

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD

UNUSUAL RECORD

1/1

Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: Least Tern
(Vernacular Name)Sterna antillarum
(Scientific Name)Date(s): 30 APRIL 1995Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: Unknown Plumage: BreedingLocality: Confluence Park Lat/long 15 Elevation: 5,100 4970 ftNearest town: DELTA County: DELTATime(s) observed: 7:15 - 7:45 and again at 12:00 - 12:10Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): Probably 3 different 10 minute intervals

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

Rich LeVad
2924 Ronda Lee Rd.
Grand Jct. CO 81503
303-242-3979

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

Bird North of observation point, overcast sky

Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): PENTAX 7x50 Binocular & BAUSCH & LOMB 45x60 -15 ScopeDistance, and how measured: 50 yds ESTIMATED, VERY CLOSE

If photographed, type of equipment and film:

Who else photographed the bird?

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

The weather was stormy, winds strong & gusty. The bird faced into the wind while on the sand when bothered by ducks, lifted off the sand and resettled a few times. While perched on a snag with gulls & other tern the bird sometimes preened its wings.

Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern. Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observed in the field:

The bird perched on a log with 1 Ring-billed Gull, 1 California Gull, and 1 FORESTER'S TERN. The bird tiny next to the Gulls and much SMALLER than the FORESTER'S TERN. The pointed, narrow bill, slender body shape and pointed wings & FORKED TAIL CLEARLY indicated a TERN species compared to the plump, rounded, big blunt-billed gulls nearby.

This TERN WAS SMALLER than (much) the FORESTER'S TERN. THE BILL WAS thin AND VERY

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Description (continued): yellow in color. A notable black tip could be seen on the end of the bill. THERE was a white cap in front of the bill or a small white area above the bill inside a black capped head. When the bird flushed the tips of the wings and the outside edge WERE dark to black. The back and wings a smooth consistent gray. The tail was forked.



Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

Confluence Park is a City Park in the town of DELTA. Converted SEWER ponds near the Gunnison River. This open water area catches many migrants. The bird perched on a very small sandbar and also on a half submerged snag in the pond.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species? A Forester's TERN is ~14-15 inches. LEAST TERN is ~9 inches. ONLY the winter plumaged black TERN would be similar in size. THE black TERN has a black bill, incomplete eye line & no black wedges on wings.

NO OTHER TERNS HAVE THE BRIGHT yellow bill this bird showed.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

Have never observed this species in Colorado. Have seen this species many times and at close range on beaches on Florida coasts.

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

- a) at time of observation: First I observed birds and then took note of as many characters as possible. Then consulted Field Guide to the Birds of North America.
- b) after observation: Refered to "Colorado Birds" R. Andrews & R. Ritter to determine status of bird & if report should be written.

This report was written from reports made during after observation from memory

Date and time report was written: 16:30 1 MAY 1995

Reporting observer: Kim M. POTTER Signature: Kim M. Potter

Address: 440 East 7th St.

Rifle, CO 81650

970-625-3713

Return to:

Bill Prather

C.F.O. Official Records Committee

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