

Lesser Black-backed Gull—1st basic
Jester Park, Campground 4
12/6/99

The bird was roosting and preening on the mudflats/islands with Herring and Ring-billed Gulls. I observed it in late afternoon with my binoculars and scope.

Description: First noticed because of its slim build and long wings. The primary projection was greater than the Herring Gulls, past the tip of the tail.

Head: very pale with light brown streaking

Bill: fairly thin and short compared to Herrings, black with just a touch of pale at the base

Underparts: very pale, light brown streaking/spotting

Mantle: dark brown mixed with dark grey, at first this made me think the bird was moulting into second winter. The grey was too light for LBB and too dark for Herring. After looking at LBB photos and reading a description of a similar bird, it seems that this probably normal for 1st year birds

Wings: I was able to observe the wing pattern when the bird flew a short distance and as it stretched. The upper surface was a dark, chocolate brown with no window or patterning of any kind.

Rump/Tail: The tail had a relatively thick, brownish band at the tip. The rest of the tail and the rump were white with brown spots or streaks. The rump/tail pattern was the most obvious feature when the bird flew due to the contrast with the dark mantle and wings.

Legs: the legs were a very dull pink

Other species: Herring Gull was eliminated by structure, wing pattern, and tail pattern.
California Gull was eliminated by bill coloration and tail pattern.
Thayers Gull was eliminated by wing pattern, structure, and over all color.

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