

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 adult

3. Parish: Plaquemines

Specific Locality: eBird List: Carnival Cruise Glory 8.17.19 Leg 18 of 25 (27.012, - 88.535) (heading NW towards Southwest Pass).

Based on the starting coordinates of this list (at 2:44pm) and that the ship covered 5.63 miles over the 20 minutes of this list, the bird would have been approximately 1.7 miles northwest of the start coordinates or approximately 140 miles southeast of Southwest Pass.

4. Date(s) when observed: August 17, 2019

5. Time(s) of day when observed: 2:50pm

6. Reporting observer and address: James F. Holmes (Jim), 4109 U Street, Sacramento, CA 95817

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): cloudy with imminent rain, ship heading NW with sun on port side of ship but mostly behind clouds. Bird was flying on the starboard side well above the water.

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Initially seen with naked eye, then switched to binoculars. Finally viewed with Kowa TSN-883 (Angled) scope (very good condition).

11. Distance to bird(s): estimated to be 300 meters off the starboard side when initially located but was moving away and gaining elevation during the observation

12. Duration of observation: nearly 1 minute

13. Habitat: Open seas,
seas 4 feet, regular Whitecaps, Beaufort 4, water depth 2310 meters

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation):

Observed from Deck 6.

Bird was flying parallel to the ship well above the water (such that I was never able to properly see the dorsum of the bird). I watched it for nearly 1 minute as it slowly gained elevation. As soon as I was confident with the sighting, I texted my dad to come to the front deck but was never able to find the bird again after taking my eyes off of it to text him. Characteristic tropicbird flight with very rapid somewhat shallow wingbeats. Bird flew straight and slowly away from the boat while gradually continuously gaining altitude.

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*):

Large white seabird, red bill, black mask around and extending behind eye, dark leading edge of wing starting at elbow and going to end of primaries, likely involving outer half of primaries. unable to appreciate back markings on dorsum of bird, underside white, not able to see leg color.

long white streamer tail (doubling the length of the body)

16. Voice: none

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

White-tailed Tropicbird: Red bill eliminates adult White-tailed Tropicbird. Also, White-tailed tropicbird has less extensive dark primaries.

Royal Tern: although somewhat similar, lacks the long tail and facial pattern is different (black cap and not a black mask)

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): None, once I was confident in the identification (viewing through the scope), I texted my dad to come to the front of the ship but was not able to find the bird again after that.

19. Previous experience with this species: I am familiar with Red-billed Tropicbird. I have seen this species on multiple occasions in more expected locations and most recently on August 20, 2018 and in April 2016 (19 individuals over 5 days at sea in the Eastern Atlantic Ocean while on the Atlantic Odyssey). This was the 3rd observation of this species for me in Louisiana (initial September 13, 1997). I have also seen White-tailed Tropicbird on numerous occasions (again most recently with multiple observations on the Atlantic Odyssey in April 2016 and Hawaii in July 2016).

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

a. at time of observation: none

b. after observation: None

21. This description is written from:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	notes made during the observation. Are notes attached?	See eBird list for dictated notes at time of observation
<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made after the observation. At what date?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Memory	
<input type="checkbox"/>	study of images	

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S59072765>

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

23. Date: November 15, 2019

Time: 12:31pm

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_____