

BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of unusual birds. It may be used flexibly and need not be used at all. Leave blank any details not observed. Attach additional sheets if necessary. Please print or type. Attach drawings, photographs, etc.; include all photos if an obscurely marked species. When completed, mail to the Secretary of the LOS Bird Records Committee.

1. Common and scientific name: Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g. 2ad. in breeding plumage): 1 adult
3. Locality: Louisiana: Jefferson Parish: Grand Isle south
of Exxon facility near east end of island
4. Date(s) when seen: 25 January 1997
5. Times of day when seen: 4:10 - 4:15 pm
6. Reporting observer and address:
B. Mac. Myers III 105 McClung St. Pass Christian MS 39571-3329
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird:
R. Dan Purrington, Phillip Wallace, Gay Gomez
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird:
R. Dan Purrington, Phillip Wallace, Gay Gomez
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): okay, colors clearly visible
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): 10x40 Zeiss 20x60 Bushnell
11. Distance to bird: 250 yards
12. Duration of observation: 5 minutes
13. Habitat (general and specific):
Sitting on Gulf of Mexico, then flew to breakwater and sat on it
14. Behavior (flying, feeding, resting, etc.; include and stress any habits used in identification):
Sitting in water, sitting on breakwater in Gulf of Mexico, near the beach.
15. Description (Include only what was actually seen, not what "should" have been seen. Include if possible: total length; body bulk; shape, bill, eye, and leg characteristics; color and pattern of plumage, etc. Stress field marks):
A very large gull with black back, white head, underparts and tail. Large, heavy yellow bill with red spot at gonys. Very large blacky head, direct comparison w/ adult and 1st winter Herring. Pink legs. Light eye.

16. Voice: not heard
17. Similar species (include how they are eliminated by your observations):
leg color rules out Lesser B-b., Kelp, Yellow-footed.
Very black back rules out Western, Slaty-backed, etc.
18. Photographs (Was it photographed? By whom? Attached?):
not that I know of
19. Previous experience with this species:
Yes
20. Aids: List books, illustrations, birders, etc. used in identification
a) at time of observation;
b) after observation:
21. This description written from: X notes made during observation; _____ notes made after observation; _____ memory.
22. Are you positive of your identification? YES. If not, explain:
23. Signature of reporter: B. Mac. Weyer III
24. Date and time of writing this account:

1 Apr 1997 7:15 PM

LOUISIANA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

97-05C

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the LBRC Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or this format when submitting records for review (to assure that all information involving an observation is accounted for). Attach additional sheets if necessary. Please print or type. Attach drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos if an obscurely marked species. When completed, mail to: LBRC Secretary, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216.

- English and scientific name: Great Black-Backed Gull (Larus marinus)
- Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2ad. in breeding plumage): ONE INDIVID, ADULT PLUMAGE
- Locality: LA. state JEFFERSON parish
GRAND ISLE, ^{on the} ~~skull~~ water near beach, seen from ^{dune-crossing bridge} at King Tarpon Park
specific locality near Grand Isle's ^{center}
- Date(s) when seen: JAN. 25, 1997
- Times of day when seen: 4:15 pm
- Reporting observer and address: GAY GOMEZ, 44 WILLOW DR.
GRETNA, LA. 70053
- Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird:
PHILIP WALLACE, MAC MYERS, DAN PURRINGTON
- Other observers who independently identified the bird: (we were all ^{birding} together at the time)
- Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): sky was clear, sunlight shone from well above ^(sun's angle about 45°) & just behind the bird, lighting of bird was strong & bright
- Optical equipment (type, power, condition): G. GOMEZ USED 7-21 X 40 Bushnell binoculars; other observers
- Distance to bird: approx. 250 ft - 300 ft ^{used Zeiss binoculars + Philip Wallace's scope}
- Duration of observation: 15 minutes (approx.)
- Habitat: ~~nearshore~~ nearshore Gulf of Mexico between ^{stone} breakwaters & beach
- Behavior (flying, feeding, resting, etc. - include and stress any habits used in identification): When I first noticed the bird it was resting on the water, floating westward with the current. About 10 minutes into the observation the bird rose from the water's surface ~~to~~ along with an immature herring gull. Both birds remained in the area. The ~~of~~ black-backed gull settled back on the water after flying for only about 5 seconds.

15. Description (Include only what was actually seen, not what "should" have been seen). Include if possible: total length or relative size compared to other species present or familiar species; body bulk; shape, bill, eye, leg and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species: ^{wings}

This large gull caught my eye because of its extremely dark back. The other observers and I agreed that they were black rather than gray, and that the bird was very large, ^{probably} in relation to the herring gulls floating near it. The bird's head was bright white; its bill was large; the bird looked bulky + powerful. When the gull lifted off the water's surface + wheeled in the air next to an immature herring gull, its dark black ^{mantle +} back + large size became even more evident. The great black-backed gull "dwarfed" the herring gull (two of us used this term simultaneously ^{as we observed the two species in flight}).

16. Voice: not heard

17. Similar species (include how they are eliminated by your observations):

lesser black-backed gull was eliminated because of our bird's dark black (not grayish) back/mantle and large size (larger than a herring gull).

Kelp gull was eliminated because of the bird's large size (larger than a herring gull). ~~larger than a herring gull~~

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained (By whom? Attached?):

19. Previous experience with this species: I have observed ^{adult} great black-backed gulls on Fowchen beach near Grand Isle (March 1988) + on Cape Beaton, Nova Scotia (August 1991); my companions have observed great black-backed gulls on ~~some~~ ^{more occasions than I have}

20. Aids: List books, illustrations, birders, etc. used in identification:

- a) at time of observation: experience of birders Wallace, Myers, + Cunningham
- b) after observation: National Geographic guide to the Birds of N. America

21. This description written from: _____ notes made during observation; _____ notes made after observation (date: _____); memory.

22. Are you positive of your identification? YES. If not, explain:

23. Signature of reporter: Gay M. Gomez

24. Date and time of writing this account: Jan. 26, 1997, 11 Am - 11:30 Am

25 Jan. 1997

w/ RDT, Philip Wallace, Greg Gomez

Grand Isle gulf beach, south of Exxon facility

4:10-4:15 p.m. Great Black-backed Gull, adult

250 yds out on gulf, sitting. Flew next to adult

and 1st year Herring Gulls. Black back, yellow bill w/

red spot, pink legs, yellow-light eyes.

97-05B

LOUISIANA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE
REPORT FORM

1. **Common and scientific name:** Great Black-backed Gull
(Larus marinus)
2. **Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage:**
1 bird in adult winter plumage
3. **Locality: State (Louisiana) Parish:** Jefferson

Exact Location: Grand Isle
4. **Date(s) seen:** January 25, 1997
5. **Time(s) of day seen:** 4:10-4:15 pm
6. **Reporting observer and address:** Phillip Wallace
4515 S. Prieur St.
New Orleans, LA 70125
7. **Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird:** Gay Gomez (discovered), Mac Myers, Dan Purrington
8. **Other observers who independently identified the bird:**
The bird was apparently discovered on the Grand Isle CBC.
9. **Light conditions:** Fair to good; bird was south of observers; sun was SW of observers.
10. **Optical equipment:** Bushnell Spacemaster 22x
11. **Distance to bird:** 200-250 yds
12. **Duration of observation:** 5 minutes
13. **Habitat (general and specific):** On gulf between beach and rocky breakwater.
14. **Behavior:** Resting on water; swimming; flying
15. **Description:**
Size - Much larger than adjacent Herring Gull
Head - All white. Clearly more massive than adjacent Herring Gull.
Mantle, Back, and Wings - Black. No brown in wings.
Primaries same color as coverts and secondaries.
Underparts - Pure white.

Tail - Completely white.

Soft Parts - Large bill was yellow with red gonys spot. Eye color was light. Eye seemed small on massive head. Leg color not seen.

16. **Voice:** None

17. **Similar species and how they were eliminated:**

Herring eliminated by size and back color.

Lesser Black-backed Gull eliminated by back color (all except L. f. fuscus) and size.

18. **Photographs?** None

19. **Previous experience with this species:** I've seen many times in Louisiana and on the East coast.

20. **Aids used in identification:**

a) at time of observation: None

b) after observation: None

21. **This description written from:** _____ notes made during observation; x notes made immediately after observation; _____ memory.

22. **Are you positive of your identification?** yes

23. **Signature of reporter:** *Chilly Wallace*

24. **Date and time of writing this account:** February 28, 1997
5:30 pm

Gr. Bl.-backed Gull 4:10 - 4:15

Grand Isla - on Gulf across from Exxon
Ad. wint. King Tarpou Park

Head - all white

Tail - all white

Bill yellow w/ red gonyx spot.

Mantle and wings - black; no brown
in wings. primaries same color as
coverts and secondaries.

Clear white underparts.

Size - much larger than adjacent
HEGU.

Sitting on water.

Starts flight.

Leg color not seen.

Eye color light. Eye appears small
on massive head. clearly.

Large bill. Head more massive
than HEGU

Distance 200 - 250 yds.
Light - Air to goal; clear.
angle of sight 45° from the sun

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)

One adult in basic plumage (1997-05) on 25 January 1997, *Jefferson*: Grand Isle, B. Mac Myers III and Phillip A. Wallace. Reportedly found by Gay Gomez.

All members accepted this record:

D. L. Dittmann, 26 August 2012. Accept. Although not definitive descriptions (eg., primary pattern not described) the large size, all white head, and black back help support ID of an adult.

John Dillon, September 30. Accept. Note that Gay Gomez also turned in a report on this same bird and was with Mac and Phillip.

Paul Conover (8/26/2012) Accept.

James L. Ingold 27 September 2012. Accept

Curtis C. Sorrells, September 14, 2012. Accept. Good description by experienced observers of a gull in diagnostic plumage.

Erik I. Johnson, 6 Nov 2012. Accept. Tough one – sure sounds like a pure GBBG. No details of primary tips troubling. One observer noted pink legs (even though stated to be on water) and other observer did not see legs. Strange.

Steven W. Cardiff; 7 November 2012. ACCEPT. I hate accepting sight reports of rare gulls, but multiple reports of an adult bird are persuasive. Wonder what happened to Grand Isle CBC documentation? Perhaps that pertains to 1997-46 (below)? If so, then they were not the same bird. Note that Gay Gomez also submitted a report and that the second page (back side) of Myers' report seems to be missing (*a la* 97-04).

Phillip A. Wallace, 28 August 2012, Accept

Nancy L Newfield, 11-10-2012, Accept: These are nice descriptions. Shouldn't Gay Gomez's name be included?