

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or a similar format when submitting records for review to assure that all pertinent information is accounted for. Attach additional pages or files as necessary. Please print or type for hard copy. For electronic copy, be sure to save this file to your computer before entering text. Attach field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed (if hard copy), mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216, or e-mail electronic copy as an attachment to Paul Edward Conover at <zoiseaux@lusfiber.net> .

1. English and Scientific names: California Gull, *Larus californicus*

2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
1 juvenile, sex unknown

3. Parish: Cameron

Specific Locality: Broussard and Rutherford beaches

4. Date(s) when observed: 26 October 2024

5. Time(s) of day when observed: late afternoon

6. Reporting observer and city/state address

Reporting observer: Paul Edward Conover
City: Lafayette
State: Louisiana

7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s):

none

8. Other observers who *independently identified* the bird(s):

none

9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light):

First sighting was on Rutherford Beach in the “golden hour” before sunset. Light was excellent, but flock was jumpy and flew before I could get close enough to get good images. Later, I relocated what appears to be the same bird on Rutherford Beach. I was able to get closer, but the sun was about to go down, and I was not at a great angle to the light.

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition):

Nikon Fieldscope 20-60X, Vortex 12x binos, Canon R10 w 200 mm lens.

11. Distance to bird(s): About 20 yards at closest. Initially saw at 100 yards or so.

12. Duration of observation: About 15 minutes, probably, when summed.

13. Habitat: Beach

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): Loafing in large flock with dozens of Herring and a half dozen or so LBBG, plus RBGU, LAGU, and various large terns.

15. Description (include only what was actually seen, *not what "should" have been seen*; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species; body bulk, shape, proportions; bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species, *or for species that are known to hybridize frequently, stress features that help eliminate possible hybrids*):

Crisp juvenile "white headed gull" in very fresh plumage.





Upperwings dark with double dark bar; greater secondary coverts with whitish edging out to primaries, but very little internal marking even on innermost coverts.



Secondaries dark brown, matching tail. Primary coverts dark with pale margins.



Primaries with pale areas on inner webs and inner primaries with darker tips and subtle pale markings, but inner primaries not appreciably paler than outer.



Solid dark area around eyes, rest of head dark and light streaked.



Rump paler than mantle and tail, barred dark on white; uppertail covert feathers with white ground color and regular fern leaf-like dark barring connected along shaft.



Underparts densely brownish, contrasting markedly and abruptly with white lower flanks, vent, and undertail area; this white area barred regularly but somewhat narrowly--a bit less marked than uppertail coverts--with dark.



Bill somewhat large, of fairly even depth down its length with slight gonydeal angle, cleanly an odd pink tone except for well-demarcated black tip.



Pink gape extended narrowly between brownish basal feathering, nasal feathering coming to point. Eyes dark, legs appeared narrower than Herrings, pinkish.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):

Herring Gull by combination of bill color and pattern, double dark bar of secondaries and greater secondary coverts, largely unpatterned greater secondary coverts, indistinct inner primary window, possibly by distinct demarcation between brown belly and white vent area.

Lesser Black-backed Gull by bill color and pattern, tail pattern.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): yes; me.

19. Previous experience with this species: Pretty broad. I have not seen many in such fresh juvenile plumage.

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











