

PENNSYLVANIA RARE BIRD REPORT FORM

This form is presented as a convenience and guide. It can be used if desired, but is not necessary for submitting a report. Species requiring documentation are those on the Review List or not on the Official List of Birds of Pennsylvania. Send documentation to:

Nick Pulcinella, Secretary
Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee
613 Howard Ave.
West Chester, PA 19380
nickpul@bellatlantic.net

337-02-2003

SPECIES (common and scientific name) Laughing Gull, Larus atricilla
Subspecies, if known _____

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 1 SEX(ES) _____

AGE(S) AND PLUMAGE(S) (e.g. immature; adult in breeding plumage; year for gulls; basic or alternate if you prefer those terms; state of molt if applicable):
adult nonbreeding

DATE OF OBSERVATION Sept. 19, 2003 TIME 0845 - 0900

LOCATION (city, borough, township) Howard Township, Centre County

EXACT SITE (e.g. name of park, lake, road) Bald Eagle State Park, Beach.

OBSERVER REPORTING:

Name Molly A. Heath
Address 234 EAST IRVIN AVE.
City State College State PA ZIP 16801
e-mail (optional) mheath@AOL.COM phone (optional) 814-234-1123

OTHER OBSERVERS (only those who saw and identified the bird with you):

HABITAT (e.g. mowed field, woodland edge, any other details)
sandy edge of lake

DISTANCE TO BIRD about 40 feet - and as close as 30 feet.

VIEWING CONDITIONS (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you)
low 60's, cloudy sky, breeze light, Sun to my left side.
I was facing South

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED binocs: Swarovski 8.5 x 42
Spotting Scope: Swarovski HD (49330) 20-60X

DESCRIPTION (Include as much detail as you observed – size relative to other species present; “jizz”= e.g. posture, body shape, and proportions; colors and patterns of plumage; bill, eye, and leg characteristics; other features relevant to this individual): _____

This laughing gull was near about 5 Ring-billed gulls.
I noticed this individual's all-black bill, larger in relation to its head than (with) the nearby ring-billed gulls' bills. Slightly "hooked" lower mandible stood out.
Dark legs caught my eye - darker than legs of RB gulls.
Smaller overall size of bird in contrast to RB gulls - I saw.
Saw that mantle was a medium grey - darker than that of the (paler grey) mantles of the RB gulls.
Noticed head was pale - with subdued mottling.
I thought, at time, subdued mottling was pale, pale tan.

(Please use an additional page if necessary.)

BEHAVIOR (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing) _____

Bird was resting quietly at edge of water - on sandy beach.
I walked towards it. Reluctantly, the bird got up, flew 15 feet EAST, and settled, again, on the beach.
I thought bird was wary, tired, reluctant to leave, just then.

VOCALIZATIONS _____

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IF ANY:

Photograph _____ Video recording _____ Audio recording _____ Drawing _____

Photographer/recorder/illustrator:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

e-mail (optional) _____ phone (optional) _____

Please include a copy of the photograph or recording with your report, and accompany it with a complete written documentation if the identification is obvious to you. If you made a drawing, please include it.

IF THIS IS A DEAD BIRD:

General condition _____

If collected (by permit), location of specimen if known _____

SEPARATION FROM SIMILAR SPECIES (how you eliminated others)

Since the laughing gull was near some ring-billed gulls, I could and did directly compare bill size, bill color, mantle color, head color, leg color, and overall size to the same features of the RB gulls.

DISCUSSION - Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it

Obviously, passing of Isabel had everything to do with this sighting.

Later, on the 19th, Matt Rockmore, and other State College Bird Club members reported finding a small group of laughing gulls at Beach, BESP. (same location)

(Please use an additional page if necessary)

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND/OR SIMILAR SPECIES

Have had 15 years of Massachusetts birding, including 10 Summers on Nantucket Island - where there were laughing gulls, etc.

ARE YOU POSITIVE OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION? (why or why not)

Yes, I am positive about this I.D. Had excellent looks at sitting bird, plenty of RB gulls to compare it to.

REFERENCES CONSULTED:

During observation The Sibley Guide to Birds, David A. Sibley
After observation " " " " " " " " "

DATE OF THIS REPORT: Sept. 26, 2003

SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER Molly A. Heath

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*)

Date of Sighting: 19 September 2003 to 19 September 2003

Location: BALD EAGLE STATE PARK

County : CENTRE

Observer(s): Molly Heath

Date of Submission: 2003

Submitted by: Molly Heath

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

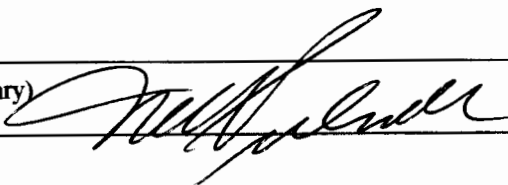
Specimen: No

Recording: ~~Video~~ NO

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
G. Armstrong R. Witmer				X				
D. Heathcote			X					
P. Guris			X					
J. Stanley			X					
E. Witmer			X					
R. Leberman			X					
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			6	1				
DECISION			X					

Comments: 6/1

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

9/14/04