

MAY 13, 1999, PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

Blue Grosbeak At 2 PM on 13 May Ann and I were looking for pockets protected from the wind and drove to Beach 6 in search of migrants. We pushed up a bird off the edge of the road and it perched no more than 20 feet from the car. It was obviously a male BIGr. We watched it at this close range and then it flew ten feet and perched for two minutes in a great view. Then, it flew in front of us landing in one of the small trees in the parking lot. We drove on and when we returned three minutes later, it was back in the tall grasses sitting upright, singing and flicking its tail.

The identification of this bird is a no-brainer. It was a very deep blue, brightest on the head. The face had black, primarily in the lores. The bill was large and almost silver on the maxilla. The wing was marked with bold chestnut. The greater coverts were broadly edged and the entire median coverts appeared tawny. As it sat, it flicked its tail, exposing white corners at the very tip. The call was a chink, recalling a waterthrush. Its song was a garbled, warbling, bubbly mess recalling a Purple Finch or even a Warbling Vireo.

I later learned two people in our party did look for this bird without success later that afternoon. The identification is straightforward and it is a common breeder in our area. (In fact, there was little interest from others chasing it as we all see lots of them in CA.) I knew it was a rarity as I had just looked at Jerry's checklist at dinner the previous evening. My camera was sitting on my back seat so I did not get a picture, a shame given its rarity and the fact that it would have been a great picture.

790 - 01 - 1999

MATT HENDRICK

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**Voting Ballot - Round One**Species: Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*)

Date of Sighting: 13 May 1999 to 13 May 1999

Location: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

County: ERIE

Observer(s): Matt Heindel

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: Matt Heindel

Written Description: Yes

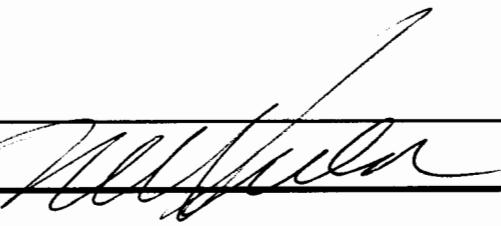
Photo: No

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. Couchman			X					
P. Hess			X					
R. Ickes			X					
B. Reid			X					
P. Rodewald			X					
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			7					
DECISION			0					

Comments: 7/0/0

Signature (Secretary): 

Date: 1/15/00