

☒ RARE OR UNUSUAL RECORD ☐ NEW STATE RECORD

accepted JG 6/30/74

Species: Laughing Gull  
(Vernacular Name)

Larus articularis  
(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): May 27, 1974

Time Bird Seen: 1:00 pm to 1:10 pm

Locality: Lake Henry

Nearest Town: Ordway

County: Crowley

Other observers who identified this bird:

JACK REDDALL NAME 4450 S. Altamont St. ADDRESS Englewood, Colo

TELEPHONE

Optical Equipment: 7x35 binoculars, 32x Bushnell scope

Light Conditions: sunny, clear no wind

Distance from Bird (how measured): estimated 100 to 300 yards

Number of Birds Seen: 2 Sex: unknown Plumage: adult

Overall Appearance and Size: medium sized black headed gull

Detailed Description (describe only what was actually observed in the field):

Bill (shape and color): gull shape, dark

Legs (shape and color): dark

Crown and Forehead: black head

Nape:

Face:

eye ring split

Throat:

Eye (color): dark

Breast and Sides: white

Belly and Flanks: white

Undertail Coverts: white

Back: white rump & tail - dark scapulars & backs of legs

Wings: dark grey mantle clear to tips darker white trailing edge

Underwings: whitish

Rump: white

Uppertail Coverts: white

Upper Side of Tail: white

Under Side of Tail: white

Shape of Tail: typical gull, fan shaped

Voice: not heard

Behavior: standing on shore typical gull soaring & flapping while flying

Habitat: fresh water lake - plains southeastern Colo

Prior Experience with this Species: I had seen numbers of them in Florida Dec 1972 and Gulf coast of Texas March 1973

How Were Similarly Appearing Species Eliminated? Franklin's Gull was eliminated because it has a white band separating black tips from the rest of the primaries. These were adult plumage birds with dark primaries no white in them at all and it was late May so apparently by spring migration was still in process. The adult head pattern was very distinct

This Report was Written From: Notes made during        after X observation; Memory       

Signed: David Griffiths Street Address: 17 Solar Drive

Date Prepared: July 14, 1974 Town and State Fruita, Colo

ZIP 81005

Return to: JACK REDDALL - 4450 South Altamont Street Englewood, Colorado 80120



Species: LAUGHING GULL

Larus atricilla

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): May 27, 1974

Time Bird Seen: 1:00 P.M. to 1:10 P.M. - MDT

Locality: Lake Henry

Nearest Town: Ordway

County: Crowley

Other observers who identified this bird:

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

David A. Griffiths

17 Solar Drive, Pueblo, Colorado 81003

561-2974

Optical Equipment: B/L 15X-60X Telescope; 10X50 Binoculars

Light Conditions: Bright and clear; no wind; light from behind observer.

Distance from Bird (how measured): 100 yards to 300 yards, estimated.

Number of Birds Seen: Two Sex: Unknown Plumage: Breeding adult

Overall Appearance and Size: Small gull; long-winged with square tail. Dark headed with comparatively darker mantle than that of nearby Franklin's Gulls. Primaries black without any describable white areas. White trailing edge to wings.

Detailed Description (describe only what was actually observed in the field):

Bill (shape and color): Small, typical gull-shaped; color not discernible; appeared dark.

Legs (shape and color): Dark, couldn't make out any color.

Crown and Forehead: Black

Eye (color): Dark

Nape: Black

Face: Black; white "eye-marks" throat: Black

Breast and Sides: White

Belly and Flanks: White

Undertail Coverts: White

Back: Dark gray mantle

Wings: Dark gray coverts and secondaries diffusing into blackish primaries; no white band

Underwings: whitish blending to gray. /// areas as in Franklin's. White trailing edge.

Rump: White

Uppertail Coverts: White

Upper Side of Tail: White

Under Side of Tail: Whitish

Shape of Tail: Square; not forked

Voice: Silent

Behavior: Observed briefly sitting on mud flats with Franklin's Gull; soon took off and began flying in circles gradually gaining considerable altitude, alternately flying and

Habitat: Fresh water lake on high plains; mud flats. /// gliding.

Prior Experience with this Species: Have seen hundreds daily in Texas; also seen every spring and summer on Long Island, New York where it is an uncommon summer visitor (non-breeder) over twenty year period; observed in good numbers along the North and South Carolina coasts as well as in Florida.

How Were Similarly Appearing Species Eliminated? Bonaparte's Gull is smaller with much lighter mantle and silver primaries; same for the slightly larger Black-headed Gull; Sabine's Gull has forked tail and striking patterns of black, white and gray triangles in wings; Little Gull extremely small with much lighter mantle. I have seen all the "black-headed gulls" in North America except for the Black-headed Gull (ridibundus). Franklin's Gull has lighter mantle and a broad band of white separating the black wing tips from the rest of the wing.

This Report was Written From: Note; made during X after X observation; Memory     

Signed: Jack Reddall

Street Address: 1450 South Alton Street

Date Prepared: May 30, 1974

Town and State Englewood, Colorado

ZIP 80110

Return to: JACK REDDALL - 1450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110

(USE REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET OR ADDITIONAL PAGES IF NECESSARY)



I have always been very dubious of Laughing Gull reports from inland states as this species to my experience seldom strays far from the sea coasts. However, there was no mistaking the dark wing coloration which was completely lacking in any white areas save the conspicuous white trailing edge. The fact that both birds flew almost directly over head gave us a good opportunity to closely examine the wing patterns. The odds of two possibly aberrant Franklin's Gulls finding the same reservoir on the same day seem astronomical, but it is always a possibility. However, due to my previous experience with this species over the years, I am 99% certain both birds were Laughing Gulls.