

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: Red-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon aethereus*)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage): 1, sex unknown, in adult plumage.
3. Parish: Plaquemines Parish
Specific Locality: Gulf of Mexico—open ocean. Exact location unknown but north of 25.777590, -89.869890
4. Date(s) when observed: 22 December 2017
5. Time(s) of day when observed: 12:10 pm
6. Reporting observer and address: Mark A. Greene, 194 Mt. Orange Road, Trenton, TN 383832
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): Clear, sunny with sun almost directly overhead.
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Zeiss 10x40 Classic binoculars and Zeiss Victory 85mm Diascope with 20-60x eyepiece.
11. Distance to bird(s): 75 yards to 200 yards

12. Duration of observation: 2 minutes

13. Habitat: Open ocean

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): I was watching for seabirds from the balcony deck of our room aboard the Carnival Triumph cruise ship. I spotted this bird with my binoculars and then got my scope on the bird. Bird was seen in flight and briefly sitting on the water after a dive.

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*): I noted a medium sized seabird similar in appearance to a Royal Tern, of which I had seen dozens of in Mexico the previous two days. The bird had a mostly white plumage with a large red bill. The bill was brighter than that of the Royal Terns that I had seen recently and was most like that of a Caspian Tern's bill in color (but without the black tip). The bird had a black mask around the eye that extended onto the nape of the bird. Outer primaries were black and extended onto the primary coverts. The back was finely barred with darker feathers. The long, white tail streamers were one of the first things that I noticed about this bird.

16. Voice: None detected.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Differentiated from White-tailed Tropicbird by reddish, not yellowish bill. Differentiated by terns by long, white tail streamers.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): The bird was in view for approximately 3-4 minutes but was too active for me to get a photograph of before it flew out of sight.

19. Previous experience with this species: None, but this was also a species that I had studied as a possible seabird that I might see in the Gulf on this trip.

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

a. at time of observation: None, I stayed on the birds and made audio notes on my phone during the observations, only referencing the field guides after the birds had disappeared.

b. after observation: I had the Sibley Guide and Peter Harrison's Seabirds on the ship with me.

21. This description is written from: I used the voice record on my phone to verbally record the plumage details, etc. and then made written notes from those audio recordings.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Audio notes made during the observation.	Are notes attached?	No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Written notes made after the observation.	At what date?	12/22/2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	memory		
<input type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

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

23. Date: 12/28/2017

Time: 12:30 pm

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