

Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

(This is a two-page report. Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.)

7-0 (A)

Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

Rec'd 10/10/00 wpl

CFO-RC FILE X:

RESULTS:

Species:(Common Name) Little Gull

(Scientific Name) *Larus minutus*

Date(s) of occurrence: September 25, 2000

Number of birds seen: 1

Sex:

Plumage: juvenile

Exact location: Big Johnson Reservoir

County: El Paso

Nearest town: Colorado Springs

Elevation: approx 5900 feet

Length of observation: 1 hour

Time(s) of observation: 11:30 to 12:30pm

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Walt Wilson

Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s): Mark Janos, Richard Stevens

Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position: Very good. Full sun overhead.

Optical equipment used: Swarovski 10x42 SLC; Leica televid-77 telescope

Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): 25 yards at times

Was bird(s) photographed? No

If so, have you submitted photos?

Who took the photographs?

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: lakeshore and in the lake

Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the Species or in supporting the identification): the little gull both fed from the shoreline and well as flew around the lake.

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the 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 important 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 field notes): the bird exactly matched the juvenile plumage found described in PJ Grant 2nd edition.

Describe bird's call or song:

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them:


What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? I have seen one other little gull one year previous

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation): Gulls: A guide to identification - PJ Grant; 2nd edition

This report is from notes made during or after xX observation or later from memory XX

Date of written report: September 29, 2000

Reporting observer: Jeff J Jones

Signature: 

Reporting Observer's Address: 2679 Sunnywood Ave

City: Woodland Park

State: CO

Zip: 80863

Send report to:
Colorado Birds Record Committee
c/o Bill Lisowsky
2919 Silverplume Dr.
Ft. Collins, Co. 80526

Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

(This is a two-page report. Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.)

Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

Red 2/5/01 apl

CFO-RC FILE X:

RESULTS:

Species: (Common Name): LITTLE GULL

(Scientific Name) *Larus minutus*

Date(s) of occurrence: 25 September 2000

Number of birds seen: One

Sex: Unknown

Plumage: Juvenal

Exact Location: Big Johnson Reservoir

County: El Paso County

Nearest town: Security

Elevation: 5810 msl

Length of observation: Roughly 25 minutes

Time(s) of observation: Approximately 5:15 PM MDST

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: David Elwonger

Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s):

Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position: Setting sun, facing northeast with sun to back

Optical equipment used: 8 x 40 Binoculars, 32x Spotting Scope

Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): Varied between 50 and 150 yards

Was bird(s) photographed? Yes (video)

If so, have you submitted photos? No, distance too great. Poor photograph

Who took the photographs? Myself

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: Open water lake

Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the Species or in supporting the identification): Flying around and occasionally landing on the water. Foraging with Franklin's Gulls.

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the 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 important 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 field notes):

Soon after arriving to Big Johnson Reservoir, I located the previously reported juvenile Little Gull flying among many Franklin's Gulls; two juvenile Sabine's Gulls were also present on the lake during the observation. The bird was noticed due to its' small size (similar to a tern, roughly only 3/4ths the size of nearby Franklin's and approximately 4/5ths the size of Sabine's Gulls) and quick, butterfly-like (dainty) flight as it foraged over the water. During the course of the roughly 25 minute observation period, the bird would occasionally land on the water but would then pick up and begin flying around relatively low over the water. The following discussion regards those traits observed in the field.

Overall Size and Shape: Very small for a gull, being roughly the same size (in body) as nearby Forster's Terns (except for the long tail).

Head: roundish crown mostly white except for the presence of a blackish/brown ear spot located behind the eye and a blackish/brown crown. The dark from the crown extended posteriorly through a thin portion of the nape. The eye was dark. The bill was very small, short, straight, and pencil-shaped with no thickening apparent.

Underparts: Mostly white except for some dark brown leading from the mantle onto the upper sides of the breast.

Mantle and Wings: When swimming, the upperparts were mostly a dark-brownish/black mottled with grays with white fringing to the feathers. In flight, a dark anterior facing "M" shape was apparent that extended across the wings and back. This shape was created by dark outer primaries, primary coverts and alula and secondary coverts; each s "V" shape on the side of each wing were partially joined by darkish brown, white-fringed feathers on the back and uppertail coverts. A thin bar was present across the secondaries. The remaining coloration of the wings was a pale gray except for a thin white trailing edge to the inner primaries and the entire secondaries. From beneath, the wings appeared wholly white except for dark tips to the outer primaries. Overall, the wings appeared short (for the body size) and somewhat rounded (though not greatly rounded as in an adult).

Uppertail Coverts and Tail: Uppertail coverts white. The short, squared-off tail was mostly white with a narrow black subterminal band.

Legs: Pale flesh

Describe bird's call or song: None heard

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: All small terns eliminated due to their relatively long bills, long pointed wings, long forked tail, and disparate flight pattern.

Other gulls that demand critique would be Bonaparte's, Franklin's, Black-headed, Sabine's, and Black-legged Kittiwake. Discussion on differences between each of these species is presented below.

Bonaparte's Gull: First winter Bonaparte's (by late September, all juvenile Bonaparte's should be in First-basic plumage) are slightly larger, have a broken "M" due to a mostly white alula and primary coverts, would have a completely dark trailing edge to all of the primaries and secondaries, would show less black in the wingtips (and more white), have an entirely gray back, and would lack a dark crown.

Franklin's Gull: In comparison to nearby first-winter Franklin's Gulls, the Franklin's were considerably larger in overall size and showed no semblance of an "M" shape to the upper wings. The upper wings were mostly dark gray with dark primary tips. The head of Franklin's contained a broken dark hood that was accentuated from the eyes rearward.

Black-headed Gull: First-basic Black-headed is a much larger gull with a broken occluded "M" shape due to white in the leading edge of the wing hand. The primary/secondary junction is darker. Instead of a black crown, young Black-headed Gulls have a parallel set of dark area on the head; one is a dark ear spot and the other is a dark band from the crown to the eye. The mantle of Black-headed is a light gray overall.

Sabine's Gull: In direct comparison, the juvenile Sabine's Gulls appeared slightly larger, had mostly a light brownish head, neck, back, and inner wings. A large black wedge to the arm of the wing, and a contrasting white wing triangle separating the black wedge and brown inner wings.

Black-legged Kittiwake: Kittiwakes are a much bird, being approximately 1.5 times the size of a Little Gull. First-winter Kittiwakes also show a large "M" shape to the wings but the mantle is entirely gray, there is an extensive white triangle in the primaries and secondaries bordered by gray and the black of the "M", and the neck has a wide half-collar on the dorsal side.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? Have observed numerous other Little Gulls (though not in juvenal plumage) on the Lake Michigan shoreline of Wisconsin.

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation):

This report is from notes made during or after XX observation or later from memory

Date of written report: 12/13/00

Reporting observer: Larry Semo

Signature:



Reporting Observer's Address: 9054 Dover Street

City: Westminster

State: Colorado

Zip: 80021

Send report to:
Colorado Birds Record Committee
c/o Bill Lisowsky
2919 Silverplume Dr.
Ft. Collins, Co. 80526

COLORADO RARE BIRD REPORT

LITTLE GULLLarus minutus

Red 2/2/01 wpl

Location: Big Johnson Reservoir; near Widefield; El Paso County; ColoradoDate: September 26, 2000

I am not sure who found this bird, but I was not the discoverer. I "chased" it and found it on September 26th.

I saw this bird while birding alone. There was also a juvenile Sabine's Gull present. This was an incredibly beautiful, juvenile bird. I observed it in full sun, for about a half hour. It mainly stood perched on the edge of the reservoir, or floated out a few feet from shore. I also saw the bird in flight. I observed it with my KOWA TSN-4 20-60x scope from as close as 40 yards.

Description:

The bird was a juvenile. It was much smaller than the nearby Sabine's Gull. It was about 12" in length. The bird had a distinctive pattern to the plumage. In flight it had a dark back, and bold, multiple black markings in the wing forming an "M". It had a square, white tail with a black terminal band. In flight the wing was very short and roundly blunt at the end; not tapered and pointed. The trailing edge of the wing was white. Standing and at rest it had a black back with rows of scales caused by light fringed scapulars. The tertials were dark gray and the blackish, white-tipped primaries projected behind. The head was overall white with a black cap, black ear-spot, black smudge around the dark eye, and a black cape extending from the mantle onto the sides of the breast. The bill was noticeably tiny, slim and black. The legs and feet were pinkish.

Similar Species:

The small size and black cap eliminate many other gulls. Of the "black-headed" species, Laughing, Franklin's and Common Black-headed gulls are noticeably larger. The Bonaparte's Gull is really the primary I.D. challenger. However it is larger with a larger bill. It lacks the distinctive scalloped scapulars and the wing pattern is different. Bonaparte's has a dark trailing edge to the wing (inner primaries and secondaries).

Experience with Species:

I have seen thousands of Laughing and Franklin's Gulls. I have seen other Little Gulls, including one juvenile before.

This report is prepared from notes made following observation and from memory.

Mark Janos
10 Sedum Ct.
Pueblo, CO 81001



COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

CFO-ORC FILE # _____

NEW STATE RECORD _____ UNUSUAL RECORD _____

Red 12/21/00 mph**Species:** Little Gull (*Larus minutus*)**Date:** 27 September 2000 **Number seen:** one **Sex:** ? **Plumage:** Juvenal**Locality:** Big Johnson Reservoir **Elevation:** about 5550'**Nearest town:** Fountain **County:** El Paso**Time observed:** about 16:05 - 17:15 MDT**Duration of observation:** off and on for about 15 minutes during this period**Description:** This bird had been present for a few days when I chased it with others. We found it flying over the west side of the lake (from the east) and then I saw it much better while it was swimming in the middle of the reservoir (as viewed from the dam).

It was a very small gull, about the size of a Forster's Tern that was swimming (I know, terns don't swim - this one did) near it. It had started it's First Pre-Basic (a few replaced mantle feathers), but it was mostly in Juvenal. The bird had a white head with blackish crown, auricular spot, eye, and bill and a small black area in front of the eye. The dark crown was only just separated from the dark nape by a thin (sometimes, apparently non-existent) white strip. The back was brownish-gray and the scapulars and wing coverts were blackish with pale fringes. The secondaries were white, as were the inner primaries. The outer black outer primaries, wrist, and ulnar bar formed a broad, broken "M" on the mantle. The tertials were blackish with pale fringing. The rump and tail were white, with the latter having a broad, black terminal band. The underparts were white with brownish smudges on the upper sides ("shoulders"). Only pp 9-10 extended beyond the tail tip.

Similar species eliminated: All similar gulls have much longer wings, producing obviously longer wingtip projections beyond the tail tip. Ross's Gull is the most similar species, but is easily eliminated by tail shape, head pattern, bill size, and overall wing coloration (Ross's being much whiter). Bonaparte's Gull is eliminated by wing pattern, particularly by the "M" pattern and secondaries color and by the lack of a white primary patch. Black-headed Gull is ruled out by size and wing pattern. Black-legged Kittiwake is eliminated by head pattern and size; Sabine's Gull by wing pattern.

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 Little Gulls, >250,000 Bonaparte's Gulls, about eight Black-headed Gulls, 1000s of Black-legged Kittiwakes, >25 Sabine's Gulls, and no Ross's Gulls.**Light conditions:** sun bright and in various juxtapositions with bird**Optical equipment used:** Leica 32x

Distance, and how estimated: estimated closest distance at 120 meters

Other observers who saw the bird with you: John Vanderpoel and Peter Gent

Other observers who saw the bird independently: Larry Semo, Mark Janos, and others

If photographed, type of equipment and film: I did not photograph

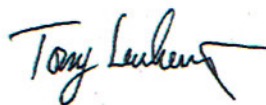
List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: none

b) after observation: none

Reporting observer: Tony Leukering

Signature:



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

Date report was written: 20 December 2000 from notes written at the time of the sighting with the bird in view