

11-1989

VERIFICATION OF UNUSUAL SIGHT RECORD FOR UTAH

Common Name: Glaucous-winged Gull

Scientific Name: Larus glaucescens

Date: Nov. 10, 1989 Time: 1:15 pm

Length of time observed: 20 minutes

Number: 1

Age: 1st Year

Sex:

Location: Logan Sewage Ponds, Cache County, Utah

Latilong: 3

Elevation (if known): 4440

Distance to bird: 30-40 ft minimum

Light conditions: Direct sunlight behind observer

Optical equipment: Bushnell 9X36 binoculars

Weather: Mostly sunny, temperature 55-60°F.

Description: (Write a detailed description of the bird's appearance, including size, shape, plumage pattern, color, and any unique features.)

This large gull was observed in close proximity to a 1st year Thayer's Gull and 1st year Herring Gull. The glaucous-winged gull was slightly larger than the Herring Gull and noticeably larger than the Thayer's Gull. It had a massive bill that was jet black to the base in color. The bill was noticeably thicker from the side than the other two species. The gull was primarily a sandy brown color. The primaries were the same color as the rest of the wing and similar to that of the whole bird. The primaries while the bird was at rest were noticeably lighter than those of either the Herring or Thayer's Gulls. The eye was dark and the legs pinkish. In flight the wings were above a uniform color and the same as the back. The under side of the wings were lighter. The profile of this bird was stockier than that of the other two gulls.

Voice or call notes and method of delivery: none

Behavior: The bird was sitting on one of the dikes during most of the observation period. It flew from this location twice.

Habitat: Sewage Ponds.

What similar species might it have been and how were these eliminated:

Glaucous Gull - 1st Year birds of this species are much whiter over all and the bill has only a black tip (light at base).

Thayer's Gull - The glaucous-winged Gull was seen with this species. Thayer's gull was smaller, primaries at rest darker in color and the bill was not jet black all the way to the base.

Herring Gull - The glaucous-winged Gull was seen with this species. Herring gull was slightly smaller, primaries at rest were darker with whitish spots, bill was smaller (more narrow) and in flight tips of primaries were dark and had dark band at ends of secondaries.

What experience have you had with this and similar species:

I have seen this species in Alaska and along the west coast.

Books, illustrations, and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

Birds of North America (National Geographic Society) and Seabirds (Peter H. Ravn) were used to determine the important characteristics.

Significance of record in this area or the state: 1st for latilong 3 and Cache Valley.

Additional material: (attach drawing, photograph, tape recording if available)

Photographs

Description from notes taken at time of sighting _____ notes made later _____ from memory X

Observer: Ron Rye

Signature: Ronald J. Rye

Address: 825 N. 600 E.
Logan, UT 84321

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

Lawrence A. Rye

Date prepared: Nov. 15, 1989

Return this form to: Ella Sorensen
3868 Marsha Drive
West Valley City, Utah 84120

Reference to record
11-1989 (Glaucous-wing
Gull)

Nov. 19, 1989

Dear Ella,

Enclosed are the two gull site records. I got a date for the Heermann's Gull from Terry Barnes, the other person who saw it.

The 'Temminck's Stint' turned out to be a Dunlin based on call. We never saw it sitting and it showed a lot of white in the outer tail. Hayman et al. shows tail pattern for Dunlin that is consistent with what we saw (darn!).

Has been a good year up here - I have 224 in Cache County (my dad 224 & Keith 222). Had Oldsquaw & Ross' Goose at Sewage Ponds recently.

Hope to get to SEC to see Glaucous Gull (will call you) and maybe to Fish Springs for Trumpeter Swan. Thanks for all the information. Good talking to you.
Best wishes Ron Ryel