

DOCUMENTATION FORM

ACCEPT 7-0

Recd 1/21/00 upl

Species: Little Gull

Number: 1 juvenile

Location: Union Reservoir, Weld County, Colorado

Habitat: large lake

Date: 5 October 1999

Time: 9:02-10:09 a.m.

Observer: Stephen J. Dinsmore 612 1/2 West Magnolia St. Fort Collins, CO 80521

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

Description of bird(s): I was scanning the flock of Franklin's Gulls along the northwest shore of Union Reservoir when I spotted a juvenile Little Gull resting on the water close to shore. The bird was distinctive because of its small size; I estimated it was half the size of a Franklin's Gull. The bill was black, thin, and very short (less than the length of the head). The eye was dark. The crown was black and there was a small black spot behind the eye. The black of the crown extended down the back of the neck, broadening into a black half collar. The mantle and upperwings were black with prominent white edges to many of the feathers, giving the bird a scaly look. The throat, breast, and underparts were white. In flight, the bold black "W" was visible on the upperwing. I also noted that the tail was white with narrow black tips to the rectrices, and that the tail was not wedge-shaped. The bird only flew once, so I had little opportunity to study the wing and tail patterns closer. I did not note the leg color. On the basis of the above description, I concluded that the bird was a Little Gull in juvenal plumage. I took several photos of the bird.

Similar species and how eliminated: The combination of small size, dark cap, and upperwing pattern eliminates other small larids, especially Ross's and Bonaparte's Gulls.

Previous experience with species: I have seen many Little Gulls along the Atlantic Coast and several in interior states such as Iowa and Nebraska.

Viewing conditions and equipment: Viewing conditions were excellent with clear skies. Estimated viewing distance was 25m. 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 11 October 1999