

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD ACCEPT 7-0

Species: Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus graellsii*) *Lcd 11/8/00 wpl*

Date: 18 December 1999**Number seen:** one**Sex:** ?**Plumage:** Basic I**Locality:** South Marina, Pueblo Reservoir**Elevation:** about 5000'**Nearest town:** Pueblo West**County:** Pueblo**Time observed:** about 16:00 - 16:15 MST**Duration of observation:** about 15 minutes

Description: While participating on the Pueblo Reservoir CBC, I found an immature 4-year gull flying in toward the marina. It looked somewhat interesting (pale-headed and pale-bellied), so I stayed with it as it approached. As it banked to make its approach to the tires, I saw that it had a white rump and tail base and a black terminal tail band, so I yelled out to Doug and Brandon, "Lesser, First Basic!" They immediately got on the bird and watched it land among the Ring-billed Gulls (RBGU). We then watched it for a while as it changed perches (by flying) twice. We got good comparisons with RBGU and California (CAGU) and Herring (HERG) gulls.

The bird was a largish gull, being much larger than surrounding RBGUs (but smaller than nearby HERGs), with a whitish head with some dark markings. The eyes were wholly dark, as was the bill. The fairly short bill had a stronger gonydeal angle than those of nearby RBGUs and CAGUs, but smaller than those of nearby HERGs. The mantle and lesser secondary coverts were an evenly-toned darkish brown. The wingtips were blackish, as were the secondaries. The inner greater secondary coverts were mostly the same color as the median and lesser secondary coverts, but had thin, blackish bases. The outer greater secondary coverts were mostly dark brown with pale fringes, thus nearly the same color as the secondaries. There was no apparent window in the inner primaries. There was indistinct, pale fringing on all of the upper wing, but at any distance, the bird's wings simply looked brown on the upper surface. The rump and upper tail were whitish, contrasting strongly with the brown back and the black terminal tail band. The underparts were white, marked here and there, mostly along the sides of the breast and on the sides and flanks with grayish-brown. The underwings were evenly colored - a medium grayish-brown. The legs were pink.

Similar species eliminated: CAGU is eliminated by body, rump, and tail coloration, and by bill structure; Great Black-backed Gull (GBBG) is ruled out by size, mantle and upperwing pattern and coloration, and by bill structure; HERG eliminated by body, rump, and tail coloration, and by lack of an inner-primaries window. Yellow-legged Gull (YLGU), the most similar species in Basic I plumage, ruled out by greater secondary coverts pattern, size, and head and bill size and structure. RBGU eliminated by size, coloration, leg color, wing pattern, and by bill size and shape.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration): No vocalizations heard.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly-appearing species? I have seen >65 *graellsii* LBBGs on the Great Lakes, the East Coast, and Colorado, bazillions of HERGs, 10s of 1000s of GBBGs, and 1000s of CAGUs. I have not seen YLGU.

Light conditions: sun behind partly cloudy skies to my left

Optical equipment used: Leica 32x and Zeiss 7x42

Distance, and how estimated: estimated closest approach at about 60 meters

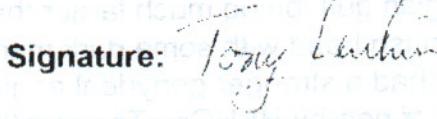
Other observers who saw the bird with you: Doug Faulkner and Brandon Percival

Other observers who saw the bird independently: Brandon Percival (and others?)

If photographed, type of equipment and film: I did not photograph

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: none b) after observation:

Reporting observer: Tony Leukering **Signature:** 

Address: Colorado Bird Observatory 13401 Picadilly Road Brighton CO 80601

Date report was written: 21 December 1999 (from notes written the evening of the 18th)