

# 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](mailto:zoiseaux@lusfiber.net)> .

1. English and Scientific names: American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*)

2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage): 1, adult

3. Parish: Orleans

Specific Locality: US-90, between Lake Catherine and Bayou Sauvage NWR, at "Flamingo Pond" (eBird hotspot name): 30.089687, -89.774428

4. Date(s) when observed: 29 September 2023

5. Time(s) of day when observed: 4:30 pm

6. Reporting observer and city/state address

Reporting observer: Erik I. Johnson
City: Sunset
State: Louisiana

7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): There were a few other birders there when I arrived.

8. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s): Lots!

9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Sunny, I was looking roughly southeast toward the bird with the sun WSW.

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): 10x42 Vortex Razor Binoculars, 25-50x 65mm Swarovski scope, Nikon D7200 with 150-600 f/4.5-6.3 Sigma lens, all in good condition.

11. Distance to bird(s): about 500 ft as measured in Google maps. The bird was toward the

opposite end of the pond from the road.

12. Duration of observation: 55 minutes

13. Habitat: coastal wetland – intermediate/fresh? Surrounded by scrubby/woody vegetation

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation):

The bird was mostly staying in place. It lazily foraged (gentle bill sweeps in water), preened, and took a few steps here and there.

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*):

Obviously a flamingo with distinctive and unique bill. Huge in size and towered over White Ibis and Snowy Egret, and making Black-necked Stilt look miniature. Pink plumage from head to body to wings, with black folded wing tips occasionally appearing from under the long body feathers and coverts. Legs were pink with redder “knees” (ankles). Bill was bi-colored, being black toward the tip and pale pink at the base. Iris was yellow. The back and lower neck were relatively pale pink with redder coverts and a little redder in the face.

16. Voice: Not vocal.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): There are five other species of flamingo in the world, and given the consideration of any escaping captivity, all should be considered as possible. Comparing adults only.

- Chilean: legs would be grayer/yellower, and generally paler body plumage.
- Greater: would be much paler and have less black on the tip of the bill.
- Lesser: would be much paler with a reddish eye.
- Andean: would be paler with yellow legs, dark eye, and yellowish base to bill.
- James's: would have stubby yellow bill, dark eye, and paler plumage.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): Yes, photos.

19. Previous experience with this species: I saw a few in the Yucatán about 5 years ago, but no real experience distinguishing among flamingo species.

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

a. at time of observation: None.

b. after observation: Cornell's Birds of the World online species accounts.

21. This description is written from:

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

22. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain: Yes, ID is certain. The bigger question is origin. This sighting is part of an outbreak of American Flamingo records from across the eastern U.S. following the passage of Hurricane Idalia on August 30, 2023, which formed between the Yucatan and Cuba, where American Flamingos are from. At least one of those birds found in the U.S. was banded, confirming a Yucatan origin. As of this report, I believe that flamingos have been found in 16 U.S. states, from Texas to Kansas to Wisconsin to Pennsylvania, and most states south and east of those to the Atlantic and Gulf states. More information about the outbreak was summarized early on here: <https://www.aba.org/hurricane-idalia-report-2023/>.

23. Date: 14 October 2023

Time: 8:30 pm

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



