

339-01-1994

LITTLE GULL

13 April 1994

Long Arm Creek Reservoir, Hanover (York County), PA
(Along Westminster Road, about 3 miles south of Hanover)
Peter Robinson, P. O. Box 482, Hanover, PA 17331

I arrived at the Reservoir at about 4:45 p.m. A rain shower had just finished, and I was wondering if any interesting birds had "dropped in". When I arrived, there was a flock of about 75 Bonaparte's Gulls in a newly plowed field on the west side of Westminster Road, across the road from the Reservoir. I had watched them for 10-15 minutes when a rather strong thunder storm came through. The gulls moved across the road and sat in a group in the mowed grass at the edge of the Reservoir during the thunder storm. I continued to watch them, and thought that one of the gulls was "dark" under the wings when it raised its wings, but was not certain. After the thunder storm finished, the flock of gulls went back to feeding in the plowed field. They were quite restless, and the flock would occasionally rise up and fly around the field. During a period of about 30 minutes, using Bausch & Lomb Elite 8x42 binoculars at about 100 yards distance, I was able to identify the Little Gull three different times as it flew around with the Bonaparte's Gulls. The Little Gull was in breeding plumage. It had a black hood and black bill, was dark gray color under the wings, the top of the wings was uniform gray color with a white trailing edge. It did NOT have the white wedge shaped area on the top of the wing that the Bonaparte's Gull has. The Little Gull seemed to have a little different wing beat than the Bonaparte's Gulls -- the Little Gull wing beat was more like that of a bat.

I called other Hanover bird watchers right away. Karen Lippy, Rusty Ryan, Jeff Wentz and I saw the bird again the same evening, for about 10 minutes. The other three people all agreed that it was a Little Gull. The Little Gull at first was sitting on a railing, along with the Bonaparte's, and it was noticeably smaller. Karen, Rusty, and Jeff got to see it fly also. After about 10 minutes, the entire flock rose, circled, then flew off towards the west. This flock was not seen at the Reservoir the following day.

Peter Robinson

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LITTLE GULL
Long Arm Dam
April 17, 1994

On April 17, after a visit from Peter Robinson, I joined a small group of birders attempting to relocate and confirm a Little Gull he had found at Long Arm Dam.

Peter was concerned that it would get dark before we relocated the bird, but we found it with at least $\frac{1}{2}$ hour of good light for viewing.

The bird was sitting on a railing with about 20 Bonaparte's Gulls. It was the third bird from the end nearest us and we noticed immediately that it was somewhat smaller than the other birds. The bird made several small flights plainly showing the white trailing edge to the wing in contrast to the Bonaparte's leading white wedge.

Unfortunately, the bird apparently left that evening and was not found the following day by other birders we notified that evening.

Bonaparte's Gulls were present for several days before and after the sighting. I made note of them, but did not take the time to look them over carefully. I congratulate Peter for taking the time to discover the Little Gull.

Karen Lippy

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: Little Gull (*Larus minutus*)

Date of Sighting: 13 April 1994 to 17 April 1994

Location: LONG ARM DAM

County: YORK

Observer(s): Peter Robinson; Karen Lippy

Date of Submission: 1994

Submitted by: Peter Robinson; Karen Lippy

Written Description: YES Photo: NO Specimen: NO

Recording: NONE

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V			Abstain
					A	B	C	
F. Haas			X					
N. Pulcinella		X						
E. Kwater			X					
R. Ickes			X					
G. McWilliams			X					
P. Schwalbe		X						
J. Skinner		X	X					
TOTALS		3	5					
DECISION			X					

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

J. C. Han

Date:

3-31-95