

SPECIES: GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL

ACCEPTED (70)  
Larus glaucescens

1998-65

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name) ✓ rec'd 2-18-99

DATE(S): January 24, 1998 TIME OF OBSERVATION: 1530 TO 1540 MST.

EXACT LOCATION: Valco Ponds SWA

NEAREST TOWN: Pueblo, Colorado COUNTY: Pueblo

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THIS BIRD:

None that I am aware of.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: 9.5X44 Celestron Binoculars.

WEATHER CONDITIONS: Mostly cloudy; 45°; Variable wind, 0-5 MPH.

BIRD/SUN ORIENTATION: Not a factor due to cloud cover and late afternoon.

DISTANCE FROM BIRD AND HOW MEASURED: 300' to less than 100'; estimated

NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: one SEX: Unknown PLUMAGE: 1<sup>st</sup> winter immature

BEHAVIOR AND DEMEANOR: I first spotted the gull sitting on the ice at the edge of the water among a number of adult Ring-billed Gulls (Larus delawarensis). It's obvious larger size and overall paleness immediately caught my eye. I had seen two, first-winter immature Hayer's Gulls (L. Hayeri) earlier in the day at another nearby lake, but this was not one of them. As I watched, the gull flew closer to me, making wide circles before landing again.

HEAD & NECK (forehead, crown, auricular & malar regions, median line, etc.):

Pale buffy-brown, lightly mottled with brown.

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

Some subtle smudgy areas around eye.

LOWER & UPPER MANDIBLES (color & shape): Entirely black; large, heavy bill

LEGS & FEET: Pink

UPPERPARTS (nape, back, rump, uppertail coverts, etc.): All upperparts pale buffy-brown with much subtle mottling and barring. More pronounced brown barring on rump.

UNDERPARTS (chin, throat, belly, sides, flanks, crissum, etc.): Uniformly buffy-brown, also with mottling and barring but not as pronounced as on upperparts.

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

Square-tailed. Uniformly pale buffy-brown. No distinct terminal band. Brown barring on uppertail.

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

Upper primaries pale gray-brown (paler webbing) and roughly same tone as mantle. Under side primaries silvery as were the wing linings. Primaries lacked translucent area at tips.

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

None heard.

HABITAT: Fresh-water lake formed from old quarrying operations. Ice had formed around the edges where the gulls were congregating.

ELIMINATION OF SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

GLAUCOUS GULL (*Larus hyperboreus*): Typical first-winter birds are somewhat paler to almost ghostly white. Two-toned bill: pale with dark distal end. Primaries with translucent tips.

ICELAND GULL (*Larus glaucoides*): Smaller, longer winged. First winter immatures all paler, sometimes mostly white. Much smaller, less massive bill. Like 1<sup>st</sup> winter *L. hyperboreus*, primaries are translucent near tips.

THAYER'S GULL (*Larus thayeri*): Smaller, less massive bill. Upper primaries normally darker than mantle, some individuals with dark brown tips. and there is usually a brown, sub-terminal tail band. Typically overall darker.

PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES: Other *L. glaucous*.

GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL: Seen about seven 1<sup>st</sup> winter immatures in Colorado plus one sub-adult in Colorado. Seen many hundreds in Alaska - Pitkin Co., Ariz., during A. W. W. Also seen off California and Washington in various ages and plumages.

GLAUCOUS GULL: Seen one or two during most winters in Colorado - adults and immatures. Also occasionally along northeastern coast from Newfoundland to Long Island, N.Y. Also off Washington coast to occasionally California.

ICELAND GULL: Seen only Atlantic Coast - Massachusetts to Long Island, N.Y.

THAYER'S GULL: Seen regularly each winter in eastern Colorado - mostly 1<sup>st</sup> winter immatures - a few adults. Also seen off California, Washington & British Columbia.

BOOKS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND ADVICE CONSULTED THAT INFLUENCED THIS REPORT:

None required.

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

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