Swallow-tailed Kite (Elanoides forficatus) (1)

- Reported Mar 22, 2014 09:45 by Kirk Elwell

- Amesbury, Essex, Massachusetts

- Map: <http://maps.google.com/?ie=UTF8&t=p&z=13&q=42.85839,-70.9301&ll=42.85839,-70.9301>

- Checklist: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S17557679>

- Comments: "Had a short but definitive sighting of this very distinctive raptor.  Forked tail was a tell tale sign but voice was the distinctive alarm call of the ST Kite. Bird was flying rapidly from SW to NE over River Court in Amesbury, MA. But it was out of my extended view due to a large building I was in front of.  Was about 200 feet above me when heard & sighted."

On Tue, Oct 14, 2014 at 11:56 AM, Kirk Elwell

Hey Matt,

It's been a while since I posted this in MassBird as well as EBird and attempted to contact you through the webpage.  I got bust with work and forgot about it.

But Jim is as tenacious as a pit bull with bird records!!

He was our Essex County leader for the Atlas II project and kept us hopping!!

On the Swallow-tailed Kite though I have no photos, etc to provide.  I was walking my Lab near our apartment building in Amesbury on the west side of the building when I heard and odd vocalization coming from behind me off to the west but partially blocked by trees.  The bird then came out into the open heading easterly, at about 400 feet up? maybe, but I immediately recognized this beauty.  The under side markings of black and white are unique to say the least as well as the forked tail.  It flew over our building in a matter of 45 secs maybe and was heading on a beeline easterly.

As you remember there were a lot of sightings in the area, and south of here, of this species near the same time.  I always keep my eyes peeled for these errant birds once I have heard of sightings.  One never knows what might pop up.

Curiously not long after I posted I heard from two separate birders who knew this species quite well from down south and had both seen one at Parker River NWR the day before.  Both told me it was headed north when last they saw it.

So?????

Let me know if I can do anything further?  Hypnosis?

Take care,

Kirk.