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Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

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

Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

2-16 Dec 01

ACCEPTED

CFO-RC FILE X:

RESULTS:

Species:(Common Name) **Black-legged Kittiwake** (Scientific Name) *Rissa tridactyla*

Date(s) of occurrence: 12/2/01

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: 1st Winter

Exact location: Chatfield Reservoir, Viewed from near the end of the Marina Sand Spit looking towards the control tower on the dam.

County: Douglas Nearest town: Littleton Elevation: ~ 5400 feet

Length of observation: approx. About 15 minutes Time(s) of observation: 2:15. to 2:30 p.m.

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Jim Schmoker

Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s): None known at time report.

Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position: Light conditions were good. The sun was out and coming from behind our left shoulders as we viewed the bird..

Optical equipment used: Kowa 82mm fluorite scope w/32X W.A. eyepiece, Nikon Coolpix 995 digital camera through Kowa 66mm scope w/20X W.A. eyepiece..

Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): About 75-100 yards.

Was bird(s) photographed? yes If so, have you submitted photos? yes

Who took the photographs? Bill Schmoker

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: Artificial reservoir behind flood control dam.

Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the Species or in supporting the identification): The BLKI was actively swimming around with a loose group of about 6 Bonaparte's Gulls and a Herring Gull.

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size and shape and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird(s). Describe other important details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches or copy field notes):

I first noticed this bird as I was looking through a group of about 6 Bonaparte's Gulls swimming around about 75 yards off the Marina Sand Spit at Chatfield. What first struck me was that there was another gull with a spot behind the eye but that it was noticeably larger than the BOGUs. Closer inspection revealed a nearly black nape and a diagonal dark line running along the middle of the wing, which further separated the bird from its companion BOGUs. The black primaries, black medium-long bill, and slight vertical elongation of the eye spot completed the match with what Sibley calls a Juvenile/1st Winter Black-legged Kittiwake.

Describe bird's call or song: Not heard.

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: As mentioned above and seen in the photographs, size and the amount of black on the nape and center of the wing eliminated Bonaparte's Gull. A 1st winter Red-legged Kittiwake should have a more uniform, darker gray back and a lighter, thinner nape coloration. Other small gulls with eye-spots like a 1st winter Ross's or Sabine's Gull can be eliminated on the basis of size. A 1st winter Black-headed Gull should have darkness above the eye as well, along with some thin white lines in the primaries, as well as a lack of a dark nape.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? This is the second immature BLKI I've seen in Colorado. I've seen dozens of Bonaparte's Gulls this fall, including at least 15 that afternoon at Chatfield.

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation): While viewing the bird and later at home I consulted The Sibley Guide To Birds. Once home, I also consulted Seabirds of the World, by Jim Enticott and David Tipling, and the National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America, 3rd ed.

This report is from notes made during and after observation.

Date of written report: 12/03/01

Reporting observer: William P. Schmoker

Signature: 

Reporting Observer's Address: 2227 Canyon Blvd. #106

City: Boulder

State: CO

Zip: 80302

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Send report to:
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P.O. Box 157
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BLKI with BOGU Chatfield S.P. 12/2/01
Photo By Bill Schmoker

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BLKI at Chatfield S.P. 12/2/01
photo by Bill Schmoker

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BLKI at Chatfield S.P. 12/2/01
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BLKI with HERG at Chatfield S.P.
Photo by Bill Schmoker

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