

SPECIES: GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL
(Vernacular Name)

Larus glaucescens

23-92-82

(Scientific Name) accepted

DATE(S): May 1, 1990

TIME OF OBSERVATION: 9:10 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

TO 9:30 A.M. - 3:10 P.M.

EXACT LOCATION: Cherry Creek Reservoir SRA

NEAREST TOWN: Aurora

COUNTY: Arapahoe

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THIS BIRD:

None that I know of.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: 10X50 Bushnell Binoculars; 15X-60X B/K Zoom Telescope

WEATHER CONDITIONS: Cloudy to overcast; Wind, NE 10-15 MPH; 40°

BIRD/SUN ORIENTATION: Not a factor due to overcast sky.

DISTANCE FROM BIRD AND HOW MEASURED: 25' up to 200', estimated.

NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: One SEX: Unknown PLUMAGE: 2nd winter, moulting

BEHAVIOR AND DEMEANOR: First observed standing with 20 Ring-billed Gulls (Larus delawarensis) & 3 Herring Gulls (Larus argentatus) at the swim beach along the east shore of the reservoir. When approached, it flew off and landed on a buoy about 50 ft from the shore where it stayed for 15 minutes, occasionally preening. It returned to the swim beach area to harass a Herring Gull that had brought in a fish. In the afternoon, it was perched on a fire at the marina on the west side of the reservoir.

HEAD & NECK (forehead, crown, auricular & malar regions, median line, etc.): Grayish-brown with dark brown mottling.

EYES & LORES (supercilium, eye-ring, eye-stripe, color, etc.):

Dark eyes; some dark smudging around the eyes.

LOWER & UPPER MANDIBLES (color & shape): Very large, thick bill, sharply up-tu at the gonys. Bill black entire length.

LEGS & FEET: Pink

UPPERPARTS (nape, back, rump, uppertail coverts, etc.): Very buffy with considerable brown mottling. except for some gray beginning to appear on the back (mantle).

UNDERPARTS (chin, throat, belly, sides, flanks, crissum, etc.): Buffy with considerable brown mottling. Undertail coverts buffy with dark brown barring.

RETICLES (inner, middle & outer tail feathers; color, pattern, shape, etc.):

Short, square tail - uniformly grayish-brown feathers with pale edges. Diffused, narrow, darker terminal band on upper tail. Undertail uniformly grayish-brown.

WINGS (color, length, shape, bars, coverts, etc.):

Wings short, barely protruding beyond tail, giving bird a blunt profile. Wing coverts white. Primaries and secondaries on upper wing uniformly grayish-brown, edged with white. Underwing-lining & flight feathers - silvery throughout.

VOCALIZATION (call/song, method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight):

None heard.

HABITAT: Fresh water reservoir on the eastern high plains.

ELIMINATION OF SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

THAYER'S GULL (*Larus thayeri*): Noticeably smaller, less bulky, with smaller, rounded head and much smaller bill. I'm not sure about what plumages are shown on second winter, moulting Thayer's Gull - have no experience with this aspect. But "typical" Thayer's Gulls are different size-wise, as noted above.

GLAUCOUS GULL (*Larus hyperboreus*): Considerably paler; 2nd winter bird is chalky white with grayish feathering appearing on mantle. Bill pale with dark tip. Eye yellow.

ICELAND GULL (*Larus glaucoides*): Somewhat smaller, longer winged with wings extending well beyond tail.

PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL: Have seen literally "thousands" during past 25 years in California, Washington, British Columbia and Alaska in all plumages and ages. Seen three times in Colorado, twice in 1989.

GLAUCOUS GULL: See a few every winter in Colorado (adults & immatures). Also seen in California in winter, less than 10 times.

ICELAND GULL: Seen irregularly off Long Island in winter; one bird in Churchill, Manitoba in June 1984.

THAYER'S GULL: Seen many over the years in Colorado, mostly 1st winter and adult birds.

BOOKS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND ADVICE CONSULTED THAT INFLUENCED THIS REPORT:

Field Guide to the Birds of North America (National Geographic).

THIS REPORT WRITTEN FROM NOTES MADE DURING AFTER OBSERVATION; FROM MEMORY

NAME: JACK REDDALL SIGNATURE: Jack Reddall DATE: 5-3-1990