

April 8, 2005

Gary Freed, Ron Grubb

Thank you for sending in the description of the Blackbird you found at Green Lane on January 20, 2002. It sounded like it was almost certainly a Brewer's Blackbird, but 4 members of the committee did not feel there was quite enough detail to absolutely rule out a Rusty Blackbird. By the end of January male Rusty Blackbirds can be all black, as the rusty color is lost by wear over the course of the winter, not by molt.

Thankfully Brewer's Blackbird was removed from the review list in 2003. This is a species familiar to birder's and which poses more of a problem in the description than in the identification. It is a rare but regular fall-early spring visitor to the state and has a fairly predictable pattern of occurrence. The records committee felt that there was not much else to be gained from reviewing additional documentation of the species.

Sincerely

Matt Sharp

Chair: Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee.

861-01-2002

Dates: 11/20/02 & 1/22/02

Species: Brewer's Blackbird (adult ♂)

Observers: Ron Grubb, 2817 Hawck Rd, Green Lane, PA 18054 215-234-8276

Gary Freed, 1132 Walters Rd, Pennsburg, PA 18073 215-679-8536

Conditions: 11/20/02 am. on 3 occasions. Total time of observation 10+ min. 10-15 yds. distance from inside looking out of large window. Morning mostly sunny, cold, snow covered. Bird observed on ground under pole feeder (black oil, suet) feeding on cracked corn and/or black oil seeds. In wooded yard w/open areas nearby fields and horse farms Ron (8x42 b&L) Gary (10x42 b&L) binoculars. Also seen perched 20-30ftⁱⁿ tree)

Description: Bird was a blackbird. When sun didn't hit bird it appeared uniformly black. In sunlight it looked hooded glassy purple, body (except tail) appeared to have a shiny greenish hue. Head shape was roundish. Bill was dark, pointed. Short compared to head. Probably not as long as head. Tail rather short compared to body with slightly rounded tip. Eyes pale yellow/white. Legs black. On at least one side had two small patches of buff (see drawing)

Similar Species:

Red-winged Blackbird - no sign of shoulder patches

Rusty Blackbird - no brown mottling like fall/winter birds

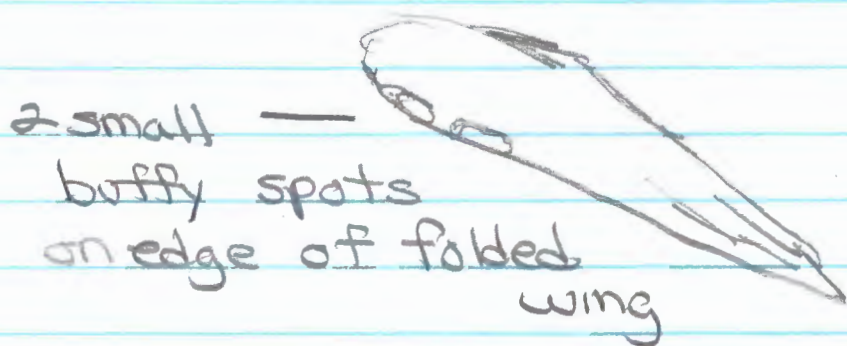
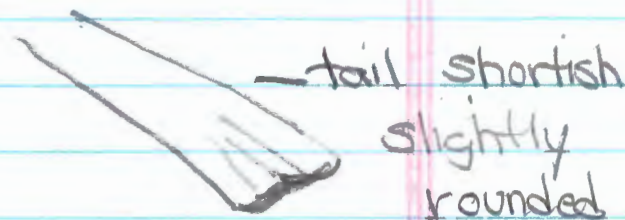
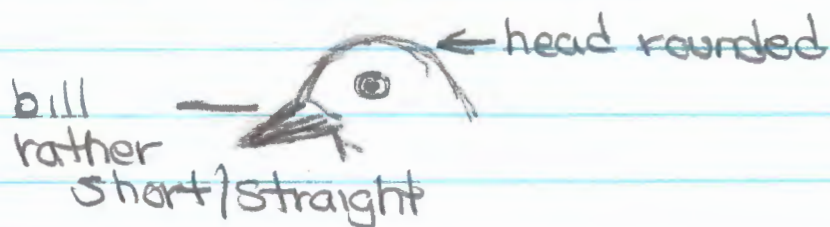
C. Grackle - head rounded, not flatish. Bill straighter/shorter, not slightly down curved or long compared to head. Tail short compared to body/slightly

rounded, Not longish, keel-shaped as grackle;

Brown-headed Cowbird - Bill wrong, no brown head

Eur. Starling - Bill dark, not yellow. Body solid black.

Conditions: 1/22/02 Same as 11/20. Seen one time for about 2 min.



Conclusions: We have seen Brewer's Blackbird on 8-10 occasions from Minnesota west. We based our ID. as much on what we didn't see as what we did see because we are very familiar with any similar species in this area (reasons stated). We therefore believe this bird to be a Brewer's Blackbird

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round Two

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

Date of Sighting: 20 January 2002 to 22 January 2002

Location: GREEN LANE

County: MONTGOMERY

Observer(s): Ron Grubb, Gary Freed

Date of Submission: 2002

Submitted by: Ron Grubb

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

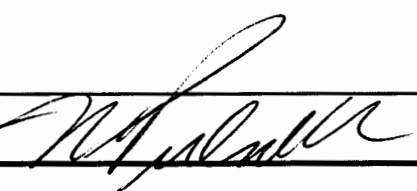
Specimen: No

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. Heathcote				X				
P. Hess			X	X				
J. Stanley				X				
E. Witmer			X					
R. Leberman				X				
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			3	3	1			
DECISION				X				

Comments: 3/4

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 6/7/03

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round One

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

Date of Sighting: 20 January 2002 to 22 January 2002

Location: GREEN LANE

County: MONTGOMERY

Observer(s): Ron Grubb, Gary Freed

Date of Submission: 2002

Submitted by: Ron Grubb

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

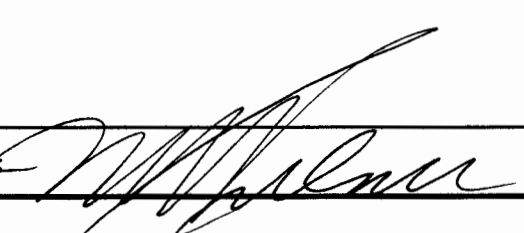
Specimen: No

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. Heathcote				X				
P. Hess			X					
J. Stanley			X					
E. Witmer			X					
R. Leberman				X				
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			4	2	1			
DECISION								

Comments: 4/3 - GO TO 2ND ROUND

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

1/12/03