

1999-171

Rec'd 5/99 wpl

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS SIGHT RECORD FORM

Results: ACCEPT 7-0

Species: Iceland Gull (Common Name) Larus glaucoides (Scientific Name)

Date(s) of occurrence: January 9 & 10, 1999.

Number of birds seen: one.

Sex: unknown.

Plumage: first basic (winter) immature.

Exact location: Valco Ponds #1, along Highway 96, east of Pueblo Reservoir, Colorado.

County: Pueblo.

Nearest town: Pueblo.

Length of Observation: 15 minutes on 1/9 and about 30 minutes on 1/10.

Time(s) of Observation: 815am to 830am on 1/9 about 800am to 830am on 1/10, also briefly at 1030am.

Other observers who saw the bird with you: On 1/9, Ric Olson, Dave Quesenberry, Sherry Chapman, Todd Dilley, Justin Rink (Illinois), and John Vanderpoel. On 1/10, Mark Janos, Peter Gent, Van Truan, Bob Dickson, David Silverman, Dave Johnson, Lindsay Lilly Jr., Jim & Rosie Watts, Bill, John, Virginia Maynard, Bob Goycoolea, BB Hahn, Sherry Chapman, Dick Schottler, Joe Roller, Warren Finch, Bob Spencer, Karleen Schofield, Toni Brevillier, Cindy Lippincott, Tina Jones, Ira Sanders, Duane Nelson, among others.

Other observers who independently saw the bird(s): Tony Leukering, Peter Gaede, and Sue Bonfield saw the bird on 1/9, in the middle of the day at the Pueblo Landfill. Mark Janos, saw it alone later in the afternoon of 1/9 at the 3rd Valco Pond.

Light conditions [quality; direction relative to bird(s) position]: Sunny, excellent.

Optical equipment used: 10x40 B&L Binoculars. Lots of different scopes, including a Questar, Kowa TSN-4, and my Swift Zoom scope.

Distance from bird (estimated unless otherwise noted): About 50 yards.

Was the bird photographed: yes. If so, have you submitted photos? no.

Who took the photographs? Tony Leukering. Also Todd Dilley, provided video of the bird.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: The bird was sitting on the ice at Valco Ponds #1, both mornings. It was with lots of other gulls, like Ring-billed, Herring, and Thayer's Gulls. Valco Ponds are small ponds near the Arkansas River, east of Pueblo Reservoir dam.

Describe the bird's behavior (flying; feeding; habits; behaviors used in identifying the species or in supporting the identification): Ric Olson first spotted the bird. We all got on the bird, and knew it seemed strange. I saw the bird sitting mostly, though also in flight two times. I saw all of the bird very well.

Describe the bird in detail: This is the most important part of this report. Include overall size and shape, and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings, and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the (bird(s)). Describe other details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, etc. That were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted: you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches, or copy of field notes):

The size was about three inches smaller than the near by Herring Gulls. The size was about 22 inches. The shape was of a gull. The bird was a gull because it was with lots other gulls, its shape was of a gull, and the size was of a gull. The colors pattern was of a gull. The bird was all evenly light brown, with whiter wing tips. The head was light brown. The throat was light brown. The undersides were light brown. The nape was light brown. The back was light brown. The wings were light brown with white wing tips that went four primaries past the end of the tail. The tail was light brown. I identified the gull as a Iceland Gull, because of its light brown overall appearance, with its whiter wing tips, that went four primaries past the end of the tail, by the dark small bill with a pink base, and by its small size. The color of the bill was black, with pink on the base. The bill was small. The legs and feet were pink. The eyes were dark. The shape of the head was round. In flight, the bird was all very light, with wing tips. There was no darker color anywhere on the bird.

Describe the bird's song and calls if heard: none heard.

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them (first basic immatures only):

Thayer's Gull: This species has darker wing tips, not white like the bird I saw.

Glaucous Gull: This species is much bigger, and has a two toned bill in this plumage.

Glaucous-winged Gull: This species is much bigger, and has a much heavier all black bill. Also, the wing tips would be the small color as the rest of the bird.

Slaty-backed Gull: This species is bigger, and has a much heavier black bill. The wing tips would not be white.

Other gulls: All the other gulls are not light brown at any plumage, so they can all be eliminated.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

Iceland Gull: None.

Thayer's Gull: I have seen a few most winters in Pueblo, CO since about 1990.

Glaucous Gull: I have seen a few in Colorado, over the years and one in California in Dec. 1998.

Glaucous-winged Gull: I have seen a few in Colorado, and several in s. California, including some in Dec. 1998.

Slaty-backed Gull: I have not seen this species.

List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how this influenced you identification (during and after observation): Grant's Gull book was looked at during the first observation.

This report was made from notes taken during , or after observation, or later from memory .

Reporting observer: Brandon K. Percival

Signature: Brandon K. Percival

Address: 835 Harmony Drive
Pueblo West, CO 81007-2632
(719)-547-3722 and (e-mail): flammowl@juno.com

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD



UNUSUAL RECORD

*Red 1/99 wpl*

Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: ICELAND GULL | LARUS GLAUCOIDES
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): SUNDAY JANUARY 10, 1999Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: UNKNOWN Plumage: FIRST WINTERLocality: VALCO POND # 1 Elevation: 4300'?Nearest town: PUEBLO County: PUEBLOTime(s) observed: 8:30 - 9:00 am and 10:20 - 10:30 amDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 40 MINUTES TOTAL

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

MARIC JAWOS, BRANDON PERCIVAL AND MANY OTHERS.

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)

TONY LEUKERING AND JOHN VAN DER POEL.

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

FIRST 10 MINS IN SHADE, REMAINING 30 MINS WITH BRIGHT SUN BEHIND ME.Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): 20-BOX TELESCOPEDistance, and how measured: 100 YDS, ESTIMATED

If photographed, type of equipment and film: _____

Who else photographed the bird? TONY LEUKERING

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

I SAW THE BIRD FIRST SITTING AND THEN STANDING ON THE ICE.IT STRETCHED ITS WINGS, WALKED AROUND AND THEN CIRCLED THE POND BEFORE FLYING AWAY.

Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern. Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observe in the field:

THE BIRD WAS A MIDDLE-SIZED GULL. IT WAS CONSIDERABLY LARGER THAN THE RING-BILLED GULLS IT WAS WITH. IT WAS NOT AS LARGE AS A HERRING GULL. THE BIRD WAS MOSTLY A COMBINATION OF LIGHT-TAN AND OFF-WHITE IN A CHECKERED PATTERN. HOWEVER, THE PLUMAGE WAS LIGHTER TOWARDS THE END OF THE WINGS AND TOWARDS THE TIPS OF THE PRIMARIES. THUS, THE PRIMARY

Description (continued):

TIPS WERE THE LIGHTEST PART OF THE STANDING BIRD. THOSE TIPS ALSO STRETCHED WAY PAST THE TAIL - WITH 4 TIPS PAST THE TAIL. THE TAIL WAS QUITE UNIFORMLY LIGHTERED, AND DID NOT HAVE ANY BANDS. THE HEAD WAS QUITE SMALL AND ROUND, WITH A LARGE, DARK EYE. THE BILL WAS QUITE SMALL BOTH IN LENGTH AND DEPTH. THE OUTER 2/3 OF THE BILL WAS DARK, (NOT QUITE BLACK), BUT THE REMAINING 1/3 HAD FLESH-COLORED MARKINGS. EVEN HERE HOWEVER, THE CULMEN AND LOWER RIDGE WERE DARK. THE BIRD SEEMED TO HAVE QUITE SHORT LEGS, WHICH WERE PINKISH.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

NONE GIVEN

WHEN THE BIRD FLEW, THE WINGS WERE UNIFORMLY LIGHT UNDERNEATH. THE PRIMARY TIPS APPEARED ALMOST TRANSLUCENT WHEN THE MORNING SUN SHONE THROUGH THEM.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

ON THE ICE ON VALLO POND #1.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

THAYER'S GULL - OVERALL LIGHTER COLORING THAN 1ST, 2ND WINTER, ESPECIALLY IN THE PRIMARY TIPS AND TAIL, WHICH ARE USUALLY THE DARKEST FEATHERS ON THAYER'S. GLAUCOUS GULL - MUCH SMALLER AND MUCH SMALLER BILL THAN THE BICOLORED BILL ON GLAUCOUS. HERRING GULL - SOMEWHAT SMALLER AND MUCH LIGHTER OVERALL PLUMAGE.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

I HAVE NOT SEEN FIRST WINTER ICELAND GULL BEFORE, ONLY ADULTS IN 1976. REGULAR, BUT NOT EXTENSIVE, EXPERIENCE WITH THAYER'S GULLS IN COLORADO.

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

- a) at time of observation: BIRDING, OCTOBER 1991 ISSUE, THIS BIRD IS VERY, VERY LIKE THE BIRD SHOWN IN FIGURE 4.
- b) after observation: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC GUIDE, P.J. CRAWT'S GULL BOOK

This report was written from reports made during _____, after observation from memory _____
Date and time report was written: JANUARY 13, 1999 AT 9pm.

Reporting observer: PETER R. GENT Signature: Peter R. Gent

Address: 55 S. 35th St, BOULDER, CO 80303.

All reports will be maintained permanently at the address below:
Return to: CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS
DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
CITY PARK
DENVER, CO 80205

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

CFO-ORC FILE # 1999-171

NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD

Species: Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucoides kumleini*)

*Rcd 3/99 wpl
(3 slides/2ea)*

Date: 9 January 1999 **Number seen:** one **Sex:** ? **Plumage:** Basic I

Locality: Valco Ponds SWA/Pueblo landfill **Elevation:** about 5000'

Nearest town: Pueblo **County:** Pueblo

Time observed: about 08:30 - 08:31; 10:10 - 12:10 MST

Duration of observation: off and on during that time period for a total of about 75 minutes

Description: Sue Bonfield and Peter Gaede and I were just starting a day of birding by looking over the gulls at Valco Ponds from Thatcher Rd. We found a potential Basic I Thayer's Gull and were waiting to get a better look at it, when it picked up and started flying around. We quickly noticed that it was actually a Herring Gull, but shortly thereafter, I saw another, paler bird flying and catching up with the original bird. It had very translucent white remiges. I said, "Here's a Thayer's Gull." I wondered why it had such incredibly pale remiges, but the light was coming through pretty strongly and I figured that the strong light was making the dark primary tips disappear. However, I also wondered why the bird wasn't an Iceland Gull, though, after the fiasco with the odd bird in Denver the year before, I didn't voice that thought, as the bird flew out of sight to the south. We then left Valco Ponds, heading for the South Marina at Pueblo Reservoir and, when there wasn't much of interest there, up to the North Marina to look for the Yellow-billed Loon and the Great Black-backed Gull. While traveling toward the North Marina, we ran into two carloads of birders, including John Vanderpoel, who informed us that they had seen a Basic I Iceland Gull at Valco that morning. I knew immediately that the bird we had seen was the same bird. After looking at the birds at the North Marina, we decided to go look for the Iceland Gull by first trying to get in to the Pueblo landfill. We went there and were successful at gaining entrance. After finding no gulls there, we talked to a couple of the employees that said that there usually were 100s of gulls present. Just as we were leaving, we saw a few gulls coming in to the landfill, so decided to wait to see if the Iceland would show up. After about 15 more minutes, Peter and I saw the bird flying around in front of us. We watched the bird for much of the two hours we were at the landfill, and I photographed it extensively.

The bird was an obvious four-year gull in Basic I plumage (much larger than Ring-billed Gulls (RBGU), no gray on the mantle, dark bill) that was noticeably paler than all Basic I-plumaged birds in the vicinity. The pale, grayish-brown head was small and fairly rounded, much more so than nearby Herring Gulls (HERG). Compared to that of the HERGs, the bill was shorter and thinner, and, at distance, appeared all dark. At close range, I could see that the distal half of the bill was black and the proximal half was pale with a dark suffusion throughout the pale (except for the very base of the mandible, which was pinkish with no dark suffusion). The eyes were dark.

The mantle, upper wing coverts, and underparts (except for the whitish chin) were all the same pale grayish-brown. Individual feathers on the mantle and underparts were white-based, but with wide, grayish-brown tips, thus creating an overall mottled look. The tertials were mottled and checkered, with no dark-brown centers. The wings were long, with three primaries extending well beyond the tail tip. The tertials and primaries were roughly the same color and tone as the rest of the plumage. The primaries had very wide, white fringes; much wider than those shown by Thayer's Gulls (THGU) of the same age. The legs were bubble-gum pink; pinker than those of nearby HERG. The tail was about the same color tone as the rest of the plumage, being whitish with gray-brown, variable-width/color marbling and banding. The undertail coverts were strongly barred dark brown and white, with these dark bars being the darkest coloration in the plumage.

In flight, the remiges were all very pale, showing translucent from underneath as the light came through them. I could discern no dark tips to the primaries and, on the upperside, the outer webs contrasted only slightly darker than the inner webs. There was no secondary bar, though, on the flying bird, a faint one was noticeable when looking at the secondaries edge on. The wing linings were mottled with the same color tone as the rest of the plumage.

Similar species eliminated: THGU is the only real confusion species, though albinistic or leucistic birds should be considered. Aberrantly-pale HERG can be eliminated by size, structure, bill size and shape, and overall plumage pattern - leucisitic HERG would show darker primaries, tertials, and rectrices and albinistic ones would be white or with patches of white, which the bird in question did not show. Iceland Gull (ICGU) can be difficult to separate from THGU, but this bird was not difficult. Though its plumage was of the dark end of the ICGU color spectrum, thus overlapping with that of THGU, no other feature was THGU-like: head and bill size and shape, tertial pattern, primary and secondary pattern, and tail pattern. Glaucous Gull is eliminated on size, structure, and bill size and pattern. I can not definitively rule out nominate Iceland Gull (*L.g. glaucoides*), though wing length and plumage pattern are suggestive of *kumleini*.

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 >30 ICGUs, >40 THGUs, and uncountable bazillions of HERGs. No other species is really similar.

Light conditions: sun bright and in various juxtapositions with bird, but mostly high (for the winter) in the sky

Optical equipment used: Kowa 30x and Zeiss 7x42

Distance, and how estimated: estimated closest distance at 8-10 meters

Other observers who saw the bird with you: Sue Bonfield, Peter Gaede

Other observers who saw the bird independently: Ric Olson, Brandon Percival, Dave Quesenberry, John Vanderpoel, and many others

If photographed, type of equipment and film: Canon rig with 420 mm lens setup and Ektachrome Lumiere 100 film, pushed to 200 ISO

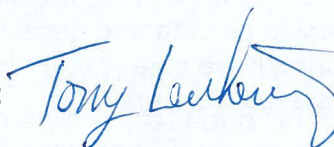
List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: none

b) after observation: none

Reporting observer: Tony Leukering

Signature:



Address: Colorado Bird Observatory, 13401 Piccadilly Road, Brighton, CO 80601

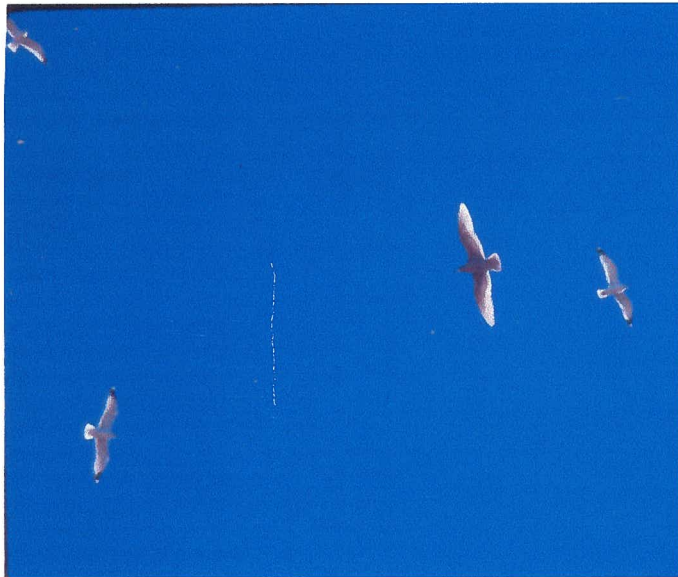
Date report was written: 28 February 1999 from notes (written at the time of sighting and later that evening) and from reviewing my photographs of the bird



ICELAND GULL
PUEBLO, CO
9 JAN 99
TONY LEKERING

1999-171

(over)



1999-171



ICELAND GULL
PUEBLO, CO

9 JAN 1999

TONY LEUKERING

1999-171