

332~~B~~2-01-1993

Jaeger specie

Stercorarius pomarinus or parasiticus

Location: Presque Isle State Park

Date: December 11, 1993

Time: about 9:30 to about 9:32 AM

Weather: Cloudy (Stratocumulus), wind approx. 25 mph from the north-northwest. temp. about 25 F.

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Kowa TSN 4 at about 30X.

Viewing distance: several hundred yards away.

Details of sighting and description: While scanning the gulls at Gull Point from Beach 11 through my scope I spotted a blackish gull-like bird appear in the right side of my scope flying to the left (westerly direction). It was flying low and direct and when it banked a prominent white patch at the base of the primaries readily identifying it as a jaeger. The jaeger was only in view for less than two minutes when it disappeared behind Gull Point. Even though my sighting was relatively brief, a few characteristics were clearly seen. The jaeger was Herring Gull-like (*Larus argentatus*) in shape and possibly size. It appeared to be entirely black with distinctive white ovals at the bases of the undersides of the primaries. A white patch at the base of the upperside of the primaries could be seen as well, but was not nearly as bright. The jaeger was noticeably darker than any Herring Gulls in the vicinity. I could not detect any tail projections so I presume the bird was a juvenile. Most of the time that it was in view, it flew very low over the water with rather slow wing beats in much the same manner as a Herring Gull. Occasionally it flew above the water about 20 feet high and held its wings stiffly in an arch for a few seconds and then would drop back down resuming its low direct flight. There were a few gulls flying in the vicinity of the jaeger, but unfortunately none of the gulls were close enough to the jaeger for an accurate size comparison. The jaeger did not chase any gulls, but continued purposefully in a westerly direction. The jaeger was too far away to see any feather pattern or to see the shape of the tail especially the central rectrices. I believe with a more prolonged look at this jaeger, especially if it was flying next to a Herring or Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*), I would have identified it as a Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*). The jaeger had slower wing beats, appeared to be stockier, and showed more white at the

bases of the primaries than any Parasitics (*S. parasiticus*) I have identified on Lake Erie. All Parasitics that I have seen fly very erratically, twisting and turning, increasing and decreasing speed and almost always harassing gulls that were nearby. This jaeger had steady wing beats and flew with very little if any speed change and ignored nearby gulls.

I have identified only one Pomarine Jaeger on Presque Isle and it was a juvenile that was observed circling with gulls that were mostly Herrings on December 20, 1980. The broad blunt tips of the central rectrices were clearly seen as well as size comparison with Herring Gulls. Because of the brief viewing time and distance of observation I believe it would be unwise of me to identify these birds beyond the two larger Stercorarius.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: Jaeger sp. (Stercorarius sp.)

Date of Sighting: 11 December 1993 to 11 December 1993

Location: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

County: ERIE

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 1993

Submitted by: Jerry McWilliams

Written Description: YES Photo: NO Specimen: NO

Recording: NONE

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V			Abstain
					A	B	C	
F. Haas			X					
N. Pulcinella			X					
E. Kwater			X					
R. Ickes			X					
G. McWilliams			X					
P. Schwalbe			X					
J. Skinner						X		
TOTALS			6			1		
DECISION			X					

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

J. C. Haas

Date:

9-25-94