9 May I brought my videotape camcorder to Bushy Run hoping to record the bird. I was able to get a videotape of the bird calling in a tree on 9 May 2001 which is submitted as documentation for this bird (this is hand held and primarily used the 10X magnification of the camcorder lens; the first part of the tape is just me trying to pick up the bird in the camera, but you can hear it calling - sorry about all the movement!). It was subsequently seen rummaging through leaves on the ground and shivering - typical Swainson's warbler behavior - by Dennis Lauffer and I.

The bird was about the size of a red-eyed vireo - many of which were also in the immediate area where the bird was found. Unlike the red-eyed vireos, it had a relatively large (I might even call it "massive" for the size of the bird), pointed, light-colored bill. It had a rufous-brown head cap, a lighter eyebrow stripe and a darker eye line (but not as thick or pronounced as in most of the vireo species). The eye itself was dark, almost black, and lacked the red iris of the red-eyed vireo. The chin and breast of the bird were a light gray and lacked any other type of marking (i.e., it was a plain, light gray breast). The belly had a light yellowish wash. The back, tail and wings were a drab, olive-brown color. The bird sang a song that is very similar to that of a Louisiana waterthrush, but ended with a more regular and pronounced pattern at its end. It also lacked the speckled breast, etc., of the Louisiana waterthrush. Because of its nearly constant singing, I believe the bird is a male Swainson's warbler.

**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Voting Ballot - Round One**

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

Date of Sighting: 8 May 2001 to 18 May 2001  
 Location: BRUSHY RUN BATTLEFIELD PARK  
 County: WESTMORELAND  
 Observer(s): Mark McConaughy

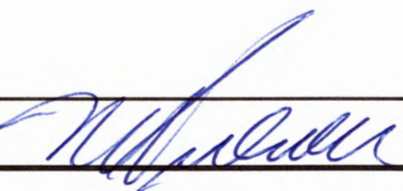
Date of Submission: 2001  
 Submitted by: Mark McConaughy

Written Description: Yes      Photo: No      Specimen: No      Recording: Video

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead	X							
D. Heathcote	X							
P. Hess	X							
J. Stanley	X							
E. Witmer	X							
R. Leberman	X							
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	7							
DECISION	X							

Comments: 7/0

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 6/2/03