

861-CB-1990

PORC

861

## Rare Bird Report

### Brewer's Blackbird Erie County

I saw a male Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) in Erie County at 11:00 A.M. on Friday, 23 November 1990. This bird is classified as a "rarity" in Pennsylvania (Kwater 1990). However, the species is extending its range eastward, and there is increasing evidence that the species may be underreported in Pennsylvania, particularly in the northwestern counties (Wilhelm 1982).

The bird was near East Fisher Road about 4 kilometers east of the Presque Isle State Park office. I observed the bird for more than 30 minutes as it foraged on rocks and vegetation between the road and Erie Bay. It was generally solitary, occasionally venturing to within several meters of a small flock of Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*).

The bird was entirely black and highly iridescent which immediately suggested Brewer's Blackbird. The male Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*), which at times the Brewer's Blackbird closely resembles, is very rarely entirely black as late as November (Bent 1958). The bird approached to within 10 meters, and I was able to discern that the eye was very pale and that the head was glossed with purple.

I also heard the bird. It called frequently and I was struck by the grating and metallic quality of the vocalizations. I have had recent extensive exposure to the calls of Rusty Blackbird (in central Pennsylvania and in southern New Jersey in October and November of 1990) and Brewer's Blackbird (in southern Texas in March of 1990 and in western Montana in August of 1990), and I was certain that these were the call notes of the Brewer's Blackbird.

The bird was observed under fair conditions with 8.5X binoculars and a 20X telescope. Mary Floyd and Richard Floyd also observed the bird. It could not be relocated later in the day.

#### literature cited:

- Bent, A.C. 1958. *Life Histories of North American Blackbirds, Orioles, Tanagers, and Allies*. United States Government Printing Office. Washington, D.C. USA.
- Kwater, E. 1990. Official list of the birds of Pennsylvania. *Pennsylvania Birds* 4:51-53.
- Wilhelm, G. 1982. The Brewer's Blackbird in western Pennsylvania. *Bulletin of the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania* 46:9.

Ted Floyd

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # of

Species: **Brewer's Blackbird**

Date of Sighting: **November 23, 1990**

Observer(s): **Ted Floyd**

Date of Submission: **1991 Erie**

Submitted by: **Ted Floyd**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater			X				
B. Haas			X				
F. Haas			X				
R. Leberman			X				
G. McWilliams				X			
S. Santner			X				
P. Schwalbe			X				
TOTALS			6	1			
DECISION			X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

*B. Haas*

Date:

*8-15-91*