

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE
613 Howard Road, West Chester, PA 19380

11 March 2003

Peter Robinson
P.O Box 482
Hanover, PA 17331

Dear Peter,

Thank you for submitting documentation of the Yellow-headed Blackbird on 29 February 2000 in Lancaster County. After careful review, the Committee has voted not to accept this record.

The members' opinions were divided, and the balloting went two rounds before a final result of one vote for acceptance and five votes against acceptance (one of our seven members was not available to cast a ballot). The report was placed in the Committee's Category IV-A as "a record for which there exists a majority of evidence in support of the observer's identification; the record is probably correct, but not beyond reasonable doubt."

The majority who voted not to accept the record felt that the few basic details provided were not sufficient to rule out abnormal individuals or hybrids with other Icterid species. One member summarized the Committee's view with the comment, "Even for a bird this easy to ID, I need something more to go on than is given here. It's just too brief a description without enough details." Another member said, "In November of 1997 I saw an apparently aberrant Red-winged Blackbird in Cape May. It was a female with a bright yellow upper breast and throat, and was amongst a large blackbird flock. Such a bird cannot be ruled out from this altogether too brief description."

Let me emphasize that our decision does not necessarily imply that the bird was not a Yellow-headed Blackbird, but simply that the Committee felt that acceptance required more unequivocal evidence. We hope that our non-acceptance in this case will not discourage you from submitting reports on any future rarities you find.

Sincerely,



For the Committee:
Paul Hess, Chair

Record No. 859-01-2000

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Tabulation - Round One

Species: Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)

Date of Sighting: 29 February 2000 to 29 February 2000

Location: RIVER ROAD and CHESTNUT LEVEL ROAD

County: LANCASTER

Observer(s): Peter Robinson

Date of Submission: 2000

Submitted by: Peter Robinson

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

Recording: No

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					
B. Leberman P. Rodewald			X					
M. Sharp					X			
TOTALS			4	2	1			
DECISION								

Comments: 4/3 Go to 2nd round

Signature (Secretary):

Date:

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Tabulation Form - Round Two

Species: Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)

Date of Sighting: 29 February 2000 to 29 February 2000

Location: RIVER ROAD and CHESTNUT LEVEL ROAD

County:: LANCASTER

Observer(s): Peter Robinson

Date of Submission: 2000

Submitted by: Peter Robinson

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

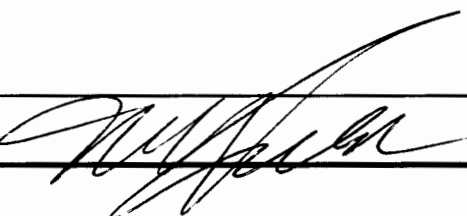
Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead				X				
D. Goughman <i>D. Heathcote</i>								
P. Hess				X				
R. Ickes				X				
B. Reid				X				
R. Leberman			X					
M. Sharp				X				
TOTALS			1	5				
DECISION				X				

Comments:

1/5

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

7/21/02