

Long Point Bird Observatory Rare Bird Report Form

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In order that any sight record or banding of a rare species can be confirmed for the historical record, it must be properly documented. LPBO cooperators are therefore asked to complete a form in every case where a rarity is being claimed. Guidance as to which species are considered rare in the Long Point area may be obtained from the LPBO Program Coordinator and in the Long Point Area Checklist found in *A Birding Guide to Long Point Area*. Each observer should prepare his/her description independently and preferably before consulting any field guides or other literature.

PLEASE PRINT.

Species claimed: Barn Owl

No. of birds: 1+

Age: Adult and young(?)

Sex: Unknown

Date(s): June 21 & 25, 2012

Place: Haldimand County

Time(s) of Observation: 0700 and 2045-2100

Who first saw the bird(s): Stu Mackenzie

Who first identified it: Stu Mackenzie

Other observers (names and addresses):

Any who disagree: No

Your previous experience with the species: Observed once before in Ontario, numerous times in Jamaica.

Your previous experience with any closely similar species:

(a) Formerly:

(b) Same day:

Species present for comparison: none

Which were beside it for comparison: none

Distance from observer(s): 100m-2km

How measured: Estimate

Optical aids used: 8.5 x42 Swarovski EL's

Weather conditions (at time of observation)

Visibility: clear

Cloud Cover: 5/10

Lighting: dusk

Wind direction and speed: n/a

Other relevant conditions:
(eg. rain, snow cover, etc.)

For "Waterbird " records only

Lake conditions:

Wave height:

Height of observer above lake:

Was observer's position sheltered:

Weather system preceding the date of observation (if known):

n/a

Attach weather map clipping from local or national newspaper if relevant.

Associated movements of other species:

Was the bird trapped:

Band # if banded:

Was it photographed:

If yes, by whom (name and address):

Specimen or parts preserved:

Present location:

Circumstances:

On June 21, I was re-visiting/conducting point counts from the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas for Eastern Meadowlark and Bobolink conservation work. During a point count I heard the distinct and loud eerie screech of what I thought were Barn Owls echoing from a nearby shed/barn. The calls were intermittent and unpredictable. I heard them 2 times during the point count and once more while investigating the property. After hearing them the first and second time I wanted to ensure that it wasn't some kind of animal or starling, but the third call was unmistakable. I did not enter the barn or investigate this area any further as the property was very well marked with No Trespassing signs and a landowner/farmer was nearby watching closely. There appeared to be old police tape across the property. The property appeared abandoned or was used very infrequently. The surrounding habitat was ideal with hay fields and abandoned fields, hedgerows, and pasture. I returned to the area on June 23 and heard/found nothing. I returned again on June 25. I staked out the barn for awhile, but didn't hear anything nor did I see any adults. I drove the surrounding concessions and observed one adult at the far end of a field about 1.5km SE of the barn foraging near dark. I watched it for about 5 minutes from about 1km or farther and lost it when it dropped into the field. I returned to the barn for awhile after dark, but didn't hear anything again. I reported this information to the Barn Owl Recovery Team, but I'm not sure if any action was taken.



Picture of the habitat and structures that the 'screeching' was coming from.

Description:

Give separate description for (a) in the field (b) in the hand. Include full measurements and wing formula with hand descriptions.

Unmistakable medium-large owl flying low along the hayfields/hedgerow hunting with a slight dihedral appearing to float effortlessly over the field. The bird had very long, rounded wings, and a very leisurely controlled flight. Colour above was tawny/sandy-brown above and dirty, with faint barring on the wings and tails, and buffy-white colouration all below. White, heart-shaped facial disk was obvious at a long distance and in low light. Although superficially very similar to Short-eared Owl, this species was ruled out due to the plain colouration and lack of any noticeable streaking on the back, wings, or belly, and the pronounce white facial disk.

Did you refer to any guides/other literature:

(a) at the time: no

(b) afterwards: no

Finally, is this record 100% certain? Yes

Signed:

E-mail Address: smackenzie@birdscanada.org

Date: January_20, 2013

Mailing Address: c/o LPBO