

SIGHT RECORD REPORT FORM to Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Species: Blue Grosbeak
Scientific name: Guiraca Caerulea

790-01-2004

Number of birds: One
Sex (if known): Male
Age/plumage (if known): Adult, Breeding plumage

Place, including nearest town, and county:
Across the street from 7955 Saw Mill Rd., Lynn Twp., Lehigh County

Date(s) & time(s) of your observations:
July 5th, 2004 from approximately 7:30 to 7:35 AM EDT

First and last dates bird was present, if known:
July 5, 2004

Date of completing this form: July 5, 2004

Observer making this report: Jeff Hopkins
Address: 1225 Pericles Pl., Whitehall, PA 18052
Telephone: Home: 610-776-0189
Work: 610-481-6960
E-Mail: hopkinja@airproducts.com

Who found the bird? J. Hopkins
Who first identified it? Same

Optical equipment used: Leica APO Televid 77 w/20x60 Zoom
Leica 8 x 42 BA binoculars

Distance from bird: About 100 ft

Weather and light conditions: Overcast and hazy. The bird was perched at the top of a tree, but fieldmarks were difficult to see with binoculars (but not with the scope).

Other birders present: None
Was the bird photographed? No
Was the bird videotaped or recorded? No

Indicate your prior experience with this and similar species:

I've seen a several blue grosbeaks over the years including one just a couple weeks ago in Colorado, but I've seen hundreds of indigo buntings (just this summer!), many bluebirds of all three species, and a few lazuli buntings.

What books, illustrations, and advice did you consult? When?
National Geo, 3rd Edition after I got home because I was a bit confused by the location of the chestnut patch.

Was this report written from notes made during, or after, the observation?
This report is written from memory less than 12 hours after the observation.

Description: Include information on the bird's plumage, shape and size, vocalizations, habitat, behavior, etc. Describe what you actually saw. Sketches are helpful. (THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE REPORT; RECORDS WITHOUT DETAILS WILL NOT BE VOTED.)

790-01-2004

The bird was singing from the top of 20 foot pine tree - one of a couple of trees in a row in the middle of an open field. I found it from its song when I was driving with the windows open.

My first thought when I heard it was it was a bluebird (I'm not that familiar with either's song), but when I checked it out in the bins, the profile was all wrong. It was a skinny bird with a weak crest (like a flycatcher not a cardinal), not the typical bluebird thrush profile. It also was too dark for a bluebird. At this point, I figured out it was a blue grosbeak and got the scope out.

The bird was back to me when I first got the scope on it. It was deep blue with black wings with lighter edgings and a black tail. When it turned I saw that it had a dark breast and belly. It was uniformly blue. I also saw a large chestnut patch on the shoulder - it was more a triangle than a stripe - and the black mask around the bill and lores. It didn't have any wing bars.

I watched the bird for a few minutes. I knew it was a good bird for the area, but since I didn't have a camera and I had no doubt of the ID, I moved on. When I got back in the car, I looked back to the tree and the bird was gone.

I went back about an hour later and it wasn't there.

Name the species you consider ID contenders; explain how you eliminated each.

Indigo Bunting: This is the closest physical match, but the song was all wrong. The grosbeak's song was a two-part warble, the bunting's is three or four paired notes or phrases. The bunting does not have the black masking around the bill and eyes, nor does it have the chestnut on the wing. It's also a smaller bird.

Bluebirds: Both eastern and western bluebirds have white bellies and rufous on the breast. This bird had neither. Eastern bluebirds are also lighter colored than the grosbeak. Mountain bluebird is even lighter (and such a unique color) and doesn't have the chestnut patch.

Lazuli bunting: Has a white belly and rufous on the breast. It also has a white wing bar which this bird didn't.

Jays: This bird was smaller than any jay, and no jay has a warbling song. Never mind that the plumage was all wrong.

Sign and date the form:

Jeff Hopkins
7/5/04

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Jeff Hopkins
7/5/04

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round ~~Two~~ ONE

Species: Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*)

Date of Sighting: 5 July 2004 to 5 July 2004

Location: LYNN TWP.

County : LEHIGH

Observer(s): Jeff Hopkins

Date of Submission: 2004

Submitted by: Jeff Hopkins

Written Description: Yes

Photo: ~~Yes~~ NO

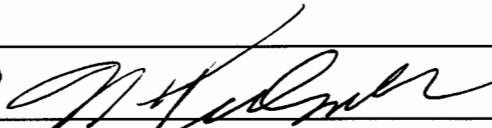
Specimen: No

Video: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut			X					
D. Heathcote			X					
P. Guris			X					
J. Stanley				X				
E. Witmer			X					
R. Leberman				X				
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			5	2				
DECISION								

Comments: 5/2 - GO TO 2ND ROUND

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

4/29/05

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round Two

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County : LEHIGH

Observer(s): Jeff Hopkins

Date of Submission: 2004

Submitted by: Jeff Hopkins

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

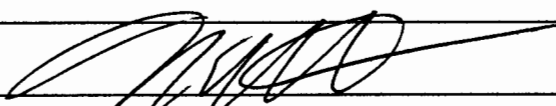
Specimen: No

Video: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut			X					
A. Guarente			X					
P. Guris			X					
J. Stanley				X				
E. Witmer			X					
R. Leberman <i>Miller</i>			X					
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			6	1				
DECISION			X					

Comments: *6/1 on 2nd round*

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

6/25/06