

<b>Submission Date</b>	2012-11-02 14:56:53
<b>Observer's Name</b>	Ian Gardner
<b>E-mail</b>	gardnie07@gmail.com
<b>Phone</b>	717-350-5815
<b>Observer's Address</b>	Street Address: 1128 W Beaver Ave Street Address Line 2: Apt A City: State College State / Province: PA Postal / Zip Code: 16801 Country: United States
<b>Names of additional observers</b>	Andy Markel, Dave Wilton, Dave Kyler, Trudy Kyler, Michael David, Jason Horn, Peter Robinson, Devich Farbotnik
<b>Species (Common Name)</b>	Sabine's Gull
<b>Species (Scientific Name)</b>	Xema sabini
<b>Number of individuals</b>	1
<b>Have you submitted this to eBird?</b>	Yes
<b>Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)</b>	Juvenile, non-breeding plumage
<b>Observation Date and Time</b>	10-31-2012 4:20 PM
<b>County</b>	Huntingdon
<b>Location (City, Borough, Township)</b>	Penn Township
<b>Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)</b>	Beer Barrel Cove, Seven Points, Lake Raystown
<b>GPS coordinates of sighting</b>	N 40.376563, W -78.089889
<b>Habitat</b>	Open water on inland freshwater lake
<b>Distance to bird</b>	roughly 2000 feet
<b>Viewing conditions</b>	overcast day with light rain and moderate wind
<b>Optical equipment used</b>	Leupold Wind River 10x50 binoculars and Kowa TSN 77 with 20x-60x objective lens
<b>Description</b>	While on the water, the gull appeared to be slightly smaller than the adjacent Bonaparte's Gulls. The gull was smudgy brown all over while on the water. A dark bill was obvious as were black wingtips. Once in the air, the gull showed off its brown, triangular mantle with

black leading edges to the primaries. The brown section was seen from wrist to wrist and then tapered to the rump. The secondaries were stark white in an inverse triangle and contrasted heavily with the back and primaries. The tail was slightly forked and white with a black edge. The head was white except for brown smudging on the back half. The underside of the gull was entirely white except for a dirty white patch on the wings, which seemed to coincide with the brown section of the mantle. Eye color could not be seen from the distance at which I was observing.

**Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)**

The bird was seen sitting on the water with 4 Bonaparte's Gulls. Occasionally the bird would raise a wing while preening. Once the BOGU took flight, the gull would pick up as well. They would fly less than 50 feet above the water and drop down to the water and attempt to feed on the water. Common loons were quickly running along the water to remove themselves from the scene where the gulls were feeding.

**Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)**

The bird was smaller than the Bonaparte's Gulls around it so I ruled out all larger gulls. The only other similar gulls I could think of were juvenile Little Gull, juvenile Bonaparte's Gull, juvenile Ross's Gull, and juvenile Black-legged Kittiwake. Because the tail was slightly forked, I ruled out Ross's Gull. The brown mantle extended across the back and neck and was continuous throughout. This ruled out Bonaparte's and Little Gull, and Black-legged Kittiwake.

**Discussion - anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it:**

Myself and 8 other experienced reputable birders had the same conclusion about the identification of this bird. It was too distinct in plumage coloration and size to be any other species.

**Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)**

Yes. I had reviewed several guide books concerning potential gulls that could be swept in with the hurricane and was confident when I saw the bird.

**During**

None

**After**

Crossley's ID Guide to Eastern Birds

**Click to edit**

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