

TO: PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE 780-02-1997
RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED FOR ACCEPTANCE AS CLASS III RECORD OF RARE BIRD

SPECIES: SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*)

STATUS: REGULAR (BREEDS IN GREENE CO. - OTC CANDIDATE - RARE - ANNOTATED LIST OF PA. BIRDS)

OBSERVER: JEFF PHEASANT 819 PINETOWN RD LEWISBERRY PA 17339

OBSERVATION - DATE: 17 JUNE 1997 TIME: 1115 HOURS [EXCEPT FOR GREENE CO., ONLY
11 RECENT 2ND QTR REPORTS (PA. BIRDS-1990-1996) SCATTERED ACROSS STATE (9 COUNTIES) FROM 4/24-5/19]

WEATHER CONDITIONS: HAZY, WARM (70's), HUMID - SIMILAR TO STALLED CONDITIONS 12-14 JUNE,
FOLLOWED BY A TRANSITIONAL CLEARING DAY ON 15 JUNE, WITH INCREASING CLOUDINESS AND
STRONG WINDS FROM SOUTH ON 16 JUNE, PERHAPS KEY TO PUSHING THIS FRINGE BREEDER NORTH!?

LOCATION: NORTH YORK CO. (~3.5 MI. NNW OF GIFFORD PINCHOT STATE PARK) IN A SEMI-MATURE
(THINNED BY QUALITY(?) WOOD HARVEST 3⁺ YRS. AGO), MIXED, DECIDUOUS, HARWOOD FOREST
(UPLAND, ELEVATION ~ 800 FT.) BEHIND MY BARN.

DETAILS: DURING ONE OF MY DAILY AVIAN ENUMERATION, WALKS (CURIOUSLY, IN SEARCH OF A
MISSING SCARLET TANAGER (*P. olivacea*), I BECAME AWARE OF AN UNFAMILIAR SONG, EMANATING
FROM VARIOUS LOCATIONS (NON-STATIONARY) IN THE DENSELY FOLIAGED CANOPY OF TALL
TULIP POPLARS, OAKS, AND MAPLES. THE MODERATELY LOUD SONG PERSISTED (RATE ~ 5/MINUTE),
IN LONG RUNS, OVER THE COURSE OF ABOUT TEN MINUTES, FINDING MANY SIMILARITIES TO ITS
CLOSE RELATIVE (*P. olivacea*) AND THE HIGHLY VARIABLE AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*),
THE REPETITION ALLOWED FOR DISMISSAL OF EVEN THE MOST ABERRANT VARIATIONS BY THESE
SING-SONG SOUND ALIKES. BASICALLY, A SINGLE, MUSICAL, SING-SONG PHRASE - SIMILAR IN
PATTERN TO *P. olivacea*. A GENERALLY DESCENDING SERIES OF UPS AND DOWNS, WITH THE FIRST
PEAK THE HIGHEST NOTE, AND THE LAST NOTE USUALLY THE LOWEST. FULL PHRASE GIVEN MOST OF THE
TIME (~80%) WITH TWO OCCASIONAL VARIATIONS - ONE SHORTER (PARTIAL) AND THE OTHER A FULL
PHRASE WITH THE LAST NOTE(S) RISING. BUT, UNLIKE THE SCARLET'S BURRY, SLURRED/COMPRESSED
(SHORTER DURATION, FEWER DISCERNIBLE NOTES), EMPHATIC, DISJOINTED, DELIVERY, THIS SONG WAS MORE
LIKE A ROBIN'S IN TONE (RICHER, MOSTLY CLEAR) AND DELIVERY (EVEN MODULATION, UNHURRIED, MORE
ROLLING), MAKING IT LONGER (≥ 4 SEC.) AND REVEALING MORE NOTES (13-14). INCREASINGLY CON-
FIDENT THAT I WAS LISTENING TO MY FIRST SUMMERTANAGER, ALL DOUBTS WERE ENDED WITH
THE SATISFYING SIGHTING OF THE BIRD - ACCOMMODATINGLY PERCHED, WITH FULL SIDE VISIBLE,
ON THE OUTSIDE EDGE OF A TULIP POPLAR (~200 FT. AWAY AND ~50 FT. UP). A LITTLE FAR FOR COMPLETE
ENJOYMENT (I BERATED MYSELF FOR NOT HAVING SCOPE!), BUT MY 10x50 BINOCULARS PROVIDED
ADEQUATE DETAILS, IMMEDIATELY PERCEIVED AS ALL RED - NOT SCARLET AND SOMEHOW NOT AS
RICH AS A CARDINAL, WHICH I QUICKLY ELIMINATED WITH INSPECTION OF WELL ROUNDED, ALL RED
HEAD AND LESS CONICAL, LONGER, STOUT, PALE (NOT ORANGE), TANNISH(?) BILL. A MEDIUM SIZED
BIRD (7-8"), SLIGHTLY STOCKY, ITS PERCH ATTITUDE WAS NEAR HORIZONTAL, INSTEAD OF UPRIGHT,
WITH ITS MEDIUM LENGTH TAIL AND BODY LEVEL AND THE HEAD UP SLIGHTLY. THE MALE BEGAN
TO CASUALLY PREEN HIS WINGS (ALL RED - DARKER TOWARD LEADING EDGE AND OUTER PRI-
MARIES) AND ALTERNATELY LIFT HIS HEAD SLIGHTLY TO DELIVER HIS CASUAL SONG. AFTER ABOUT
A MINUTE OR SO, HE WAS OFF, HIS SONG HEARD MOVING TO THE NORTHEAST, LEAVING ME ENRICHED
WITH A NEW "YARD BIRD" AND, APPARENTLY, PIQUEING THE INTEREST OF MY REGULAR TANAGER.
THE SCARLET'S PETULANT, BURRY SONG HEARD AS THE SUMMER'S MOVED AWAY.

P.5. IT STRUCK ME LATER THAT THE SONG'S PERFUNCTORY DELIVERY REMINDED ME OF AN
(OLDER) TIME RECORDING - "AT THE TONE, THE TIME WILL BE, 11:15:30 A.M.
- APPARENTLY TYPICAL FOR YOUNG BIRDS TO OVERSHOOT DURING MIGRATION, THIS
LAD WOULD QUALIFY AS POSSIBLE BREEDER (WELL PAST ATLAS SAFE DATE OF 6/1),
THOUGH IT'S UNLIKELY HE'LL FIND A "DONNA"! BUT... IT'S A START.

P.P.5. NOT HEARD OR SEEN AGAIN THRU END OF JUNE

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: Summer Tanager (Piranga rubra)

Date of Sighting: 17 June 1997 to 17 June 1997

Location: NORTH YORK CO

County: YORK

Observer(s): Jeff Pheasant

Date of Submission: 1997

Submitted by: Jeff Pheasant

Written Description: YES

Photo: NO

Specimen: NO

Recording: NONE

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V			Abstain
					A	B	C	
F. Haas			X					
P. Schwalbe			X					
K. Parkes			X					
R. Ickes			X					
P. Hess			X					
J. McWilliams			X					
T. Floyd			X					
TOTALS			7					
DECISION			X					

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

F. C. Haas

Date:

4-19-99