

861-01-1999

Rare and/or Unusual Bird Sighting Documentation Guide

SPECIES: Brewer's Blackbird

DATE SIGHTED: 3/2/99 and 3/3/99

SIZE, SHAPE, and PLUMAGE DESCRIPTION:

It was the size of a Red-winged Blackbird (maybe slightly bulkier) with a distinctive shorter, thicker, but still pointed bill. The body was glossy black, the head had a purplish shine to it. The body was glossy with no rusty brown portions or edges. There were no epaulets. The eye was white. The tail was similar in length to the Redwings in the field with it.

Why is it not a Common Grackle or Rusty Blackbird?

Common Grackles are larger with longer tails. Rusty Blackbirds that I saw during the same day still had some rusty brown patches and usually do not feed with Red-wings in corn stubble. There was no marsh nearby.

BEHAVIOR:

The bird was migrating with 70 + Red-winged Blackbirds and 55 + European Starlings. They were feeding in the rows of corn stubble in a small cornfield. Occasionally flying to a roost trees across the road near a farmhouse. When spooked, the birds flew north and did not return that evening.

NUMBER, SEX, AGE:

1 bird, male, an adult

LOCATION:

Just south of the junction of Township Road 368 and Rollar Coaster Road in Rose Township, Jefferson County, Pa.

CONDITIONS, TIME, WEATHER, OPTICS, EXPERIENCE:

I was using my Leica 8 x 42 binoculars both days. It was cloudy on 3/2 and drizzling on 3/3 and about 30 to 35 degrees both days. Wind was slight. The time on 3/2 was about 5:15 pm and on 3/3 was about 4:15 pm. The bird was just on the side of the road and I could see it off and on for about 10 minutes on 3/2 and about 15 minutes on 3/3. It was easy to compare it with both Red-winged Blackbirds, European Starlings (3/2), and on 3/3 Common Grackles as well. Both days I accidentally spooked the mixed flock away trying to get a picture (with no success). I have experience with Brewer's Blackbirds from out west and 1 in Lancaster County.

ANY OTHER OBSERVERS?

No

NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL, DATE OF WRITE-UP:

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The original write-up was on 3/3 using notes from 3/2 and 3/3.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Ballot - Round One

Species: Brewer's Blackbird (Euphagus cyanocephalus)

Date of Sighting: 2 March 1999 to 2 March 1999

Location: ROSE TOWNSHIP

County: JEFFERSON

Observer(s): John Fedak

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: John Fedak

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

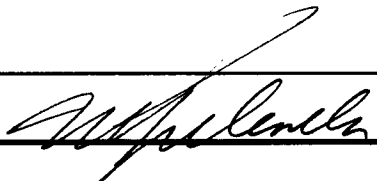
Specimen: No

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					
P. Rodewald			X					
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			6		1			
DECISION			X					

Comments: 6/1

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

2/27/01