

861-03-1991

Brewer's blackbird - 3 ♂'s observer: Barb Warren
Southern Lancaster County, Christmas Court Sun, Dec 15, 1991

copy of notes made during + just after observation:

white eye

blackbird sized + proportioned (vs grackle size/shape)

round - plump body

rich bluish sheen to head, body black

bill small + thin + short, compared to grackle's, more than $\frac{1}{2}$ the length of the head but less than $\frac{2}{3}$ definitely

forehead prominent

fully developed feathered tail - a short tail in one plain; slight rounding @ tip

slight bluish sheen to tail feathers not always visible

Scott Dr. - habitat: wooded edge, adjoining farm, small lounge development with some houses unoccupied summerhouses, $\frac{1}{2}$ acre pond w/ good stand of cattails

in large open field next to woods, unroad edge

bird #1 first seen in lawn/hedge of a summer house between marsh + woods; it walked around the yard, scratched on the soil/leaf litter of foundation plantings; observed for 2 min before it flew out of sight; National Geographic Guide consulted, time 8:25 am

I wrote my notes, drove + bird #1 to the end of the road, + on the way back out, 8:35

saw the bird or another one again, it was beside the road on the ground - I was very close to it before I noticed it then sitting very still; it was so close + still +

unconcerned about my car. I began to wonder if it was a jay but then it flew strongly across the field to beyond the marsh landing in a tall tree; it was seen joined by approx 25 starlings; it was just slightly larger than the starlings; it soon

flew to a smaller tree nearby, not very visible from my location; when I drove over to that side of Scott drive, the starlings had left + the bird was back in the tall tree. I watched it + added to my notes. It was then joined by bird #2 + shortly thereafter

by bird #3; all were identified having the white eye, prominent forehead, bluish hue in the sun, same body proportions, short bill that was nicely proportioned to the head

at 8:45 a car came up behind me flushing all 3 + several dozen house finches from a nearby tree; although the birds were still in the vicinity of the marsh + houses, I left at 8:45

while perched in tree, posture was moderately upright

861-03-1991

On 15 Dec. 1991 I was participating on the Southern Lancaster County Christmas Bird Count. The group I was with started out with 5 people. But by 1 pm. there was only one left, Cathy Hicks. At apx. 2 pm. we saw a flock of Blackbirds I estimated at 150,000 Common Grackles. The flock also contained Brown-headed Cowbirds, Red-winged Blackbirds, and a few European Starlings. We searched for anything unusual until the flock moved on. Then at apx. 2:30 pm. while we walked on the edge of a winter wheat field the blackbirds moved towards us. There was a wood lot on both sides of the field. As the birds came closer we stood still and looked through them. At apx. 3 pm. as part of the flock moved in on the woodlot I spotted a smaller blackbird. It was almost sitting broadside, facing left, apx. 20 ft high, in a small tree with apx. 100 common grackle. The distant was apx. 25-30 yards. I next checked the bill size and saw the bill was apx. $\frac{1}{2}$ the size of the common grackles that surrounded it. The eye was light yellow. I then directed Kathy to the bird. We studied it for apx. 5 minutes. The purple iridescent on the head showed up well when the bird looked around. The body appeared a greenish-black. We could also study the difference in bill length with Common Grackle. The tail was shorter than the Common Grackle. I ruled out Red-winged Blackbird because of the yellow eye. Rusty Blackbirds have brown in their fall plumage. Brown-headed Cowbirds have a short conical bill. Common Grackles have a larger bill, body, and tail.

From other observations I have made in PA, Mont., and Calif., we were looking at a male Brewer's Blackbird.

861-03-1991

RARE SPECIES REPORT

SPECIES: Brewer's Blackbird <i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>		NUMBER SEEN: one
SIGHTING DATE: 15 Dec. 1991		SIGHTING TIME: 3 pm.
LOCATION:	COUNTY & STATE: Lancaster Co. Penna DISTANCE & DIRECTION FROM NEAREST TOWN: 3 miles east of Quarryville DIRECTIONS, IF APPLICABLE: Rt. 372 east from Quarryville for 3 miles. Left at May Post Office Rd. Go approx. 1/2 mile. Sighting was on left.	
HABITAT: Wood patches and farm land.		
SIGHTING CONDITIONS:	LIGHTING: Clear Day, Sunny. DISTANCE: approx 25-30 yards EQUIP. USED: 10 x 50 swifts LENGTH OF SIGHTING: 5 minutes	
DESCRIPTION:	VOICE: not heard SIZE: approx. 9" PLUMAGE: Male bird - Purple iridescence on the head and neck. The body was greenish black. ANATOMY (bill length, leg color, etc.): The bill length was 1/2 the size as Common Grackle. The Eye was light yellow. The tail length was shorter than Common Grackle. BEHAVIOR: This bird sat in a tree with approx. 100 common grackle which was part of a larger flock of approx. 150,000 Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Red-winged Blackbirds, and a few European Starlings	
FAMILIARITY WITH THIS & SIMILAR SPECIES: I have seen this species in PA., Montana, and California.		
COMPARISON TO SIMILAR SPECIES: Rusty Blackbirds show brown feathers in fall plumage. Common Grackle has larger body, longer tail, and larger bill. Red-winged Blackbird has a black eye. Brown-headed Cowbird has a short conical bill.		
HAS A PHOTOGRAPH BEEN TAKEN? No		IF SO, BY WHO?
Have any additional observers filled out a rare species report? If so, who? Cathy Hicks		
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (Use back of form for more space):		
SIGHTING & REPORT BY: Randy C. Miller		
ADDRESS: 607 Woodland Dr Manheim PA. 17545		PHONE # (717) 664-3778
SIGNATURE Randy C. Miller		DATE: 16 Dec. 1991

RARE SPECIES REPORT

861-03-1991

SPECIES: BREWER'S BLACKBIRD EUPHAGUS CYANOCEPHALUS		NUMBER SEEN: 1 (ONE)
SIGHTING DATE: 12/15/1991		SIGHTING TIME: 3:00 PM
LOCATION:	COUNTY & STATE: LANCASTER COUNTY - PA DISTANCE & DIRECTION FROM NEAREST TOWN: THREE MILES EAST OF QUARRYVILLE DIRECTIONS, IF APPLICABLE: FROM QUARRYVILLE, RT 372 EAST TO MAY POST OFFICE RD, 1/2 MILE ON MAY POST OFFICE RD, SIGHTING ON LEFT SIDE OF ROAD	
HABITAT: WOODED EDGE OF WINTER WHEAT FIELD		
SIGHTING CONDITIONS:	LIGHTING: CLEAR, SUNNY DISTANCE: 25-30 YARDS EQUIP. USED: 10X40 BUSHNELL LENGTH OF SIGHTING: 5 MINUTES	
DESCRIPTION:	VOICE: N/A SIZE: 8 1/2 - 9 INCHES PLUMAGE: PURPLE IREDESCENT HEAD, GREENISH-BLACK BODY ANATOMY (bill length, leg color, etc.): MUCH SMALLER BODY SIZE AND SHORTER BILL AND TAIL COMPARED TO COMMON GRACKLE, PALE YELLOW EYE BEHAVIOR: PERCHED IN TREE IN CLOSE PROXIMITY OF DOZENS OF COMMON GRACKLES	
FAMILIARITY WITH THIS & SIMILAR SPECIES: NONE PREVIOUSLY OBSERVED		
COMPARISON TO SIMILAR SPECIES: SMALLER BODY & BILL, PURPLISH HEAD ONLY AND SHORTER TAIL COMPARED TO COMMON GRACKLE		
HAS A PHOTOGRAPH BEEN TAKEN? NO IF SO, BY WHO?		
Have any additional observers filled out a rare species report? If so, who? RANDY MILLER		
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (Use back of form for more space): THE BIRD WAS OBSERVED DURING THE SOLANCO WINTER BIRD COUNT. IT WAS FOUND IN A FLOCK OF APPROXIMATELY 150,000, CONTAINING COMMON GRACKLE, REDWINGED BLACK BIRDS AND EUROPEAN STARLINGS.		
SIGHTING & REPORT BY: CATHY L. HICKS		
ADDRESS: 245 S. FRANKLIN ST LANCASTER, PA. 17602		PHONE # 717 293-9061
SIGNATURE Cathy L. Hicks		DATE: 12/18/91

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Brewer's Blackbird**

Date of Sighting: **15 December 1991 to 15 December 1991**

Observer(s): **Randy Miller, Cathy Hicks**

Date of Submission: **1992 Lancaster**

Submitted by: **Randy Miller, Cathy Hicks**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater		X					
B. Haas		X					
F. Haas		X					
R. Ickes		X					
G. McWilliams		X					
S. Santner		X					
J. Skinner		X					
TOTALS		7					
DECISION		X					

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

Tom Haas

Date:

2-27-93