

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2013-08-06 21:17:15
Observer's Name	Matt Wlasniewski
E-mail	martind28@comcast.net
Phone	610-463-8845
Observer's Address	Street Address: 21 Scenic Drive City: Hamburg State / Province: PA Postal / Zip Code: 19526 Country: United States
Names of additional observers	Kerry Grim, Ken Lebo, Matt Spence, Joan Silagy, Ruddy Keller, Toni Wlasniewski
Species (Common Name)	Black-necked Stilt
Species (Scientific Name)	Himantopus mexicanus
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Male, adult
Observation Date and Time	07-19-2013 7:30 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Not yet (please do, eBird is great!)
County	Berks
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Old Route 22, Shartlesville, PA
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	Farmer's pond on north side of Old Rte 22 about one mile east of Shartlesville. We call the farm after the previous owners', Christman's Pond.
Habitat	Pond is at edge of fields that are planted in rotation of corn or alfalfa. Water comes from an underground spring. Pond has a verticle drain pipe.
Distance to bird	Between 50 and 300 feet. Distance varied as bird moved around.
Viewing conditions	Clear summer morning. Good sunlight. Excellent sun on following days.
Optical equipment used	Naked eye--bird was easily seen. Vortex Diamondback 8x42 binocular (I carry these in my truck); Kowa Scope 30-60 zoom.
Description	I left Mt View Hardware after some early shopping and

continued west on Old Rte 22 to Shartlesville with the purpose of checking out this pond which I try to do once a week. New owners have not been real friendly so my visits are short and sometimes relegated to stopping on the highway and scanning very quickly. If I see something, I turn around and park down the road east of the pond. As I drove by the pond, I saw a tall wading bird on the shore line but couldn't stop. I turned around as soon as possible and did my stop in front of the pond. I saw a tall shorebird feeding next to a Great Egret. With its brilliant pink legs and sunlit black and white plumage, it was easily identified as a Black-necked Stilt. I went down the road, turned around again and parked. I then set up my scope and watched the bird for several minutes before I made a cell phone call to Ken Lebo to alert the BOC members who are around early on a Friday morning. Please see attached photo for an excellent description and comparison with the Great Egret. I took this later in the afternoon on 7/19.

Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)

The stilt appeared healthy and fed actively along the shore line. During the next two days, it moved to and from one of the smaller retention ponds on the other side of the drive. It also fed along all the exposed muddy shoreline. I watched it fly several times and it flew well. The bird would at time go into the tall weeds on the road-side bank and get out of view. It was last seen on 7/21, Sunday afternoon by myself and Kerry Grim as far as I know. At times the bird would stand and preen. I didn't catch it sleeping. When tractors or trucks came by on the driveway, the stilt would take flight and move along the shoreline.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

Set apart from all tall other waders by stunning black and white plumage and bright pink legs. American Avocet has a curved bill and rusty head and neck with black and white body. This is third sighting of this stilt in Berks County that I know of: 1962, May, one bird found near a parking lot in Hamburg; about 3 years ago or less, Bruce Williams reported one near Topton.

Discussion – anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:

See photo.

Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)

Yes. Size, plumage, pink legs, size and shape of bill. See photo.

During

none.

After

National Geographic, Sibley's, and A Century of Birding Berks County for local history.

Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

Upload images, audio, video or drawings

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