

332A-01 -1997

Jaeger species

Stercorarius pomarinus or parasiticus

Location: Presque Isle State Park, Erie County, Pa.

Date: November 22, 1997

Time: 7:35 AM

Weather: Cloudy (Stratocumulus), wind 15 mph from the northwest with six foot breakers. Light rain showers.

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Kowa TSN 4 at about 30X.

Viewing distance: perhaps 1/2 mile off shore.

Viewing conditions: fair

Details of sighting and description: I was conducting my waterbird count at Sunset Point. There was little bird activity over the water this morning especially waterfowl, but there were a few Bonaparte's Gulls flying from west to east. There were also a few Ring-billed Gulls and Great Black-backed Gulls flying over the lake. At 7:35 AM, I spotted a fast flying blackish bird coming from a northerly direction towards land. It continued to get closer until I was able to confirm my suspicion that it was a jaeger. As it started to get close enough to identify it to species it veered off and headed back out into the lake and out of sight. The jaeger was in view for only a few minutes. I identified the bird as a jaeger by the following characteristics: The blackish plumage and flight of the bird were the first clues to its identity. It was constantly flying up and down roller coaster style, dipping below the six foot wave crests and then gliding up to about ten feet above the water. It would fly on stiff strongly arched wings with strong powerful wing beats similar to a Peregrine Falcon. At one point it gave short chase to a Bonaparte's Gull. The plumage of the bird looked entirely black except for the occasional flashes of white at the bases of the primaries. The wings were pointed and always angled back and curved downward giving the bird a rather arched profile especially when viewing the bird head on. Most of the time when the bird was in view, it was by itself so size was difficult to discern. However, when pursuing the Bonaparte's Gull it was clearly larger than the Bonaparte's and was always flying faster than all of the other gulls scattered throughout the lake that were flying in the same direction. The bird appeared to be too large and heavy and the wings too broad based to be a Long-tailed Jaeger. The falcon-like flight was more typical of Parasitic rather than Pomarine Jaeger, but it is well known that strong wind conditions effect both species typical flight behaviors.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round One

Species: Jaeger species (*Stercorarius pomarinus* or *parasiticus*)

Date of Sighting: 22 November 1997 to 22 November 1997

Location: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

County: ERIE

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 1997

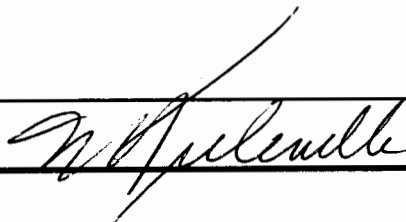
Submitted by: Jerry McWilliams

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	
D. Couchman			X					
T. Floyd								X
P. Hess			X					
R. Ickes			X					
J. McWilliams			X					
B. Reid			X					X
P. Rodewald			X					
TOTALS			6					1
DECISION			X					

Comments: 6/0/1

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 9/28/00