

California Gull

3 Nov 1996

Lost Island L., Palo Alto Co., IA

\*Lee A. Schoenewe

IBL 67:22, 82

Record Number: 96-60

Classification: NA

DOCUMENTATION

Lee A. Schoenewe, 518 W. 4th St., Spencer 51301 [4/6/97]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 67:22

Records Committee: IBL 67:82

VOTE: 2 A-D, 5 NA

NA, No direct comparison with other gulls makes size hard to determine.

A-D, No description of underparts, but brown tail and dark wings should eliminate similar species.

NA, I don't believe Herring Gull has been ruled out. If the mantle was changing to gray, it certainly appears to be a second-winter bird. However, there is no quantifying of the shade of gray, probably a difficult task anyway with a single bird. Especially with gulls of this age, bare part colors are soft criteria as they seem to vary all over the place. Comparative structure with known gulls is a more solid criterion for separating California from the more expected Herring.

NA, I see no reason why this wasn't a 2nd-winter Herring Gull. Bill and eye color OK and leg color extremely variable.

NA, Not enough detail of the upper surface (color, pattern of feather tracts, even color of neck and head, especially without any other gulls for direct comparison) of this bird for me to accept this record. I also do not get any idea of the behavior or 'look' of this bird compared to other gull species. Similar species were not completely eliminated as listed.

NA, 2nd winter CA and Herring gulls v. similar--enough variation in eye and leg color to raise doubt on ID on this basis--need better description of primary and secondary (coverts) patterns. Age can be confirmed by tertial wear (worn in 1st winter, fresh in 2nd winter). ID of imm gulls can be tricky by soft parts alone.

96-60

## DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species \_\_\_\_\_ How many? **CALIFORNIA GULL 1**  
 Location? **N. SHORE OF LOST ISLAND LAKE, PALO ALTO, CO.**  
 Type of habitat? **SHORELINE**  
 When? date(s): **11/3/76** Time: **10:35 AM - 10:55 AM**  
 Who? your name and address  
**LEE A. SCHOENEWE 518 W. 4<sup>th</sup> ST. SPENCER IA 51301**

Others with you **NONE**

Others before and after you

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also describe voice and behavior. **OBSERVED A SINGLE GULL WADING IN THE SURF ON A SANDY BEACH SCAVANGING FLOTSAM INCLUDING 2 FROGS KILLED BY THE FROST. DISTAL 1/3 OF BILL DARK AND SHARPLY DEFINED FROM PINK/GRAY BILL, WHICH WAS LARGE AND HEAVY. EYE WAS DARK. MANTLE CHANGING TO GRAY AND LEGS DULL GRAY/GREEN. BIRD WAS DISTINCTLY LARGER THAN NEARBY COOTS. IN FLIGHT, UPPER AND LOWER PRIMARIES WERE DARK AND TAIL WAS DUSKY BROWN WITH WHITE ON THE RUMP SPOTTED WITH BROWN. JUDGED A SECOND WINTER BIRD.**

Similar species and how eliminated: **RING-BILLED GULL - BILL SIZE, TAIL + WINTIPS IN FLIGHT** **HERRING GULL - BILL, EYE AND LEG COLOR**

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification?

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: **DAYLIGHT/SUN; 30-80 YDS; 8x40 BINOCULARS**

Previous experience with this species and similar ones:  
**NONE**

References and persons consulted before writing description:  
**PETERSON WESTERN GUIDE, NAT'L GEOGRAPHIC, MASTER AUDUBON AND ADVANCED BIRDING GUIDE**  
 How long before field notes made? **IMMEDIATELY**  
 this form completed? **10 HOURS**

Mail original form to field editor for this season.