

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Rec'd 11/08/01 (2)

Species: Least Tern

Number: 1 adult

Location: Strauss Cabin L., Fort Collins, Larimer Co., Colorado

Habitat: small lake

Date: 25 June 2001

Time: 7:00-7:10 p.m.

Observer: Stephen J. Dinsmore 612 ½ West Magnolia St. Fort Collins, CO 80521

Others who saw bird(s): n. ob.

Description of bird(s): I was scanning the north shoreline of the lake when I spotted a tiny tern that I recognized as an adult Least Tern. The combination of bill shape, color pattern, short legs, and long-winged appearance identified the bird as a tern. The bird was roughly the same length as a nearby Killdeer, although it was shorter-legged and smaller-bodied. The bill was approximately the same length as the head, pointed at the tip, and entirely yellow. The short legs were also yellow. The head pattern was distinctive with a black cap (including the area around the eye) and a white forehead. The mantle was pale gray and contrasted with the white underparts. The folded wings were also pale gray (same color as the mantle), except that at least the outer primary was noticeably darker. I did not see the bird in flight. On the basis of plumage, I aged the bird as an alternate adult Least Tern.

Similar species and how eliminated: The combination of small size, bill and leg color, and head pattern eliminates all other terns.

Previous experience with species: Very familiar with Least Terns from Great Plains, Midwest, and East Coast.

Viewing conditions and equipment: Viewing conditions were excellent with clear skies and the sun behind me. Estimated viewing distance was 75 m. I used 10x42 binoculars and a 20-60x spotting scope.

References consulted: none

How long before field notes written? none written

How long before this form completed? written 28 June 2001