

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

1. English and Scientific names: Long-tailed Jaeger, *Stercorarius longicaudus*
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
1 in fresh juvenile plumage
3. Parish: Plaquemines Parish
Specific Locality:
4. Date(s) when observed: 2 September 2017

5. Time(s) of day when observed: Beginning around 1:42

6. Reporting observer and address: Paul Conover, Lafayette LA

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

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

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

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Zeiss 10s and Nikon D3300 with 200 mm lens

11. Distance to bird(s): The bird flew by, at closest point probably within 20 yards

12. Duration of observation: Total time about 1 minute

13. Habitat: Blue water/green water interface, with a thick sargassum line separating the different waters. The area was very active with life, from fish to birds. There were Bridled Terns and Audubon's Shearwaters in sight or in the near vicinity at the time.

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): Someone shouted, "Jaeger," from behind me (I was on the bow), and I began to look around. A small group of Bridleds was coming from the stern in direct but lazy flight, and it took a few moments for me to realize that the jaeger was mixed in with the terns. A difference in bulk and build was obvious, as was larger size, but it was flying in time with the terns in unhurried flight. The bird drew even with us, then passed us without deviating from its course. It continued up the sargassum line, only banking when it was probably 100 yards past us.

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*):

A somewhat dull medium-brown gull-like bird with somewhat falcon-like albeit very leisurely flight.

Upperparts dull medium brown, with thin pale whitish fringes to coverts of inner wing, and whitish or pale buff fringes to mantle feathers. Inner wings appeared almost 3-toned due to presence of fringes of secondary coverts: lesser coverts with many fringes appeared palest, followed by more widely spaced median and greater covers appearing intermediate brown, and secondaries themselves the darkest brown. Outer two primaries with obvious ivory shafts, with some photos suggesting reduced presence of same pattern on next innermost primary.

Nape appeared buff or golden, ground color of head pale dull buff with darker brown diffusely around dark eyes and weakly across crown.

Rump barred or marbled brown and white, in roughly equal amounts. Tail similar in shade of brown as secondaries, somewhat laterally compressed and narrowing distally. The tail shows narrow but conspicuous whitish tips running basically perpendicular to the grain of the tail, i.e. not showing spiked shape, but elongated or rounded central rects not visible in views given.

Underparts with broad blurry dull brown breast band that continued up sides of rear neck and connected on the nape behind buffy nape. Center of breast unmarked. sparsely marked, or smudged slightly darker than pale ground color. Axillars smudged darker than breast, flanks and undertail barred fairly evenly brown and pale. Pattern of flanks continued onto underwing linings. Flight feather underneath medium-dark brown with white flash from base of primaries conspicuous but confined to inner ¼ or so of outer primaries and continuing inward at same width.

Bill somewhat narrow, with gonydeal angle at about 2/3 the length of bill, dark tip of bill beginning around gonys and contrasting with paler (horn colored?) bill base.

Flight even and unlabored, but direct. Wingbeats rose only slightly above horizontal and dropped to only about 45 degrees below horizontal. Wings appeared long and not particularly broad-based, swept back and somewhat pointed.

16. Voice: Not vocal

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Pomarine Jaeger should appear bulkier, but in absence of direct comparison that difference is

subjectively assessed. Bill of bird appears thinner and less massive than Pomarine, and with gonys much farther from bill tip than Parasitic. Parasitics often show rustier feather edging and rustier tones in overall color, less contrast between coverts and flight feathers. More or less transverse pale edging to tail suggests the banding on the inner rects of LTJA. Individually, many of the field marks can overlap with Parasitic, but as a suite, are more suggestive of LTJA.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): Yes, by many observers including me. My photos attached.

19. Previous experience with this species: None previous.

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

a. at time of observation:

b. after observation: Photos, id websites of known ID birds, looked at NG guide a week or so after sighting, and tonight I looked at Sibley.

21. This description is written from:

<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made during the observation.	Are notes attached?	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made after the observation.	At what date?	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	memory		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

22. Are you positive of your identification? Yes. I remained pretty firmly skeptical even though my first impression of the bird was LTJA. However, looking at all of the features which individually overlap with other jaegers, and seeing them all present on this bird in a combination which favors LTJA, I feel confident calling the bird a LTJA.

23. Date: 9/24/2017













