

332A-02-1999

Jaeger species (1)

Stercorarius pomarinus or parasiticus

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

Date: December 30, 1999

Time: 8:15 and 8:45 AM

Weather: cloudy, wind 10 mph from the southwest .

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Zeiss 10 X 40 and Kowa TSN 4 at about 30X.

Viewing distance: perhaps 1.5 to 2 miles off shore.

Viewing conditions: good

Details of sighting and description: I was conducting my waterbird count at Sunset Point. There were a few Ring-billed Gulls and Herring Gulls flying over the lake. At 8:15 AM, I spotted a fast moving jaeger flying in a westerly direction. The jaeger made a few passes at some Herring/Ring-billed gulls and with direct comparison the jaeger looked smaller than the gulls. The blackish plumage and flight of the bird were the first clues to its identity. It would fly on stiff strongly arched wings with strong powerful wing beats similar to a Peregrine Falcon. 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. The upperside was entirely blackish with a hint of white at the base of the primaries which was only barely discernible at this distance and only on the underside of the wings. Most of the time when the bird was in view, it was by itself. The bird appeared to be too large and heavy and the wings too broad based to be a Long-tailed Jaeger, but the bird seemed to small and the wings seemed too narrow to be a Pomarine Jaeger.

It eventually landed on the water and because of the distance I could not see it any more. After about 30 minutes I saw the jaeger (different one?) again chasing gulls. Sometimes it would rocket skyward upwards of 100 feet or more in pursuit of a gull than it would quickly descend and fly just above the surface of the water before repeating the same behavior. It was always able to out fly the gulls, quickly catching up to them with its fast and powerful wingbeats. After a few minute of chasing gulls I saw it disappear over the horizon in a westerly direction.

I did not see any central tail streamers, so I believe the jaeger was an immature.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Ballot - Round One

Species: Jaeger species (Stercorarius)

Date of Sighting: 30 December 1999 to 30 December 1999

Location: ERIE

County: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: Jerry McWilliams

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

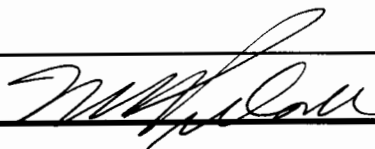
Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead			X					
D. Couchman			X					
P. Hess			X					
R. Ickes			X					
M. Sharp			X					
B. Reid			X					
P. Rodewald			X					
TOTALS			7					
DECISION			X					

Comments: 7/0

Signature (Secretary):



Date: 2/26/01