

APPENDIX IIDOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTINGS
FOR
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

A

Species: Laughing Gull; Larus atricilla
(Vernacular name) (Scientific name)

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students -- those studying occurrences 50 years from now -- must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Dates (est): May 16, 1962 Time Bird Seen: 2:00 P.M. to 2:15 P.M.Locality: Chatfield State Park, mudflat east of Plum Creek Picnic Area -Denver, Colo.

Nearest town, county and state:

Optical equipment: 7X35 binocs., 20X scope

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: Summer adultLight conditions: Clear. Sun behind observerDistance from bird, and how measured: 150 ft. estimated.

Describe the bird's overall behavior: Mostly standing and walking around with about 12 Ring-billed Gulls. It made two short circling flights with excellent display of wings and returned to same site. Stayed with Ringbills.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

mud flat at edge of shallow lagoon

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address):

None that I know of.

APPENDIX II Continued

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough). Describe what you actually saw in the field. Black-headed, white bodied, white-tailed gull nearly the size of associated Ringbills. Bill red with small black tip. Bill appeared same as Ringbills in dimensions. Dark eye with broken white ring. Dark gray mantle intensifying to near black at wing tips. No white spots in primaries visible while standing, walking or flying. Narrow white trailing wing edge appeared to be confined to secondaries. Two thumb nail sized odd shaped spots on rear of mantle above rump. Legs very dark - near black - hard to distinguish hint of red. Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

None heard

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Franklin's Gull → Bonaparte's Gull - both with quite different wing patterns, paler mantle and smaller birds. Bonaparte has black bill. Note - Observed numerous Franklin's flying on water 2-3 hundred yards away 15 mins. later. Prior experience with this and similar species:

Familiar with Laughing Gull on east coast years ago - more recently fed by hand on So. Padre Island.

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

Name (print) : Frank Justice

Mailing address: 1917 So. Quitman

Signature: Frank Justice

Return Form To:

CFO Records Committee
c/o Curator - Dept. of Zoological Collections
Denver Museum of Natural History
City Park
Denver, CO 80205