

CFO-RC FILE#

RESULTS: ACCEPT 7-0

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS SIGHT RECORD FORM

(Please print or type. Attach photographs, drawings, and additional pages if necessary.)

Rcd 1/6/00 wpl

Species: Laughing Gull
(Common Name)Larus atricilla
(Scientific Name)

Date(s) of observation : July 6, 1999.

Number of birds seen : one

Sex : unknown

Plumage : second year immature

Exact location : East side of the dam at Adobe Creek Reservoir, on Road UU.

County : Bent.

Nearest town : Las Animas.

Elevation: 4,128.

Length of observation : 30 minutes total.

Time(s) of observation : 1030am to 1100am and 1230pm to 1245pm.

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Sherry Chapman.

Other observers who independently saw the bird(s) : unknown.

Light conditions (quality; direction relative to bird's; position): Overcast most of the time.

Optical equipment used : 10 x 40 B&L Custom Binoculars and zoom spotting scopes (mine and Sherry's).

Distance from the bird(s) (estimated unless other wise noted) : About 50 yards.

Was bird photographed? : no.

If so, have you submitted photographs? n/a.

Who took the photographs? n/a.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred :

The bird was along the lake shore and on a sand bar, on the south side of Adobe Creek Reservoir. Adobe Creek Reservoir (Blue Lake) is a large reservoir in southeastern Colorado.

Describe the bird's behavior (flying; feeding; habit; behaviors used in identifying the species or in supporting the identification) :

The bird was sitting and walking around with other birds (e.g. Franklin's, Ring-billed, California gulls, and Forster's Terns) on the shore and sandbar. It did raise its wings once, I never saw it fly.

Describe the bird(s) in detail. This is the most important part of the report. Include overall size and shape, and how you placed the bird(s) in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings, and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Describe other details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches, or copy of field notes) :

The bird's overall size and shape was of a gull. About two inches larger than the near by Franklin's Gulls and almost the same size as the Ring-billed Gulls also present near by. The bird was one of the dark headed gulls. The plumage was of a second year bird. The head was white with a dark smudge on the top (above the eyes to the top of the head). The throat was whitish. The undersides were white. The nape was white. The back/mantle was dark gray (a shade darker than the near by Franklin's Gulls). The wings were also dark gray. The outer primaries (while sitting) were dark brown not black, so this made the bird a second year bird, instead of an winter adult bird. The tail was only seen once when the bird flapped. It had some black color on the end or near the end of the mostly white tail. The bird had a long black bill (longer and bigger than the near by Franklin's Gulls). It had dark eyes. It had longer black legs than the near by Franklin's Gulls. The bird was a couple inches taller than the nearby Franklin's Gulls and almost as big as the near by Ring-billed Gulls. I identified the bird by its gull shape, different head pattern than the Franklin's Gulls, bigger bill, longer legs, darker mantle, and larger size than the nearby Franklin's Gulls. The dark smudge on the head put the bird in the dark-hooded gull type birds. When I saw the bird flap, its wing tips were all dark brown, with no white on the them.

Describe bird's call or song:

None heard.

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them:

Franklin's Gull: The bird was not this species because of size (the bird I saw was about two inches taller), mantle color (too dark), longer black bill, and longer black legs, the smudge on the top of the head (above the eyes and up) was different than the eye patch back to the nape of the Franklin's Gulls. All of these features were compared directly to the many nearby Franklin's Gulls.

Bonaparte's and Little Gulls: These two species are way too small for the bird I saw, as they are smaller than Franklin's Gulls.

Black-headed Gull: The size is about the same though this species never has a black bill and black legs, among other things.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

Laughing Gull: I have seen five previous ones in Colorado, with the first in 1994. Also two at Salton Sea, California in 1993 and thousands in Texas during each of my four visits to the state since 1996.

Franklin's Gull: I seen hundreds to thousands annually in Colorado since 1990 or before.

Bonaparte's Gull: I have seen perhaps hundreds each year in Colorado. Large numbers appear at Pueblo Reservoir each fall.

Little Gull: I have seen three in Colorado since 1994.

Black-headed Gull: I have seen one alternate adult at Jim Hamm Pond, Boulder County, Colorado on Apr. 14, 1990.

List books, guides, recordings, or other sources consulted and how these influenced your identification (during and after observation) : I looked at National Geographic Society's Birds of North America 3rd edition, to check the age of the bird. I knew the brown outer primaries would rule out an adult bird.

This report was made from notes made during ☒ and after ☒ observation, or later from memory ☐.

Reporting observer : Brandon K. Percival

Signature : Brandon K. Percival

Observer's address: 835 Harmony Drive, Pueblo West, CO 81007-2632. (719)-547-3722.

Send report to : Bill Lisowsky, 2919 Silverplume Drive, Fort Collins, Colorado 80526