

Rec'd 1/10/02 @

ACCEPTED

Glaucous-winged Gull (GWGU) *Larus glaucescens*

March 7, 2001 (RBA tape reported gull seen through 3/12)

(1) 1st basic sex ?

Location: Chatfield St. Park, nw corner of reservoir
Jefferson County, Littleton 5300' elev.

Observed from 1105 - 1140 and 1345-1347.

Other observers: Joey Kellner, Andrew Spencer (3/8 early a.m.)

Light conditions: full sun, wind 4 mph; 47 deg., views from all angles to sun.

Equip: Swarovski 8x56 bino; Kowa TSN 4, 20-60 zoom scope.

Distance: at 40' overhead to 150-200 yds.

no photo

Habitat: large, dammed reservoir, almost total ice cover except for small open area in NW corner near picnic shelters. Many Herring Gulls (HEGU) and Ring-billed Gulls (RBGU) of all ages scattered across ice, some near GWGU.

Behavior: Originally seen standing on ice and walking with large dark object (crayfish?) in bill. Flew directly overhead and to west end of parking lot and back, then out-of-sight to far NE corner of reservoir. When gull didn't return, I walked the trail along top of dam to look for it. Saw GWGU again, flying below me along face of dam with HEGU.

Direct flight - medium deep, strong deliberate strokes on broad wings; strokes slower than nearby RBGU, and very much like that of HEGU flying with it in p.m.

Description: placed age at 1st basic because of brownish mantle.

Body - large, bulky; much larger than nearby RBGU. Drew my attention because of large size and very uniform coloration of uppers.

Head: large, white with light brown smudging on face, crown and nape; sloped forehead.Bill: stout, black color; no obvious gonydeal angle.Eyes: darkUppers: mantle, scapulars, wing coverts, tertials, primaries all uniform light brownish gray color, mottled with white; no pattern noted in tertials.Wings: in flight, showed faint, paler inner primaries, much less contrasty than "window" on HEGU. Secondaries light brown. Flight feathers translucent from below when back-lit by sun, with only slight "shadowing" on outer primaries, no black or dark brown. Short primary projection beyond tail.Tail: light gray; mottled uppertail coverts and rump same shade as uppers.Underparts: Uniform mottled light brown, breast through undertail coverts.

-wing linings and axillaries light mottled brown.

-flight feathers white/translucent from below.

Legs: pink, long

continued-

Glaucous-winged Gull continued. 3/7/01

Similar species:

Herring Gull, 1st basic - similar size, but by late winter often has bicolored bill; much darker overall coloration with distinct inner primary "window" in flight, blackish outer primaries/coverts, secondaries and tail.

Glaucous Gull, 1st basic - similar size, but bill always bicolored in young gulls. Near white/white flight feathers above and below; paler overall body plumage; very large bill and head.

Thayer's Gull, 1st basic - somewhat smaller in size. Primaries and tertials darker than rest of uppers, shows inner primary window in flight.
- darker secondaries and tail; shows alternate light/dark pattern on flight feathers (dark outer web, light inner web); secondary coverts have more checker-like pattern; head and bill less bulky.

Iceland Gull, 1st basic - smaller in size, more petite build; head smaller, rounder. Longer primary projection beyond tail; tertials more patterned than gull I saw. Generally more contrast between inner primaries and secondaries.

Prev. experience: have seen all of the above species in past 10 years in Colo. and out-of-state.

Report written from notes made during and immed. after sighting.

Date: March 8, 2001

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