

1997-35

ACCEPTED 6-1

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTING

rec'd 11-15-97

**Species:** Laughing Gull

**Date(s):** 21 Oct 1997      **Time seen:** Followed constantly with binoculars, 1000-1010

**Locality:** Prewitt Reservoir, Washington County

**Latilong:** 6      **Optical equipment:** 8x42 binoculars

**Number of birds seen:** 1      **Sex:** ?      **Plumage:** Winter/basic

**Light Conditions:** Bright light; fair to good from time to time, but not ideal.

**Distance from bird:** 100-500 yards

**Weather at time of observation:** cloudy to sunny

**Describe habitat:** Plains reservoir

**Describe behavior:** Flying during entire observation. Flew by itself although many Ring-billed Gulls flew around the reservoir at the same time.

**Field marks observed: size, color, pattern, shape, bill, etc.:**

**Head:** White with black eye and black smudge behind eye. Forehead and crown white.

**Mantle:** Darker than Ring-billeds which flew around it. Wing tips black, no white, more extensive than Ring-billed (i.e., covered a larger portion of the wing tip. On the underside of the wings the dark extended in a sort of line along the trailing edge. See drawing.

**Size:** Slightly smaller than the Ring-billeds.

**Tail, body:** White.

**Bill:** Dark, but bird too far away to determine color.

**Flight:** Flapped continuously, and more frequently than Ring-billeds.

**Bird's call or song:** Not heard.

**Field marks not seen:** Color of legs, bill.

**Similar species:**

**Ring-billed:** Has white face without smudge, and has white in wing tips.

**Franklin's:** Back of head has large dark patch. Has white in wing tips.

**Bonaparte's, Sabine's:** Have different wing patterns with contrasting black and white.

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** Head has a bigger patch, adult has yellow bill.

**Prior experience:** Observed on Gulf and Atlantic coasts.

**Description from:** Notes taken in field.

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