

# 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](mailto:zoiseaux@lusfiber.net)> .

1. English and Scientific names: [Lesser Nighthawk \(\*Chordeiles acutipennis\*\)](#)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage): [1](#)
3. Parish: [Jefferson](#)  
Specific Locality: [“Exxon fields” across from the TNC camp on Grand Isle, LA](#)
4. Date(s) when observed: [15 April 2016](#)
5. Time(s) of day when observed: [7:45 pm](#)
6. Reporting observer and address: [Erik I. Johnson, 102 Goodwood Cir., Lafayette, LA 70508](#)
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): [The sun had gone down, but the evening light still had that “glow” before the darkness takes over. The lighting was pretty even in all directions, but was fading rapidly.](#)
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): [None. Bins were in my car, and I was too far away.](#)
11. Distance to bird(s): [It was first seen about 50 feet away over the field \(to my north\) and approached, passing over the road, passing the camp, and flying E across the lawn, and then N back over the road to the field. It circled back toward me and crossed in front of me just at the ditch on the other \(N\) side of the road, only about 15 feet away.](#)

12. Duration of observation: I watched the bird for a total of about a minute before turning to group at camp to alert them. When I turned back around 10 seconds later, I had lost the bird and we couldn't refind it.

13. Habitat: Grassy field surrounded by marsh/beach/mangrove.

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): Low-flying *Chordeiles* nighthawk staying within 5' of ground as it flew quickly, banking from side to side and gliding interspersed with somewhat floppy, but powerful wing beats.

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*): The color of the underparts weren't noted, but from above appeared relatively pale (although brownish). Most notably, the somewhat limited white bars on the primaries were very near to the tip of the wing. The white bar seemed a bit smaller than a male Common Nighthawk, but not as limited as in some female Lesser Nighthawks, but again, the relatively distal placement on the primaries was apparent both from above and below as the bird glided and banked between flaps. The flight feathers also appeared barred with paler brown markings. The impression of the wing tip shape was more rounded than Common Nighthawk, although I admit to not having seen Common Nighthawk well since last fall.

I went back the next evening to look at the same time of day, and lighting conditions were similar. I did see several Common Nighthawks that indeed appeared dark in these conditions, and helped me feel more comfortable about the white wing spot position and wing shape.

16. Voice: Not heard.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Common Nighthawk is the only other likely possibility. The color of the bird looked "bright" in the approaching darkness, whereas I would have expected a Common Nighthawk to appear darker than this. Most importantly was the position of the white markings on the wing (see 15), and the wing tips appeared rounded. Also the flight style, staying within a few feet of the ground as it circled around me, fits Lesser Nighthawk well.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): none

19. Previous experience with this species: Little, especially in flight like this. I've seen here and there out west and a couple times in SW LA, but few individuals and it's been

several years since seeing one flight. Even so, lots of experience with Common Nighthawk, including at this very site, which were only just arriving for spring, so it has been about 6-8 months since seeing many of them, but then I saw a few the day after the Lesser Nighthawk.

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

a. at time of observation: none

b. after observation: Audubon Field Guide app

21. This description is written from:

<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made during the observation.	Are notes attached?	
X	notes made after the observation.	At what date?	15 April 2016 (eBird) <a href="http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S28973895">http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S28973895</a>
X	Memory		
<input type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

22. Are you positive of your identification? I was mostly convinced at the time, and upon visiting the site the next day and seeing Common Nighthawks under the same lighting conditions, I remain quite certain.

23. Date: 4 August 2016

Time: 8:30 am

24. May the LBRC have permission to display in whole or in part this report and accompanying photos on the LOS-LBRC website and LBRC Facebook page? yes

If yes, may we include your name with the report? Yes