

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or a similar format when submitting records for review to assure that all pertinent information is accounted for. Attach additional pages or files as necessary. Please print or type for hard copy. For electronic copy, be sure to save this file to your computer before entering text. Attach field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed (if hard copy), mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216, or e-mail electronic copy as an attachment to Paul Edward Conover at <zoiseaux@lusfiber.net> .

1. English and Scientific names: Kelp Gull (*Larus dominicanus*)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage): 2: one adult seen during boat ride between Freemason and Curlew islands; one adult on SE 1/2 of Curlew Island. A possible fourth bird was seen flying off of Curlew Island.

3. Parish: St. Bernard

Specific Locality: Delta-Breton NWR, Chandeleur Islands, between Freemason and Curlew islands, and Curlew Island

4. Date(s) when observed: 16 June 1997

5. Time(s) of day when observed: offshore bird between 11:00 and 12:30 PM; Curlew bird between 1 and 4 PM

6. Reporting observer and city/state address

Reporting observer: Donna L. Dittmann
City: 435 Pecan Drive
State: Louisiana

7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): Daniel F. Lane; also Jane Ledwin (USFWS-Lafayette). Pon Dickson (refuge manager stayed with the boat).

8. Other observers who *independently identified* the bird(s): none

9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): partly cloudy to cloudy at Freemason becoming overcast and very windy in the late PM on Curlew as huge thunderstorm moved eastward towards the Chandeleurs. I'll never forget Dan saying regarding the weather as we were leaving the dock, "I think we need a bigger boat." The flags were pegged out at Venice when we arrived there in the AM.

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): binoculars

11. Distance to bird(s): distance to flying bird between Freemason and Curlew not recorded but it was fairly distant but still seen well enough to be confident it was a Kelp Gull (and recorded as such); good looks at the nesting bird on Curlew. A third dark backed gull (probably also a Kelp) was seen departing Curlew but we did not get views adequate to be confident it was also a Kelp.

12. Duration of observation: first observation probably not more than a minute as bird headed past us towards offshore shrimp boats; Kelp on Curlew for several minutes while we looked for the nest/offspring.

13. Habitat: barrier islands

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): offshore bird seen flying offshore in direction of shrimp boats; Curlew Kelp paired to a first generation (LBBG-colored mantle) hybrid had nest (found by Jane Ledwin) with 3 small chicks; nest fairly flat constructed of seaweed type grasses placed on the sand just above the high tide wreck line; presumed hybrid chicks silvery grayish-white with dark brownish-black patterning, black legs, black bill with pale tip; the chicks scrambled off the nest and hid in the wreck line. This pair was in the vicinity where DLD observed the pure Kelp pair in 1994.

15. Description (include only what was actually seen, *not what "should" have been seen*; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species; body bulk, shape, proportions; bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species, *or for species that are known to hybridize frequently, stress features that help eliminate possible hybrids*): Herring Gull-sized gulls. Mantle blackish-gray, notably darker than nearby Laughing Gulls. The mantle had an almost black appearance and in certain light, the birds appeared black and white. The head, underparts, and tail were immaculate white. In flight the primaries from above contrasted little with the dark gray wing. On Curlew individual there was one mirror on primary #10 and a broad white trailing edge to the secondaries. The undersurface of the wings in flight were reminiscent of a Laughing Gull with black primaries that graded into dark gray on the inner primaries and continued down the secondaries, forming a distinct dark secondary bar. The head looked fairly large in relationship to the rest of the body in flight, as did the legs and feet. The bill was on the hefty side with a pronounced gonydeal angle, deep yellow with a large red gonydeal patch. On Curlew Island bird, the iris was white or pale yellow and the orbital ring was red. The legs and feet were greenish-yellow.

16. Voice: Long calls and distraction calls.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): No other large black-backed gull has the combination of greenish-yellow legs, a red orbital ring, and a single mirror on primary #10. No hybrid combination shows these characters.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): NO camera!

19. Previous experience with this species: Visited the Chandeluers in 1994 and saw the original pair of Kelps first discovered in 1989 by Dan Purrington and Larry O'Mealie. Also responsible for discovering hybrids, and mixed pairs with offspring.

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification): None.

a. at time of observation: None.

b. after observation: None

21. This description is written from:

<input type="checkbox"/>	notes made during the observation.	Are notes attached?	Yes
X	notes made after the observation.	At what date?	
X	memory		
<input type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

22. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain: Yes.

23. Date: 21 February 2020 <compilation of Kelp records for LBRC>

Time:

24. May the LBRC have permission to display in whole or in part this report and accompanying photos on the LOS-LBRC website and LBRC Facebook page?

__yes_____

If yes, may we include your name with the report? __yes_____

Donna L. Dittmann