



April 2, 1978

## CFO RECORDS COMMITTEE:

After hearing the call of the Black-legged Kittiwake on the record, I have decided to submit our sighting of the kittiwake to the CFO Records Committee;

Species: Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)

Date: March 21, 1978. Time: About 11 a.m. for a few minutes.

Locality: On south end of Toten Reservoir, about one mile east of Cortez, CO.

Gene and Robbie Elliott observed the birds (the second one very briefly) with 7x50 binoculars and our bare eyes. It was a bright, sunny morning, when the first bird topped the dam and flew right overhead.

Details: As we were unloading the car, setting up the scope, preparing to look over the reservoir, a typical small gull flew over the dam toward us. The flight was slow, and easy, affording the opportunity to see that the bird was a small gull. Immediately, I looked at the wing pattern and knew that it was a gull that I had never before seen. The underside was completely white except for the black legs and the wing tips. The wing tips were totally black, no "windows" or other pattern, with a clear-cut line between the black and white. At a distance of about 30' from me, the bird dropped toward the ground, bounced up, giving a loud, raucous call, and then dropped again. At this point, I noticed that the bill was plain, light yellow, typical gull-shaped bill; the tail was completely white, and the mantle was gray. Gene said, "Look, there are two of them." Both birds then took off over a meadow and we were unable to follow them.

The tail seemed almost square, very slightly forked, and certainly not rounded. The call, three loud notes, given three times, seemed most un-gull-like; however, yesterday I was able to play the taped call of the black-legged kittiwake, and am convinced that our identification is authentic.

Sincerely,

Robbie M. Elliott