

2001-19
ACCEPTED

Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form (Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.) Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

CFO-RC FILE X:

RESULTS:

Species:(Common Name) Mew Gull (Scientific Name) *Larus canus*

Date(s) of occurrence: 3/30/01, 4/1/01, 4/2/01 (4/3/01 by John Rees)

Number of birds seen: one Sex: Unknown Plumage: Adult in alternate plumage

Exact location: Pastorius Reservoir SWA on CR 302 in La Plata County

County: La Plata Nearest town: Durango Elevation: ~6800 feet

Length of observation:

35 mins., 25 mins., 90 minutes on respective dates. Time(s) of observation: 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM MDT

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Jim Beatty on 4/1/01; Peter Derven, Mona Hill & Dean Hill on 4/2/01

Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s):

4/3/01 John Rees of Bloomfield, NM & Les Lesperance of Farmington, NM.

Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position: Light conditions were good with the sun behind me.

Optical equipment used: Kowa TSN-2 with 20-60x zoom, Swarovski 7x42 binoculars

Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): ~ 125 meters, 170 meters, & 140 meters

Was bird(s) photographed? Yes If so, have you submitted photos? No

Who took the photographs? Dean Hill, Durango, CO

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

Bird occurred @ a reservoir on a mesa top; the reservoir is surrounded by mainly agricultural lands.

Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the Species or in supporting the identification): The gull was mainly seen resting out on the reservoir, but also seen in flight.

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size and shape and how you placed the bird 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(s). Describe other important 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 field notes):

The Mew Gull had a white head & a yellow, delicate, unmarked bill. The bill was more delicate than that of the Ring-billed Gull or Franklin's Gull due to a smaller bill depth. The curved culmen gave somewhat of a drooped effect to the bill. The eye was dark. The mantle was gray in color; the color intermediate between that of the Franklin's Gull and the Ring-billed Gull mantle colors. (Since the gull was initially next to a Franklin's Gull, I noticed that the mantle color was very similar - just a hint of a shade lighter. In comparison with a Ring-billed Gull, the mantle color of the Mew Gull was a slightly darker gray.) Similarly, the Mew Gull was intermediate in size in comparison with the Franklin's Gull and the Ring-billed Gull. (The Mew Gull was about 2 inches longer than the Franklin's Gull, but appeared to be a couple of inches shorter in length than the Ring-billed Gulls.) The tail and underparts of the Mew Gull were white. On the folded wing, the primary tips showed an extensive area of black with noticeable white windows. White tertials were also evident on the folded wing. On the underwing in flight, the wing tip had a prominent white wedge followed by a black band & there was a prominent black line on the trailing edge of the wing.

Describe bird's call or song: No vocalizations were noted.

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: The delicate, unmarked, yellow bill, the overall size and the mantle color allowed me to eliminate the Ring-billed Gull. The details of the underwing pattern of the Mew Gull (with a more significant white area at the tip, plus the prominent dark trailing edge at the wing tip) were noticeably different from the underwing pattern of the Ring-billed Gulls. Since I had such an accurate idea of the size of the gull, most other gulls could be eliminated from size alone. The Kittiwakes were within the size category for possibilities, but the wing pattern of the Mew Gull eliminated both Kittiwakes.

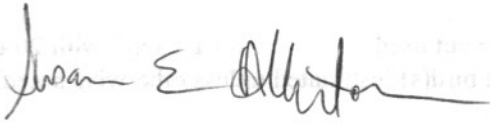
What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? I had no prior experience with Mew Gull. Side-to-side comparisons of the Mew Gull with the familiar Ring-billed Gull & Franklin's Gull were relied upon for judging the bill size, mantle color & the overall size of the bird.

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation):

The Sibley Guide to Birds and Third Edition of the National Geographic were consulted. A combination of the field marks (particularly the yellow, unmarked bill on a white headed gull in combination with the size, mantle color & white wing tip) safely eliminated all the other gull species.

This report is from notes made during Yes or after observation or later from memory

Date of written report: 4/12/01

Reporting observer: Susan E. Allerton Signature: 

Reporting Observer's Address: 61 Newland Circle

City: Durango State: Colorado

Zip: 81301

Send report to: Colorado Birds Record Committee Tony Leukering P.O. Box 157 Arvada, CO 80001

rec'd 4/9

2001-19

Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form*(this is a two page report-click at the bottom for page 2)*CFO-RC FILE X: _____
RESULTS: _____

Print this page and then fill out. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species (please include common and scientific name): Mew Gull *Larus canus*

Date(s) of Observation: 4/2/01

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: Adult

Exact location: Pastoria's Reservoir SWA

County: La Plata Nearest town: Durango Elevation: ±6600

Length of observation: about 30 minutes Time(s) of observation: 12:30 - 1:00 PM

Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Susan Allerton

Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s): James Banting

Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position): Partly cloudy, occasionally
bright sunlight

Optical equipment used: 10x40 Celestron binoculars, Kowa 823 scope 20 to 60x

Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): 75 - 100 yards

Was bird(s) photographed? Yes If so, have you submitted photos? No

Who took the photographs?

Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: Reservoir surrounded by
plowed fields and meadows -- some weeds and grasses at
edge; one cottonwood groveDescribe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the
species or in supporting the identification):Flaw in alone
and settled offshore. Soon joined by four Ring-billed
Gulls.

CLICK HERE FOR PAGE 2 OF THIS FORM / RETURN TO THE SOURCE FOR MORE FORMS

Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

page 2

Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size and shape and how you placed the bird 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(s). Describe other important 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 field notes):

Describe birds call or song: —

Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them:

Ring-bills and California Gulls were present. Mew was smaller than either. Mew's bill was clear yellow; Ring-bills' a bit longer, straighter with black "rings;" California's bills had black and red-orange

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

Mostly England & Central Asia sightings — once in Victoria, BC

List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation):

Sibley, National Geo Guide & Harrison's Seabirds

This report is from notes made during or after observation, or later from memory

Date of written report:

4/4/01

Reporting observer:

Peter Dawson

Signature:

Peter Dawson

Address:

40 South Elk Run
Durango, CO 81303

Send report to:
Colorado Birds Record Committee
Tony Leukering
P.O. Box 157
Arvada, CO 80001

Other details:

Mew Gull: dark irides, slightly darker gray mantle & wings, large white crescent on folded wing in front of black wingtips. See my attached computer notes accomplished 4/2/01 two hours after observation.

Peter Derven
40 South Elk Run
Durango, Colorado

Documentation of Sighting

Date of Report
4/2/01

Sighting Date: 4/2/01
Species: Mew Gull
Scientific Name: *Larus canus*
Number Seen:
Place: Pastorius Reservoir
City: Durango
County: La Plata
State: CO
Nation: USA
Habitat: Lake & reedy edge
Record Number: 18332

Another Allerton find, I waited from 9:30 'til 12:30 before I noticed a bird with slightly larger white wing patches drop behind the spit. *Quickly changing positions I alerted the others and quickly got on this bird standing just west of the spit in 2 inches or so of water. Small, slender all-yellow bill first and foremost! The culmen is curved virtually throughout its length. Irides dark. A mature adult bird, it is snowy white on the head, neck, breast and tail. We observed a large white crescent in front of the black wingtips;*

the tips bore three tiny white spots. Soon three Ringbill Gulls alighted beside the Mew Gull showing, larger size, slightly paler gray mantles and, obviously, black bill rings. The bill of the Ringbill is *also longer and thicker; the culmen is straighter through most of its length and more acutely hooked at the tip. The irides of these Ring-bills were yellow-white.*

Observed through 10 X 40 Celestron binoculars and Kowa TSN823 telescope at 20 to 60 power under partly cloudy skies, winds occasionally gusty from the northwest causing a rippled texture to the lake, temperature about 50 degrees F. I observed the bird for about 30 minutes. Apparently it appeared *at about the same time 4/1. It was first seen by Susan Allerton, I believe on 3/30/01*