

## LOUISIANA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

## BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

## REPORT FORM

Species: Great Black-backed Gull, *Larus marinus*

Number: One; first winter plumage.

Locality: BFI Dump, St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana.

Date: Jan. 9, 1992

Time: 8:15 A.M.

Reporter: David P. Muth, 1617 Charlton Dr., N.O., La. 70122

With Reporter: Jon Dunn, spotted bird.

Other Observers: None.

Light: Overcast, but quite adequate.

Optics: Zeiss Dialyt 10x40, Bushnell Spacemaster 25x.

Distance: About 200 meters.

Duration: In view at various times over more than an hour's time.  
Actual viewing time about two minutes.

Habitat: Dump.

Behavior: Loafing on fill in large mixed flock. It moved but was re-found several times.

Description:

A very large gull, standing head and shoulders above nearby Herrings. In profile, larger overall, taller, with thick, long pink legs. Bill long, very thick, and black; contrasted strongly with large, blocky white head. Large black eye. Head and nape contrasted with checkered back and wing coverts. Flight feathers very dark brown, tertials outlined with pale edgings. Mantle also contrasted with mostly white underparts. Overall effect was of well-delineated dark wings and back, contrasting with otherwise whitish plumage, suggesting adult pattern more strongly than on other Herring-type gulls. Tail was white with a broad black sub-terminal band; tail coverts white with dark flecks.

Voice: Not heard.

Similar Species:

Herring and other dark-mantled gulls all differ in size (much smaller), proportions, especially of bill and legs, and tail pattern.

Photos: Jon Dunn took some. I haven't seen them, but assume they were sent to LSUMNS.

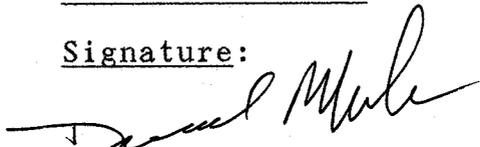
Previous Experience: I've seen about ten individuals now in Louisiana, and a few in the northeast.

Aids: None.

Circumstance of Description: Made from very skimpy field notes and (mostly) from memory.

Confidence Level: I am certain of the i.d.

Signature:



David P. Muth

Date: 3/22/93.

Louisiana

Eared Grebe- 9 Jan. 1993- Lake Pontchartrain- two at Mandeville

Canada Goose- 30 Dec. 1992- Crowley area (250; all small and pale consistent with hutchsinii)

White-tailed Kite (back to that common name)- 31 Dec. 1992- Cameron area

Whimbrel- 31 Dec. 1992- East Jetty Road, Cameron (one)

Glaucous Gull- 9 Jan. 1993- BFI Dump, New Orleans. We got excellent views of this bird and I took a couple of poor photos of it (sent to Donna Dittmann). This was a first winter bird. It was large, but not dramatically larger than the 100's of Herring Gulls present. It was chunky and nearly all a chalky-white gull that had a faint coffee tint (coffee with cream). I noted definite buffy barring on the rump, uppertail and undertail coverts. The primaries appeared unmarked whitish-cream color and contrasted slightly paler to the coverts. The long, thick and even bill was pink for the basal 3/4 and black (totally) for the terminal 1/4. The eyes were dark and the legs were pink. *Seen with David Muth.*

Great Black-backed Gull- 9 Jan. 1993- B.F.I. Dump, New Orleans. I got very good views of this first winter bird that was at the dump the entire time we were. I got a couple of OK, but not great, photos of it (sent to Donna Dittmann). This was a very big gull, dramatically larger than the many adjacent Herring Gulls. The head always projected well above the pack of Herring Gulls and thus was always easy to find. The head and underparts were quite whitish with some darker markings on the sides of the breast and the sides and flanks. The back and coverts were strongly checkered with black and white and there were a few blackish feathers (or partially blackish) on the back. The huge and thick bill was entirely black. The primaries were blackish as were most of the secondaries (a prominent blackish secondary bar). There was no pale on the inner primaries as is typical with our Herring Gulls. The tail was strikingly white at the base and there was a broad black terminal band; perhaps a thinner and more diffuse band was just in from this terminal band. *Seen with David Muth.*

Common Tern- 31 Dec. 1992- Cameron Ferry crossing (immature, point blank photos)

Broad-billed Hummingbird- 30 Dec. 1992- A stakeout at a feeder in Amelia near Morgan City. This was a good sized hummer that in poor light looked almost blackish. The overall color was bright green on the crown, nape and back, and the underparts, except for the white undertail coverts. Except in good light when we could see that the throat was clearly blue (with some white tipping). The tail appeared long and floppy and was black. It was distinctly forked and was pumped up and down consistently. The tail feathers were tipped with grayish, and this combined with the white tipping on the throat probably indicates that the bird was an immature male. There appeared to be a slight hint of a supercilium. The basal 2/3 to the bill was a bright coral-red color and the terminal 1/3 was blackish. The bird gave a chatter call that was somewhat similar to the call of a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. *Seen with Sue Utterback and Al & Gwen Smalley.*

Broad-tailed Hummingbird- 10 Jan. 1993- Baton Rouge- I saw this stakeout with Van Remsen. This was an imm. male with a few dark rose feathers on the throat. This bird was quite differently structurally from a Rufous/Allen's (as Van pointed out) with a long and slightly decurved bill and long wings and especially a long tail. The tail extended back well past the folded wings, unlike Rufous/Allen's. The rufous wash on the sides and flanks was less evident than a Rufous/Allen's, but there was some white in the collar like Rufous/Allen's. The color above was more of a blue-green, less of a golden-green which Rufous/Allen's typically exhibits. The calls (chip notes) were very different from Rufous/Allen's being a metallic tinkling, like a soft White-eared Hummingbird.

Hairy Woodpecker- 31 Dec. 1992- in the town of Cameron

(over)

Jon L. Dunn

Louisiana (Cont.)

Northern Wheatear- 30 Dec. 1992- south of Crowley. <sup>Seen with Sue Utterback and Al & Gwen Smalley.</sup> This bird was found by Steve Cardiff and Donna Dittmann on the Crowley Xmas Count. The size of this bird impressed me as a bit large to me for the Northern Wheatears I've seen annually in Alaska and this combined with the very richly colored underparts led me to guess that the bird was probably the Greenland race. But that's all it is, a guess, and I could well be wrong. Only with a specimen could that determination be made.

This was an upright perching bird, about the size of a Hermit Thrush. It bobbed its body and also while sitting still often pumped its tail up and down. The overall color was a rich buff. The crown and back were brownish. There was rich buffy supercilium and dark mask that was not well defined. The wings were dark and all of the feathers were edged with dark, except for the primary coverts that were edged with whitish. The tertials were dark centered with buffy edges. The rump was white and there was an inverted black "T" on a white tail (terminal dark tail band narrower than an Isabelline Wheatear. I counted six primaries extending past the tertials. I took a few photos, but they don't even begin to compare with the video that Steve and Donna showed me.

↖ Ash-throated Flycatcher- 31 Dec. 1992- Garner Ridge, Johnson's Bayou (had been found on the Xmas Count. This was a rather small and slim appearing Myiarchus that was clearly very pale below, essentially whitish, but was washed with pale yellow on the belly. The crown was dark and the bird appeared slightly crested. The nape and back was grayish-brown with no visible olive cast. There were two diffuse whitish wingbars. There were rufous edges to the primaries and whitish edges to the secondaries. The tail from below was rufous with dark tips that formed a narrow dark band across the tip. The bill appeared blackish and not particularly large. The bird gave a sharp, short, and hard "prrrrt" note. <sup>Seen with Sue Utterback and Al and Gwen Smalley.</sup>

Lapland Longspur- 30 Dec. 1992- Crowley area (17 birds)

A few additions for Mississippi (forgot to include them earlier)

Calliope Hummingbird- 9 Jan. 1993- Diamondhead. This immature male stakeout at Doris Hope's yard was very well seen. It had been trapped, banded and plucked (no more magenta feathers left on the throat!). This bird then looked like a female Calliope, except it was whiter underneath. It was a very small hummingbird with a very short bill and tail. There was just a hint of buff below. The calls suggested Anna's, with a slight Costa's tinkling quality. They were very soft, which is distinctive. This was the third in Mississippi this winter!

Vermilion Flycatcher- 9 Jan. 1993- Bay St. Louis (stakeout and stunning adult male)

Again, sorry this is all late.

Sincerely,



Jon L. Dunn