

PA Rare Bird Report

Submission Date	2020-04-08 12:45:53
Observer's Name	Dave DeReamus
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Phone	4847889280
Observer's Address	3339 Allen Street Easton PA 18045 United States
Names of additional observers	Jason Horn and several others.
Species (Common Name)	Red-naped Sapsucker
Species (Scientific Name)	Sphyrapicus nuchalis
Number of individuals	1
Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)	Adult male.
Observation Date and Time	04-07-2020 11:00 AM
Did you submit this sighting to eBird?	Yes
Link to eBird checklist	https://ebird.org/pa/checklist/S66806183
County	Chester
Location (City, Borough, Township)	Downingtown
Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)	601 Dogwood Drive (private)
GPS coordinates of sighting	40.007119, -75.645522
Habitat	Two yews located at the beginning of the driveway of this residence by the cul-de-sac.
Distance to bird	Approximately 25 feet.
Viewing conditions	Mostly sunny.
Optical equipment used	Eagle Optics 10x42

Description

Discovered on April 6th by local resident John Daniel, who lives several houses down from where I saw the bird. After processing my photos and consulting my limited library and the internet, this bird seems to fit the Red-naped criteria pretty well. It showed an obvious red nape, broken black border between the all-red throat and white malar stripe, and two rows of white markings on the back separated by a black center panel. I'll leave it to the experts to determine whether or not this bird is a pure Red-naped or a dreaded hybrid, but I really don't see anything glowing here that points solely to Yellow-bellied. I have added some of my photos to my eBird checklist. All of my photos can be seen at: <https://goo.gl/photos/aWtBeNArw415dYZP8> for others to study.

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

The bird was seen feeding from its holes drilled in the main branches of the yews. When flying into and out of the yews, it was at a low to medium height in the surrounding forested area. I never saw the bird higher than halfway up the nearby tall oak trees.

Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)

The main issue here is whether this is a Red-naped x Yellow-bellied hybrid. After examining all of my photos, all of the main identification criteria found in various field guides concur with Red-naped. I could not find any issue that solely pointed to Yellow-bellied. The only potential issue appears to be whether the amount of black showing between the white malar and the red throat is more than what would be expected for Red-naped. After looking at many photos of male Red-naped, I noted various amounts of black in the border, but most, if not all, show breaks in the black, especially the area farthest from the base of the bill. The black is most noticeable near the bill base and seems to become thinner or disappear totally towards the back of the neck. This bird seems to follow that same pattern.

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

I could find very little information pertaining to Red-naped and Yellow-bellied comparisons, but here are the relevant internet search results that I found: <https://www.nctexasbirds.com/home/perot-study-skins/red-naped-vs-yellow-bellied-sapsucker>
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birds/r/red-naped-sapsucker/>

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

Yes, with the obvious caveat of the problem of hybridization.

After

National Geographic "Field Guide to the Birds of North America", "The Sibley Guide to Birds", and the Smithsonian "Birds of America".

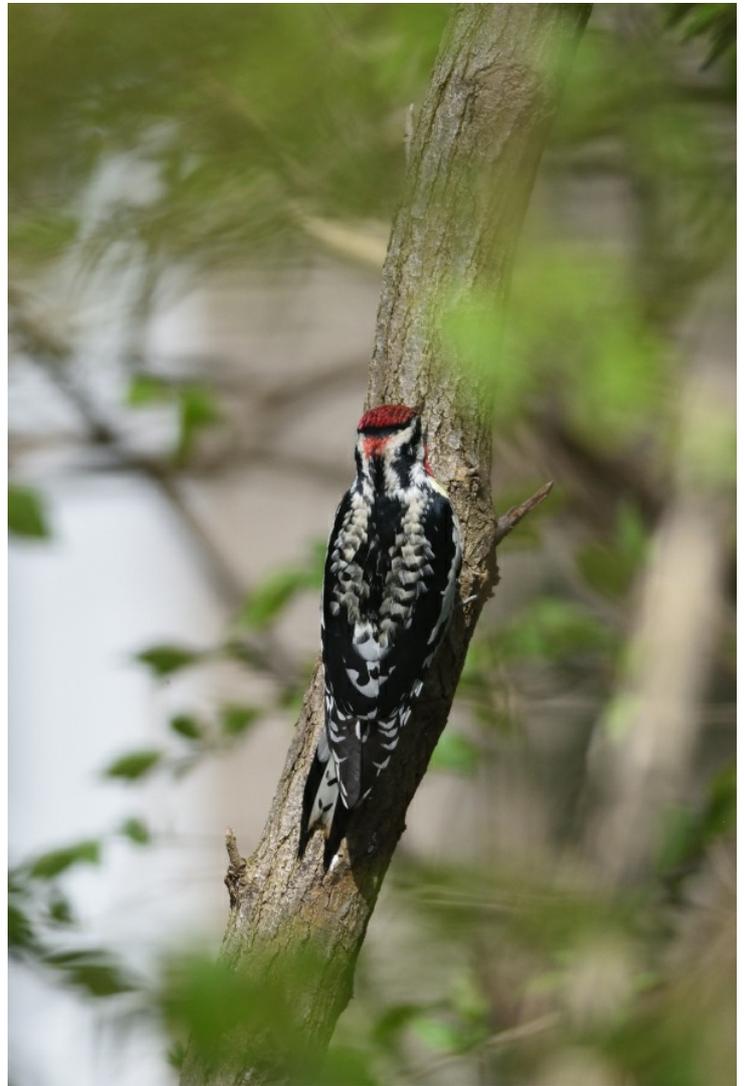
Supporting evidence (check all that apply)

Photograph

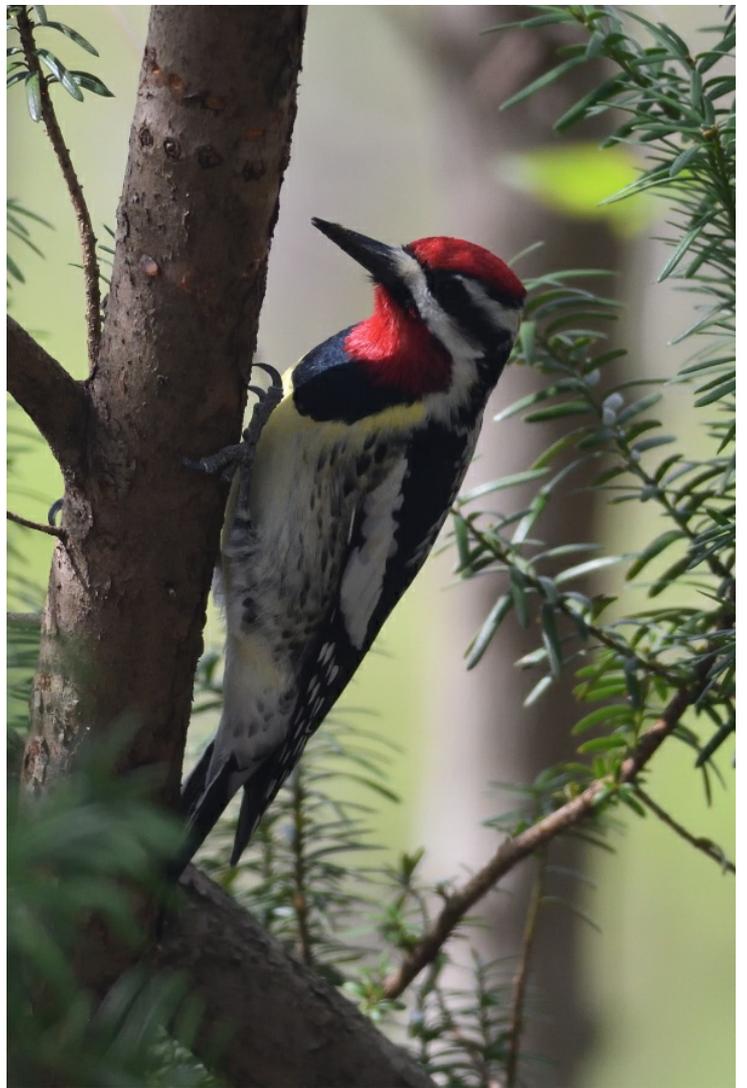
Upload images, audio, video or drawings



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