

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTINGS
FOR
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

Species: Mew Gull ; Larus canus
(Vernacular name) (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.

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.

Dates (s): 27, 28 Sept 1990 Time Bird Seen: ~9:00 am to ~10:00 am

Locality: Olive Marsh; Arkansas River
Pueblo, Colo.
Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Nikon 9x30 binoculars

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: -

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: - Plumage: juvenile, molting into 1st winter

Light conditions: Sunny; good light on Sept 27; Overcast on Sept 28.

Distance from bird, and how measured: Estimated as close as 75 yds.

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

Perched on gravel bar in Arkansas R. with ~50 Ring-billed Gulls and 2 Calif. Gulls. Flew in circles then flew away up river.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

River,

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

None

APPENDIX II Continued

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. *In comparison to Calif. Gull it was smaller; was about same size as Ring-billed Gull with slightly smaller bill. Bill was two-toned with pink base and black distal half. Flesh-colored legs. Overall very uniform plumage, colored plain dusty brown. Belly all dark. In flight is very uniform colored with dark tail, dusty brown rump and overall dark wings, with primaries slightly darker than rest of wing.*

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

Not heard.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

- Size (about size of Ring-b. Gull) with small bill eliminate all but:*
- 1.) Black-headed Gulls would have dark head or dark ear spot.*
 - 2.) Sabine's Gull / Kittiwake have black & white notched tails; other problems.*
 - 3.) Ring-billed Gull - Has mono-colored bill in juv. pl.; is lighter overall with white belly; has dark tail / light rump.*

Prior experience with this and similar species:

Although I've seen many Mew Gulls in Calif., and a 1st year Mew Gull this past winter in Pueblo, I've never seen a juv. mew bill

This report was written from (notes) made during after observation; from memory *(were very sparse).*

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Signature: Mark Janos

Return Form To:

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