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From: **Marsha Salett**

Date: Tue, Nov 25, 2014 at 12:26 AM

Subject: American White Pelican submission to MARC

To: mattpgarvey@gmail.com

Hi, Matt,

Jim Berry recommended that I submit my sighting of an American White Pelican at Plum Island on October 26, 2014 to the MARC because only a handful have been seen and  submitted over the years. I looked at the 18th Report of the MARC in this issue of Bird Observer and noticed the record for Sharon on 5/30-31/13 and Stoneham on 6/1/13 (probably the same bird), then looked in previous reports of records in Provincetown on 12/5/04 and Plum Island on 6/29/05. So I guess October is as good a date as any for a white pelican to appear; Plum Island is certainly the right habitat—wetlands, river, and ocean.

All I have to offer is a narrative and my posting to Massbird, but there are not many other birds that can be mistaken for a White Pelican when it flies over one's head.  None of us had cameras and there's no way I could have gotten the photo on my iPhone in time. This is what I posted on Massbird from my iPhone:

Sent, Sunday, October 26, 2014 10:51 AM

Subject: [MASSBIRD] White pelican Parker river NWR

White pelican at Warden's around 10 am; flew to ocean side at 10:15. Sorry for the late post; I thought someone else posted it

Here's a more detailed narrative. On Sunday, October 26, 2014, I went birding at Plum Island with two friends, Lisa Standley and Elaine Kile, both of whom are also from Needham. We are all seasoned and experienced birders and frequently bird together at Plum Island and other places. The morning of October 26 was sunny, blue sky with lots of clouds, breezy, with temperatures in the mid-40s, that would warm up considerably by noon (maybe close to 60 by then).

We arrived at Warden's, walked past the maintenance buildings, and set up our scopes to pan north toward the salt marsh and west toward the Parker River and Sound.  Lisa was scanning the far shore of the river when she calmly said, "I have a white pelican." I scanned with my binoculars, noticed a large white bird in the water and answered, "It's probably a swan" but then I got it in my scope and there was no missing or mistaking that large, long, bright yellow bill.  All three of us identified the bird as a White Pelican. I noted the time, figuring I'd report it on MassBird. It was 10 am. Four other women walked past us toward their car, exclaiming excitedly, "Did you see the pelican?"

After watching it bobbing on the water for about 10 minutes, we saw it fly, make a couple of soaring circles over the river and salt marsh, then fly east toward the ocean. As it came close to us, I could clearly see the black tips and edges (primaries and outer secondaries) of its wings, contrasting with the rest of the white bird.  We lost sight of it after it flew over the road and the dunes. I checked my watch again—it was 10:15.With its enormous yellow bill and black and white wing patttern, this huge white bird could only be an American White Pelican.

Other people must have seen the bird earlier in the morning. As we were packing up our scopes, a car drove up and and a woman got out and asked if the White Pelican was still here. Sadly, we had to tell her no.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Regards,

Marsha C. Salett

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Marsha Salett       msalett@gmail.com

95 Beard Way

Needham, MA  02492            781 235-1881

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