

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

22-89-16

Species: Parasitic Jaeger (Vernacular name) Stercorarius parasiticus (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.

Date (s): 14, 15 September 1989 Time Bird Seen: Various; a.m. & p.m. to For extended periods of 1/2 hr or more.
Locality: Hallbrook Res. (Rocky Ford S.W.A.)
Rocky Ford, Otero County CO
Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: Nikon 9x30 binoculars; KOWA 20-60x Scope

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: - Plumage: ad. breeding

Light conditions: Excellent; sun & no clouds. Various angles; also dusk.

Distance from bird, and how measured: As close as 100 yds (est.) also 500 yds, est.

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

Bird perched at water's edge rarely. Spent most of its time floating ^{quietly} on lake surface. Also preened, stretched wings & bathed. Turned head constantly, apparently watching for gulls flying in. When a gull was spotted, it would fly off rapidly to intercept. Flight was direct, with rapid falcon-like flapping. Flapping would stop & bird would approach gull low (2' off water) with fixed-wing glide. Then would swoop up & harass the gull with extremely acrobatic twists & turns. It picked on small Forster's tern, Ring-billed and Franklin's Gulls & barely larger California Gulls.

Open Plains Reservoir.

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

None

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.

Med. sized jaeger, a little smaller than Calif. Gulls. Brown above & white below w/ a distinct narrow brown breast band all the way across the breast. Brown cap extending as a diffuse grayish area down center of otherwise white nape. Forehead area, just behind bill, whitish. Bill med-sized, dark, not markedly stout or powerful. Wings narrow & falcon-like with a single white patch seen both above & below on wing that includes bases of most of primaries. Tail dark with two central tail feathers extending about 4" longer than rest of tail. These tail feathers were acutely pointed at ends.

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:

Pomarine Jaeger larger, & thicker based wing, more powerful, heavier-bodied with less direct falcon-like flight. Tail feathers blunt-ended.
Long-tailed Jaeger smaller, longer-tailed (usually) with 2-toned upper wing surface.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

I've seen all jaeger species during the 1980's on various east & west-coast pelagic trips. One Parasitic on Sept 6, 1984 at Jumbo Res.

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

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