

DOCUMENTATION OF LATILONG PAPE BIRD SIGHTING
FOR

23-90-23

THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

Species: Mew Gull (Vernacular name) | Larus canus (Scientific name)

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students--those studying occurrences 50 years from now--must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

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We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Date (s): January 2 thru January 7, 1990 Time Bird Seen: 2 PM to 4:30 PM - January 2, 1990

Locality: Arkansas River near southwest corner of Runyon Lake
Pueblo, Pueblo County, Colorado - First record of Mew Gull in
Nearest town, county and state: Latilong #19 (Pueblo)

Optical equipment: 10x40 Zeiss Binoculars

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: FIRST winter

Light conditions: Good - bird  observer - January 2, 1990

Distance from bird, and how measured: 20 yards estimated

Describe the bird's overall behavior: This bird stayed with small flock of Ring-billed Gulls. It fed along rocky fords & shoals in river. It would chase ring-billed gulls which tried to approach it by lowering its head & squealing at them. It flew in broad circles with fairly rapid wing beat & returned to same spot in river. It has been with ring-billed gulls for about a week along the river & the west-end of Runyon Lake.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Shallow river & open lake warmed by power plant. Lake is stocked regularly with fish. Many cottonwoods near lake & river areas which this gull seems to prefer

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):

- Bob Dickson 55. Villa Drive Pueblo, Co 81001
- Dave Johnson 1920 Greenwood Pueblo, Co 81003
- Van Triuan 812 W. 14th Street Pueblo, Co 81003

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird.

Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough.) Describe what you actually saw in the field.

This bird was slightly smaller than ring-billed gulls. It caught my attention by its overall ashy gray-brown color excepting white head & predominately dark tail.

Head was mostly white with a few diffused light brown speckles towards back of head. Eye was large & dark. Beak was slim & short with pale yellowish base with large dark tip.

Nape was washed in grayish brown, back was solid gray, rump was white with light brown speckles. Throat was white, belly & flanks were washed with ashy gray brown.

Tail was fan-shaped, rounded, & appeared predominately dark brownish black.

Wings were long & pointed. Wings were mostly pale grayish brown except for upperwing's dark brownish black primaries & a dark bar thru secondaries along trailing edge of wing. Underwing was more uniform pale gray brown. Legs were grayish as were webbed feet.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

A high pitched squeal on one pitch - higher & more plaintive than cry of Ring-billed Gull.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Immature Ring-billed Gull has whiter underparts & white tail with dark terminal band. Underparts of Ring-bills may be speckled but lack uniform gray-brown wash of New Gull's underparts. Ring-billed Gulls are larger - beak & head proportionately larger in relation to body.

Immature Laughing Gull has solid black bill, & large bill. Tail is bicolored with white base & solid dark tip. Underwing primaries of Immature Laughing Gull are darker than New Gull's.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I have seen many New Gulls in Washington State where I lived for 7 years. I have seen Ring-billed Gulls & Laughing Gulls many times in several different states.

This report was written from notes made during ___ after ___ observation; from memory ___.

NAME (print): David Silverman

Mailing address: P.O. Box 362 Rye, CO 81069

Signature: David Silverman

Return Form To: CFO Records Committee
c/o Curator - Dept. of Zoological Collections
Denver Museum of Natural History
City Park
Denver, CO 80205

DOCUMENTATION OF LATILONG PAPER BIRD SIGHTING
FOR
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

23-90-23

Species: Mew Gull
(Vernacular name)

Larus canus "brachyrhynchus"
(Scientific name)

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If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students--those studying occurrences 50 years from now--must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Date (s): 3 Feb 1990 Time Bird Seen: ~14:00 to ~15:00

Locality: Pueblo City Park Lake
Pueblo, Colo
Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: KOWA TSN-4 20-60X; NIKON 9x30 binoc's.

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: _____ Plumage: 1st winter

Light conditions: Excellent, bright sun, fairly low in southern sky; all angles

Distance from bird, and how measured: As close as 50 feet (esti); 50-250 feet.

Describe the bird's overall behavior:
Perched on ice and flew around pond. Loosely associated with about 150 Ring-billed and 2 Herring Gulls. Occasionally floated on open water. Ate on a piece of fish laying on the ice. Often challenged the slightly larger Ring-billed Gulls for the fish -- and always chased to Ring-billed away.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:
Small pond in a city park with tame ducks & geese.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):
→ The bird was first found by Silverman at Runyan Lake.

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the critical marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough.) Describe what you actually saw in the field.

Med.-sized first winter white-headed gull. Slightly smaller, shorter-legged (shorter in perched height) and more elongate (or longer-tailed) than adjacent Ring-billed Gulls. Smaller & rounder-headed and with more slender & shorter bill than Ring-b. Gulls. Overall fairly uniform brownish, especially at a distance - appeared a smallish brown gull amongst the Ring-billeds. Undersides nearly white only on chin, throat & breast - otherwise belly & flanks heavily washed brown. Head & hind neck lighter than belly, being white and lightly speckled brown (but darker than Ring-billeds in similar plum). Dark crescent-shaped smudge in front of dark eye. Mantle med.-gray. Wing coverts evenly mottled - up close have round interior markings, fringed with white →  white round center. Tail → Under- & uppertail coverts heavily barred with brown. Tail all uniform dark brown (except for pale tips), all the way to barred coverts. In flight upper wing uniform brown.

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

Once gave a single high, quavering call.

→ darkest on primaries, forewing and secondaries; lightest on coverts. Underwing uniform light brown. Two-toned bill - pink base, dark tip.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Medium size rules out Herring / Calif / Glaucous, etc.. Lack of marked upperwing pattern & size rules out Kittiwake, Bonap, G. Black-headed Gull, Little Gulls. Laughing Gull has larger bill, 2-toned tail. Franklin's Gull has darkish head - 2-toned tail.

In similar (1st winter) plumage, Ring-billed Gull has 2-toned tail (white, banded black), larger bill; different shape & wing coverts with pointed interior markings → 

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I've seen many R-b. Gulls in all plumages. I've seen scores of New Gulls on the west coast in the 80's.

This report was written from notes made during X after observation; from memory .

NAME (print): MARK JANOS

Mailing address: 902 Colorado Ave La Junta, CO 81050

Signature: Mark Janos

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c/o Curator - Dept. of Zoological Collections
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