

338-01-1992

Recd 5/7/92

Rare Bird Documentation

Species: **Franklin's Gull, *Larus pipaxcan***
 Location: **Harvey's Lake, Luzerne County, PA**
 Observer: **Dr. Jerry Skinner (and ornithology class from KJC)**
Keystone Junior College
LaPlume, PA 18440-0200
(717) 945-5141

Date: **17 April 1992**
 Time: **17:45 hours**
 Weather and lighting conditions: **overcast; rain, sometimes heavy, most of the day.**
 Habitat: **near shore in the open waters of the lake; specifically, near the public boat launch area.**
 Sighting conditions: **the bird was sighted from about 100 yards for about 5 minutes, using Zeiss 8 x 40 binoculars.**

Characteristics noted:
 The medium-sized gull with a black head was flying with a flock of about 25 Ring-billed Gulls. Being accustomed to checking the bill color of such gulls, I was surprised to see its blood-red color, distinctive of Laughing and Franklin's Gulls, and not of Bonaparte's Gull. The black hood extended further on the nape than in Bonaparte's Gull. A broken white eye ring was noted. The breast was effused with pink. This was a surprising observation, as I was not aware that other gulls besides Ross' Gull showed this. The mantle was a dark gray, lacking the white wedges on the wings characteristic of Bonaparte's Gull. Examination of the wing tips confirmed that it was a Franklin's Gull. The mantle was separated from the dark wingtips by a white band. The tips of the primaries were white. These wing characters eliminate Laughing Gull. This was such a picture-perfect breeding plumaged bird that a whole vanful of neophyte birders (they stayed in the van while I watched the gull in the rain!) had correctly identified it when I returned to the van.

Vocalizations: **None.**
 Previous experience: **I have extensive experience with breeding Laughing Gulls along the eastern seaboard. While I have never observed a breeding plumaged Franklin's Gull, I had occasion in June, 1976 to identify a similar gull in Ohio. Although that bird turned out to be a Laughing Gull, I have ever since been attuned to the characters needed to distinguish these species.**
 Others who observed this bird: **Bill Reid, Tunkhannock, County Coordinator for atlas project corroborated the sighting later that evening. Ed Johnson, Dallas, compiler for Dallas (PA) Christmas Bird Count corroborated the report the next morning.**

PS As best as I can tell this is a county and regional 1st record.

Jerry Skinner
4/18/92

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Franklin's Gull**

Date of Sighting: **17 April 1992 to 17 April 1992**

Observer(s): **Jerry Skinner**

Date of Submission: **1992**

Submitted by: **Jerry Skinner**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater			X				
B. Haas			X				
F. Haas			X				
R. Ickes			X				
G. McWilliams			X				
S. Santner			X				
J. Skinner	Abstain		-				
TOTALS			7				
DECISION			X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

B. M. Haas

Date:

2-27-93