

861-02-2000

Male Brewer's Blackbird  
*Euphagus cyanocephalus*

On November 16, 2000, I was standing in my kitchen watching out the window at about 10:00 a.m. watching the feeder activity when a blackbird flew into the maple tree in my yard. The tree is about 20 feet from the window where I was standing. While in the tree, the blackbird called 5 different times which peaked my curiosity even further for it was not the blackbird call that I was expecting. The "kw-see" call was shorter than or not as drawn out as a rusty blackbird. It was in the tree for about 10 minutes and then flew down to the ground about 10 feet from the window near the feeder where I had a really good look at it.

The first thing I noticed was the yellow eyes. Then I noticed that it was all glossy black like a common grackle with a purplish shine on the head and neck area. It was smaller than a common grackle and more the size of a rusty blackbird. But the voice was wrong; so I knew it wasn't a rusty or a grackle. Plus, rusty blackbirds have a brownish or rusty coloring to them during winter plumage which this did not. So, this also rules out a brown-headed cowbird because of the lack of a brownish head and different voice, of course. Plus, the bill was not short and fat like a cowbird, but it was dark colored, longer and more slender. I can also rule out a red-winged blackbird for it didn't have any epaulets, it had the yellow eye and the voice was wrong for a red-winged blackbird as well. After being on the ground for about 5 minutes where it looked around for food, it then flew back up to the maple tree for a minute and flew away.

I then raced for the books to confirm what I had just seen. First checking Peterson Field Guides both Eastern and Western Birds (which unfortunately has the same exact picture in both books), then Stokes Field Guide to Birds (Eastern Region), National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America (third Edition), and National Audubon Society The Sibley Guide to Birds. Totalling five different books just to be sure. After figuring out that it was a male Brewer's Blackbird, I wanted to confirm it vocally; so I checked on Peterson's Bird Song tape and again confirmed it was a Brewer's Blackbird.

I had seen many Brewer's Blackbirds previously while vacationing in the state of Washington, but never before here in my Indiana County yard.

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**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**

**Tabulation Form - Round Two**

Species: Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*)

Date of Sighting: 16 November 2000 to 16 November 2000

Location: INDIANA

County: INDIANA

Observer(s): Steve Graff

Date of Submission: 2000

Submitted by: Steve Graff

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				
<del>D. Heathcote</del> D. Couchman			X					
P. Hess			X					
J. Stanley			X					
B. Reid			X					
R. Leberman			X					
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			6	1				
DECISION			X					

Comments: 6/1

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

12/20/00