

**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 - 1<sup>st</sup> year bird
3. **Locality: State (Louisiana) Parish:** Lafourche  
**Exact Location:** Fourchon Beach
4. **Date(s) seen:** April 2, 1999
5. **Time(s) of day seen:** 12:15-12:35
6. **Reporting observer and address:** Phillip Wallace  
4515 S. Prieur St.  
New Orleans, LA 70125-5044
7. **Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird:** Discovered by Wallace. Seen and identified by Sorrells and Kersting.
8. **Other observers who independently identified the bird:** None that I know of.
9. **Light conditions:** Hazy; good light; bird to the east of observers; sun over right shoulder.
10. **Optical equipment:** Zeiss 10x40 bins
11. **Distance to the bird:** 20-50 yds.
12. **Duration of observation:** 20 minutes
13. **Habitat (general and specific):** On the beach at the edge of the gulf and flying over the gulf.
14. **Behavior:** Resting; feeding on fish carcass; flying.
15. **Description:**  
*Size and General Impression* 20-25% larger than adjacent Herring Gulls. Big and bulky.  
*Head* The head appeared completely whitish at a distance. At close range, some indistinct dark streaking was visible, There was a dark smudge around the eye.  
*Upper Parts* The back was checkered black and white.

*Wings*

*Folded* Dark brown primaries; dark tertials with whitish fringe; coverts showed the same checkered pattern as the back; except for a brown streak, which appeared to be formed by the lesser coverts.

*Spread* In flight, there were no pale windows at the base of the primaries, as a Herring Gull would show.

*Underparts* Breast and belly and undertail coverts were whitish

*Tail* In flight, the upper part of the tail showed a dirty whitish rump and base of the tail. There was a broad, dark, speckled (broken up, not solid) subterminal band (appeared terminal).

*Bill* The bird had a massive, all-black bill. The bill gave the appearance of being relatively short because it was so deep.

*Eye* Not noted.

*Legs* Pale pinkish legs and feet.

16. **Voice:** None

17. **Similar species and how they were eliminated:** Size alone eliminates Herring and Lesser Black-backed. Tail pattern and wing pattern also eliminate Herring.

18. **Photographs?** Slides by Wallace accompany this report.

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

20. **Aids used in identification:**

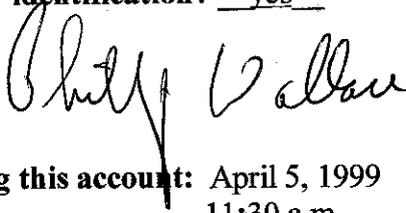
a) **at time of observation:** None

b) **after observation:** Grant

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

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

23. **Signature of reporter:**



24. **Date and time of writing this account:** April 5, 1999  
11:30 a.m.

P.W. (discovered) CS CK

Great black-backed Gull

4/2/99

WT

Fourchon beach

Hazy; good light

12:15 - 12:35

large - song

20-2520 large flm adj. HEGU

photos

Whitish head

Massive all-black bill

Dark checkered black and white

brownish lesser(?) coverts

Dark brown

Legs - feet pale pinkish

primaries;

Dark tentacles with

Breast - whitish

whitish fringes

Dark smudgy around eye; some minor streak on head  
apparent only at close range.

In flight - whitish upper-tail and wing

speckled dark subterminal band.  
(broken up, not solid)

↓  
broad

No pale windows like HEGU

## 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.

1. English and scientific name: Great-Black-backed Gull,  
Larus marinus
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2ad. in breeding plumage): One first year bird
3. Locality: LA Lafourche  
state parish  
Fourchon Beach  
specific locality
4. Date(s) when seen: April 2, 1999
5. Times of day when seen: 12:15 & 12:55 p.m.
6. Reporting observer and address: Cecil C. Kersting  
401 Rue Saint Peter #228  
Metairie, LA 70005-4620
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird:  
Curt Sorrells, Phillip Wallace
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird: —
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): good light, hazy bright
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition):  
Zeiss 7x42 binos
11. Distance to bird: 50 to 20 yds
12. Duration of observation: 40 min.
13. Habitat: Beach at waters edge
14. Behavior (flying, feeding, resting, etc. - include and stress any habits used in identification): Walking along beach with short flights to keep ahead of us.

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:

A large gull, 25% larger than adjacent Herring Gull.  
Dusky white head, nape & breast. Streaked nape, dark smudge around eye.  
Massive all black bill. Legs & feet pale pinkish about same as Herring Gull.  
In flight - upper tail & rump whitish, dark broken terminal band on tail. Back checkered black & white - feathers white w/ black centers.  
16. Voice:  
not vocal.

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

Very large size and checkered appearance & massive bill make it stand out from all other dark mented gulls in this region.

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

Photos by Phillip Wallace

19. Previous experience with this species:

See it on New England coast the last several summers.

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

a) at time of observation: Grant

b) after observation: -

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:

Cecil C. Korsting

24. Date and time of writing this account:

Apr 7, '99 11:30 a.m.