

1998-58

ACCEPTED (7-0)

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - Rarity Report Form

Common Name: Black-headed Gull Scientific Name: *Larus ridibundus*

Number of Individuals: 1      Sex: unknown.      Age: 1st winter.

Locality: Colorado: Chatfield Reservoir, Jefferson and Douglas Counties:

Date(s) Seen: October 20, 1997.      Time: 7:30 am – 8:15 am.

Reporting Observer: Christopher L. Wood.

Other Observers: None.

Light Conditions: Mostly cloudy.

Optical Equipment: B&L "elite" 15x-60x spotting scope.

Distance to Bird: 40 – 100 meters.      Duration of Observation: 45 minutes

Habitat: Suburban Reservoir.

Behavior: Sitting in water for about thirty minutes, sleeping, preening and actively looking around. It then flew about 40 meters away from me, then past me, and I lost it as it headed toward Plum Creek delta. Its style of flight was similar to that of a Bonaparte's Gull.

Description:

Overall Size and Shape: Smaller than California Gulls (direct comparison) also larger than Bonaparte's Gull (one present at Chatfield at the same time, but no direct comparison). In flight, noticeably larger than three Common Terns (direct comparison).

Head: White with dark ear spot, dusky around eye.

Upperparts: Mantle and scapulars pale gray. Some pale gray extending onto sides of breast and the lower part of the hindneck.

Underparts: White

Wings: Warm-brown carpal-bar. Secondaries brown (perhaps slightly darker than carpal-bar) with white fringes, creating a dark subterminal secondary bar. Pale midwing panel. Outer greater primary coverts white, while inner ones dark. Inner primaries similar in color to secondaries, though lacking any white on tips. Conspicuous white wedge in outer wing, created by white outer greater primary coverts and upper part of outer primaries. Dark trailing edge to upper wing, becoming darkest in middle and outer primaries. Underside of primaries and secondaries dark grayish, most dark in middle primaries. Narrow translucent white leading edge to outer wing.

Tail: Rump white. Tail white with very dark brown (almost black) subterminal band.

Bare Parts: Bill fleshy-orange with black tip. Legs pale pink.

Vocalizations: None.

**Similar Species:** 1st winter Bonaparte's Gull has all black bill; less extensive dark trailing edge to wing; darker carpal bar and is smaller. 1st winter Little Gull is smaller, with darker carpal bar; all black bill; and lacks dark trailing edge to wing.

**Photographs?** No.

**References:** P.J.Grant's *Gulls: a guide to identification* (second edition).

**Description from:** xx Contemporaneous notes; xx Later notes;        Memory.

**Experience with Species:** I saw hundreds in June of 1990 in England. I have also seen thousands of Bonaparte's Gulls in all plumages in North American, especially during the last four years in Wisconsin.

**Are you Positive of the Identification?:** Yes.

**Signature:** Chris Ucc  
**Date:** 7/6/98