

Species: LAUGHING GULL

Larus atricilla

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): November 1, 1975

Time Bird Seen: About noon for to 15 minutes.

Locality: Union Reservoir

Nearest Town: Longmont

County: Weld

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME

Robert Andrews, Bruce Webb, Mike Moulton, Pete Moulton, Narca DeWoskin

TELEPHONE

Optical Equipment: 10X50 Bushnell Binoculars; 15X-60X Zoom Telescope

If photographed, type of equipment used:

Light Conditions: Bright, clear; sunlight directly upon birds.

Distance from bird (how measured): 50 feet up to 300 feet (as birds flew off); estimated.

Number of Birds Seen: Two Sex: Unknown Plumage: Non-breeding adult

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:

Birds observed separately. Seen flying and walking along sandy tract of shoreline.

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

These were two adults in non-breeding plumage. Slightly larger and longer-winged than Franklin's Gull (of which there were none present for direct comparison). Bill, dark. Eye, dark. Head, white except for a smokey gray area extending from top of crown and around the eye area to over and around nape. Forehead, white. Remainder of under parts, white. Back, dark gray. Rump, white. Tail, full, rounded, white (above and below). Upper surface of wings, dark gray with white trailing edge. Primaries, black completely devoid of any white areas or markings. Underside of wings with whitish linings and dark gray to black primaries. Legs, black.

(OVER)

Describe the bird's song or call, if heard, including method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight, etc:

None heard.

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Large fresh water reservoir bordered by cultivated fields and farmlands.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

Franklin's Gull: Smaller, daintier not as long-winged. Much different wing pattern. Shows considerable white area separating black tipped primaries from remainder of wing. Shows more gray in head in winter plumage (more of a hooded effect).

All other dark-headed gulls: Eliminated by different wing patterns and smaller size.

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

Seen Laughing Gulls many times over the years from Long Island, New York (1947-1961), the Carolinas every summer (1951-1961), Florida (1971 and 1975) and Texas (1970, 1973 and 1975). Seen in Colorado once before (May 1974) at Lake Henry, Crowley County - two breeding adults.

Very familiar with very common Franklin's Gull from Colorado.

Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation?

Standard Field Guides supported observation.

This report was written from notes made during x after x observation; from memory

PRINT NAME: JACK REDDALL SIGNATURE: Jack Reddall DATE: January 17, 1976
Street Address: 4450 South Alton Street Town and State: Englewood, Colorado ZIP: 80110

Return to: JACK REDDALL - 4450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110

Species: LAUGHING GULL

(Vernacular Name)

Larus atricilla

(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): November 1, 1975

Time Bird Seen: late morning to

Locality: Union Reservoir

Nearest Town: Longmont

County: Weld

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME ADDRESS TELEPHONE

Bruce Webb

Jack Reddall

Narca DeWoskin

Optical Equipment: 7 X 50 binoculars, 15-60 X B&L Zoom telescope

If photographed, type of equipment used:

Light Conditions: Sunny, sun shining on birds from behind observers

Distance from bird (how measured): minimum estimated 50 feet.

Number of Birds Seen: 2 Sex: ? Plumage: Adult-nonbreeding

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:

The birds were seen in flight or walking on sand beach, not together.

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

Head and underparts unmarked white, except for gray mark extending from eye around the nape. Back and wings unmarked gray above, fading to black on outermost primaries. Except for a white trailing edge on the wing, there was no white on the wings (no spots or window in the primaries). Rump white. Tail white (no marks). Legs black. Bills black. Eyes black. Underside of wings not really seen very good.

Describe the bird's song or call, if heard, including method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight, etc:

None.

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Mediumsized lake in agricultural countryside.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

Ring-billed, Herring, California eliminated by dark bill, wing pattern.
Franklin's Gull (only really similar gull) eliminated because of the wing pattern, which lacked any white spots separating the gray mantle and black wingtips. The birds also appeared large in size, longer-winged and longer-billed than a Franklin's, although the two species were not directly compared (no Franklin's seen at Union anyway).

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

I am very familiar with the Franklin's Gull (both breeding season, non-breeding plumage and immatures). I have seen many ~~Frank~~ Laughing Gulls on the Texas coast in March 1975, and one adult in breeding plumage in Colorado (May 5, 1975). I am not very familiar with the immatures, most of those that I have seen having been adults (which the Unkon Res. birds were).

Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation?
Standard field guides consulted, supported the identification.

This report was written from notes made during after X observation; from memory

PRINT NAME: Robert Andrews SIGNATURE: Robert Andrews DATE: Jan. 8, 1975
Street Address: 1390 So. Ivy Way Town and State: Denver, Colorado ZIP: 80224

Return to: JACK REDDALL - 4450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110