

23-90-25

SPECIES: Lesser Black-backed GullLarus fuscus

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name)

DATE(S): Sat., Nov. 17, 1990 TIME OF OBSERVATION: 1:55<sup>±</sup> TO 2:30<sup>±</sup>EXACT LOCATION: Cherry Creek State Recreation Area, Sand Spit North-east of the Prairie Loop Parking LotNEAREST TOWN: Aurora COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THIS BIRD:

Bob Richter, Glenn HagemanOPTICAL EQUIPMENT: Bushnell Spacemaster 15x45 scope.WEATHER CONDITIONS: Sunny 65°F<sup>±</sup>BIRD/SUN ORIENTATION: Sun at observers' backDISTANCE FROM BIRD AND HOW MEASURED: 100 yds estimateNUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: 1 SEX: ? PLUMAGE: AdultBEHAVIOR AND DEMEANOR: Standing with large mixed species flock of gulls on sand spit. Standing, walking, and Preening 10-15 min. Then flew off away from observers. Returned later with small flock of gulls.OVERALL SIZE: Larger than California Gulls standing along side it. Did not appear to be as large as Herring Gulls.

HEAD &amp; NECK (forehead, crown, auricular &amp; malar regions, median line, etc.):

Head & neck white with gray-brown spotting. No outstanding lines or markings

EYES &amp; LORES (supercilium, eye-ring, eye-stripe, color, etc.):

Eye yellow with dark pupil.LOWER & UPPER MANDIBLES (color & shape): Bright yellow. Larger than thebill of California Gull. Long nostril. Long bright red spot on lower mandibleLEGS & FEET: Legs yellowUPPERPARTS (nape, back, rump, uppertail coverts, etc.): On Standing bird:nape white with gray-brown spots.

UNDERPARTS (chin, throat, belly, sides, flanks, crissum, etc.):

Underparts white



RETRICES (inner, middle & outer tail feathers; color, pattern, shape, etc.):

Tail white

VOCALIZATION: None

WINGS (color, length, shape, bars, coverts, etc.): Standing Bird: Exposed part of Primaries black with three white tips. A row of white feather tips above primaries (tertiaries). Two white crescents where scapulars meet along center of the back. The remainder of the folded wings dark gray.

~~VOCALIZATION (call/song, method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight):~~

This gray color, darker than the ring-billed or California gulls making the bird easy to locate while standing or flying with other gulls. In flight ~~the~~ the upper wings were dark gray with a white trailing edge, black wing tip with small white primary tips. Not sure whether there were mirror spots.

ELIMINATION OF SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

This bird was standing and walking with California & Ring-billed gulls under very good viewing conditions. The combination of the gull's overall size, coloration, bill size and color, leg color, and eye color, make me believe that my identification is correct.

PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

I have never seen this species before. I am familiar with adult Ring-billed gulls & California Gulls. I did not know what species this was until Bob Righter identified it.

BOOKS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND ADVICE CONSULTED THAT INFLUENCED THIS REPORT:

National Geographic Field Guide

THIS REPORT WRITTEN FROM NOTES MADE DURING ☒ AFTER ☐ OBSERVATION; ☐ FROM MEMORY

NAME: Randy Lentz SIGNATURE: Randy Lentz DATE: 11/18/90



23-90-25

SPECIES: Lesser Black Backed Gull | Larus fuscus  
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)

DATE(S): Nov 17, 1990 TIME OF OBSERVATION: 2:45 PM TO 3:15 PM

EXACT LOCATION: Prairie Loop Sandpit, Cherry Creek Res, CO

NEAREST TOWN: Greenwood Village COUNTY: Arapahoe

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THIS BIRD:  
Bob Richter  
Randy Lutz  
Glenn Hogenan

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: Zeiss 10x40, 20x scope

WEATHER CONDITIONS: partly cloudy, mild temp ~ 65

BIRD/SUN ORIENTATION: seen at our backs, great light on bird

DISTANCE FROM BIRD AND HOW MEASURED: est 100 yards on sandbar; ~ 125-150 on water later

NUMBER OF BIRDS SEEN: 1 SEX: - PLUMAGE: adult winter

BEHAVIOR AND DEMEANOR: standing on sand bar then flew 50 yds to the N and landed + floated on lake.  
Easily spotted among Ring Billed gulls + ducks by size.

HEAD & NECK (forehead, crown, auricular & malar regions, median line, etc.):  
head + neck white with light brown streaks.

EYES & LORES (supercilium, eye-ring, eye-stripe, color, etc.):  
yellow eyes.  
orbital ring not visible

LOWER & UPPER MANDIBLES (color & shape): large yellow bill (similar to nearby Cal Gull, perhaps a little larger).  
large red spot on lower mandible at gonyschal angle.

LEGS & FEET: yellow

UPPERPARTS (nape, back, rump, uppertail coverts, etc.):  
nape white w/ brown streaks. Back same dark gray as wings.  
Rump not well seen.

UNDERPARTS (chin, throat, belly, sides, flanks, crissum, etc.):  
white



RETRICES (inner, middle & outer tail feathers; color, pattern, shape, etc.):

all white tail square tail

No tail band.

WINGS (color, length, shape, bars, coverts, etc.):

dark gray, black tips & few white spots

Not black. Darker gray than Cal Gull standing next to it.

Wing long & extended beyond tail.

VOCALIZATION (call/song, method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight):

None

HABITAT: Lake & sandbar

ELIMINATION OF SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

Not Cal gull - eye yellow not dark like Cal Gull

nearby Cal gull had red & black spot on bill.

& had lighter gray back

& was slightly smaller

Not Greater BB runt - Not big enough, had yellow not pink feet

Not Slaty - Backer - leg color

Not Herring Gull - leg color, not big enough. Mantle color

Not Thayer's - leg color; wing back & wing color

Doubt yellow-tailed Gull - bill NOT thick enough; YF Gull mismatched head

PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILARLY APPEARING SPECIES:

saw 1st Co L-BB Gull in '76

saw similar bird 2/90 in Texas

BOOKS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND ADVICE CONSULTED THAT INFLUENCED THIS REPORT:

Nat Geog

Kaufman

PJ Grant

& sketch

THIS REPORT WRITTEN FROM NOTES MADE DURING ☒ AFTER ☐ OBSERVATION; ☐ FROM MEMORY

NAME: Joe Roller SIGNATURE: Joe Roller DATE: 11/17/90



23-90-25

2358 S. Fillmore  
Denver, Co. 80210  
Nov. 17, 1990

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Official Records Committee  
c/o Zoological Collections  
DMNH  
City Park  
Denver, Co. 80205

To Whomever Concerned:

At approximately 1:50 P.M. on Nov. 17, 1990, while viewing a flock of gulls on a mud spit from about 50-75 yards away on a hillside at Prairie Loop Drive, Cherry Creek Reservoir, Randy Lentz first spotted a gull that appeared different.

The gull was standing next to a Ringbill and a California Gull. The gull was approximately 15-20% larger than the California. With the sun being behind us, we were able to see that the gull was noticeably darker gray shaded than the California and significantly darker than the Ringbill. Although there wasn't a Franklin Gull present, I felt the contrast difference between this gull and a Franklin to the California and Ringbill would have been about the same. The white tertial tips and two white spots on the lower back or inside scapular region (?) were very noticeable against the dark gray back. The bill was yellow with a large red spot on distal portion of lower mandible. The nostril was elongated and quite noticeable, particularly when compared to the California. and on highpower of the Questar, one could actually see through the nostril. It was difficult to determine if there was a gonys angle. The lower edge of lower mandible appeared about the same as the California's. The head seemed average sized, being flat of crown and moderately "winter-streaked". The eye appeared whitish-yellow, dark pupiled. The legs were yellow. At approximately 2:10 P.M. the bird flew in a northwardly direction, and we had a quick glimpse of upper wing; what was immediately noticeable was a white trailing edge to upper wing. When it took off, it flew behind some trees. I thought I detected



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some white in upper outer wing section. Randy didn't. The bird returned at 2:35 P.M., where Joe Roller was also then able to see bird. All of the above seems quite suggestive of the Lesser Black-backed Gull in adult plumage. Participants: Bob Righter, Randy Lentz, Glenn Hageman, Joe Roller.

Submitted by:

Bob Righter