

337-01-1994

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Juvenal Laughing Gull at Kinzua Dam, Warren Co.

About 10 AM August 25, 1994. I was at the outlet of Kinzua Dam watching a spectacular release of over 10,000 cu. ft. per second through four gates. A flock of ring-billed gulls was flying and feeding below the outlets, but one very different gull was with them.

With 7 x 35 binoculars at a range of 60 feet at the closest, I saw that one gull was an overall smooth brown, with no apparent mottling nor light feather edgings. It was about the same size as the ring-bills. The belly was white and the tail bright white in marked contrast with the rest of the bird. There was a well-defined dark terminal band on the tail. I believe the forehead was somewhat paler than the head and neck. The primaries were black and the secondaries brown with white tips. The bill was black.

The description of the juvenal plumages in Harrison's "Sea Birds" fit the laughing gull. Later, an illustration of the juvenal laughing gull in the National Geographic guide was convincing.

On 8/27/94 I did not see it at the outlet of the dam, but I found it at the fish hatchery on the right bank of the river. It was resting with the other gulls among the rows of fish tanks. It allowed a close approach with a row of tanks between us. This time I could see that it was slightly smaller than a ring-bill standing next to it, and that there were light feather edgings on the back. I took a few photos of it with a 200 mm. lens. A slide duplicate is enclosed.

I believe this is the first Warren County record.

Ted Grisez

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See Slide

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September 1, 1994, 12:15 to 12:30 p.m.

I observed at close range with 7x35 binoculars an immature laughing gull with a flock of about 30 adult and immature ring-billed gulls over the spillway of the Kinzua Dam, Warren County, Pa.

This bird, noticeably different in overall appearance from any of the young ring-bills, displayed the typical features--including size, by comparison to the ring-bills--of a first-year laughing gull, particularly as pictured in the Peterson field guide: a uniformly-dark (not mottled) brown overall, especially on the head, around the entire neck, and on the back and wings; a prominent white rump; and a sharply-defined white border on the trailing edge of the wings.

Chase Putnam
Chase Putnam
108 Woods Road
Warren, Pa. 16365

See Slide

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Laughing Gull (Larus atricilla)**

Date of Sighting: **25 August 1994 to 1 September 1994**

Location: **KINZUA DAM**

County: **WARREN**

Observer(s): **Ted Grisez**

Chase Putnam

Date of Submission: **1994**

Submitted by: **Ted Grisez**

Written Description: **YES** Photo: **YES** 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							
S. Feldstein	X							
TOTALS	6						1	
DECISION	X							

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

F. Haas

Date:

9-19-95