

VERIFICATION OF UNUSUAL SIGHT RECORD FOR UTAH

Common Name: Little Gull Scientific Name: *Larus minutus*

Date: Sept. 17, 1992 Time: 10¹⁵ AM Length of time observed: 3 min.

Number: 1 Age: Adult Sex: ♂

Location: ^{North} EAST END OF Willard Bay, Box Elder Co. Utah

Latilong: Z Elevation (if known): 4215

Distance to bird: 20 ft to 20 yds. Light conditions: Excellent AM SUN

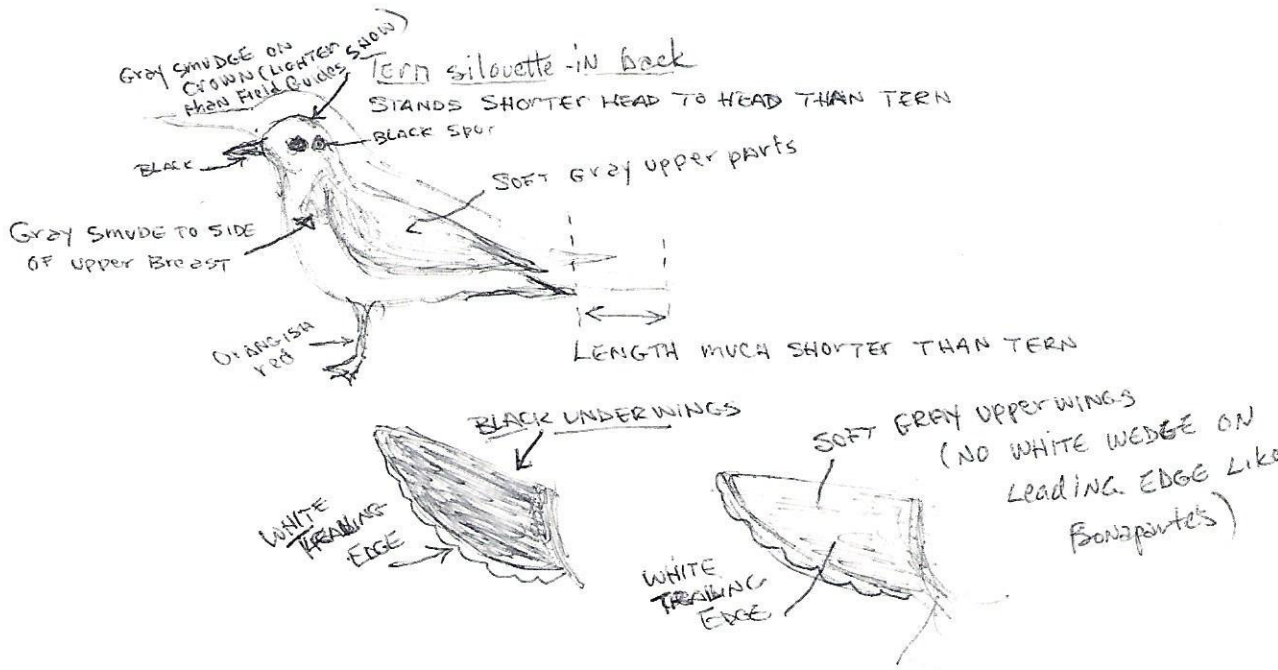
Optical equipment: BINOS 10x35 coming from a low angle to the left of the bird.

Weather: cool/clear

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

Small Bonapartes-like gull. Stood shorter than a forester's Tern, and was noticeably shorter in overall length than a Foresters. Upperparts i.e. nape, mantle, wing coverts, and flight feathers appeared soft gray. This gray extended on to sides of upper breast. All underparts were white (with exception of gray on sides of breast). Rump & head white. Black spot behind eye. Gray smudge on crown. Bill black, short & thin. LEGS orangish red.

In flight the gray coloration extended to wing tips (with no white wedge as Bonapartes'), narrow white trailing edge. The entire underwing was black! Wings were relatively short & rounded... but the bird was WITH TERNS so comparatively it seemed very short winged!



Voice or call notes and method of delivery:

No vocalizations heard

Behavior:

Sitting quietly with 15 Forsters Terns on a rocky spit in Willard Bay, when flushed circled with terns then settled on shore approx 50 yds from spit.

Habitat: Rocky spit into Willard Bay, Forsters Terns, Calif. & Ring billed Gulls, and about 12 Bonaparte's Gulls present (ON SHORE WHERE BIRD SETTLED AFTER FLUSHED)

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

Bonaparte's - Larger, white leading edge on upper wing, underwing white.

Common Black-headed - Larger still, bill orange, white leading edge to upper wing, back color much lighter, underwing w/ dark flight feathers only.

What experience have you had with this and similar species:

Bonaparte's - common, much experience

C. Black-headed - no experience

Little Gull - I saw one at Ft. Reyes in 1990.

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

National Geographic was main reference. P.J. Grant's 'Gulls' was consulted to see why crown was so much lighter than in Nat. Geo. - winter adults often lack smudge to crown.
All notes & descriptions taken & drawn at time of observation.

Significance of record in this area or the state:

STATE FIRST

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

Return to area w/ camera on following three days failed to turn up the bird.

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

Observer: CRAIG L. KNEED

Signature:

314 S. 4500 W.

Address:

West Point, Utah
84015



Other observers who independently identified this bird:

Date prepared:

10/9/92

Return this form to:

Ella Sorensen
3868 Marsha Drive
West Valley City, Utah 84120