

LOUISIANA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE  
REPORT FORM

1. Name: Little Gull *Larus minutus*
2. Number: one, first winter
3. Locality: Louisiana; Cameron Parish; Johnson's Bayou beach; first sighting about 1 mi west of Martin Beach Rd.; second sighting about 2 mi east of that road
4. Date: 16 Dec. 2001 Johnson's Bayou CBC
5. Time: 0850 CST and 0925 CST
6. Reporting observer : B. Mac. Myers, III 5660 Ada Pl.--rear apt. New Orleans, LA 70124
7. Accompanying observers: Phillip A. Wallace and Curt Sorrells
8. Independent observers: Mark Swan might have glimpsed the bird later
9. Light conditions: foggy, but conditions were actually good, not glary
10. Optics: 10x40 Zeiss, good condition
11. Distance: first observation about 60-70 feet; second about 85 yards
12. Duration: first observation about 1.5 min standing, then we watched it fly out of sight into the fog; second observation, only a few seconds for me; I lost it shortly after it flushed
13. Habitat: beach edge of gulf
14. Behavior: nothing remarkable; standing on beach, then flying; first seen alone; second sighting near a group of mixed gulls and terns; seen in flight with Forster's Terns
15. Description: a very small gull; bill black, tiny, both fine and short; legs and feet dull pink; mantle generally pale gray; underparts white; the head had a dusky post-ocular spot, and there were dusky markings on the rear crown, forming a sort of ill-defined cap; on the perched bird there was a very strong, bold, black bar on the folded wing, heavier and darker than on first winter Bonaparte's. The bird's head had a very rounded or domed appearance, perhaps partly an effect of the very short bill. In flight the wing pattern was striking; the carpal bar was very dark and heavier than on BOGU; from the bend of the wing it included the forward edge of the outer wing and extended back through many of the outer primaries; the effect was of much darker primaries than on BOGU; it was similar

to a first winter Black-legged Kittiwake; the tail was white with a narrow black/dusky band at or very near the tip. In flight in direct comparison with Forster's Terns, the bird appeared to be about the same size, but obviously built differently; its wingspan was less than the FOTE.

16. Voice: not heard

17. Similar species: BLKI has dark legs, larger, has dark nape mark but not dark crown marks; BOGU lacks the dark crown markings, is larger (wingspan would not be less than FOTE), has longer bill, and has much white in the outer primaries; Ross's Gull would have a wedge-shaped tail, would lack the dark crown markings.

18. Photographs: no, we blew it.

19. Previous experience: two in LA, a few in Europe many years ago; plenty of experience with Bonaparte's and Black-legged Kittiwake

20. Aids: none until following the original sighting; various guides subsequently

21. Description made from notes and sketches made in field; copies enclosed

22. Yes, I'm positive of the identification

23. Signature:


24. Date: 23 January 2002; Time: 135 CST


16 Dec

0850 1 mi. W

Johnson's Bayou Rd

Little Gull

 - very short black

 - very black bar  
legs dull pink  
very

in flight next to

FOTE same size

~ 60 ft wingspan

high, domed head