

Records Committee, Iowa Ornithologists' Union

Printed: 11/22/00

Sabine's Gull

24 Oct 1996

Red Rock Reservoir, Marion Co., IA

\*Jim Fuller

adult; IBL 67:23, 82

Record Number: 96-64

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll NE, Iowa City 52240

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 67:23

Records Committee: IBL 67:82

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D, Adult.

A-D, Adult.

A-D, The shape and location of the triangles on the wing surface would have helped with this record.

A-D, Although distant, features seen confirm ID.

96-64

## DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD

SPECIES: Sabine's Gull (Adult)

LOCATION: Red Rock Reservoir (Marion County)

DATE & TIME: 24 October (11:05-11:20 AM)

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240

OTHERS: Seen later by Rita Goranson, Chuck Fuller, John Rutenbeck

BACKGROUND: I was scoping waterfowl in the middle of Red Rock Reservoir, viewing from Whitebreast Point, when a very different looking small gull came into the field. I watched it fly around for about twenty minutes. It never did get closer than 500 yards, and was as far as 800 yards at times.

DESCRIPTION: Although there were thousands of Franklin's Gulls on Red Rock at the time, I did not see another gull of any kind in the same scope view to compare. I did later see a Bonaparte's Gull and numerous Franklin's Gulls. The most striking feature of the bird was the three-toned upperwing pattern. An outer triangle formed by the outer primaries was black, a middle triangle on each wing was white, and the inner triangle and back were gray. In addition, there was a full dark hood. The underparts were white, and the tail was entirely white, and was notched. At this distance, I could not see a yellow bill tip. The bird flew back and forth, often low over the water, and at times wheeled about quite acrobatically. A later look at the upperwing of a flying Bonaparte's Gull showed mostly white in the outer primaries, and the rest was light gray.

SIMILAR SPECIES: First winter Black-legged Kittiwake, Little Gull, and Bonaparte's Gull have a somewhat three-toned upperwing, even though the pattern is not as clear-cut, but all have a dark tail band, and none has a full dark hood.

VIEWING CONDITIONS & OPTICS: It was late morning on a sunny day, and I was looking mostly north with a KOWA TSN-4 telescope at distances ranging from 500-800 yards.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: I saw an adult of this species at Davenport on 10/14/91. I also saw a number of adults in breeding plumage in Alaska in 1993.

REFERENCES & FIELD NOTES: Field notes were made immediately after returning to my car, and the National Geographic Field Guide was also viewed at that time. This form was typed on 28 October.