

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

1. English and Scientific names: Audubon's Shearwater, *Puffinus lherminieri*
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
3 individuals seen "together" at one point, then separately.
3. Parish: Plaquemines
Specific Locality: ca. 36-37 mi SE of South Pass
4. Date(s) when observed: 2 September 2017
5. Time(s) of day when observed: Encountered from 1:37-1:38 p.m., when we had the first bird, to shortly after when we had 3 Audubon's at the same time in one small area of grass line, (adjusted for the fact that my timestamps are an hour off as I had the camera set for a different time zone). 2nd bird alone was encountered at 1:50, and a third bird was approached around 2:05. We birded this area while staying in one small area, and there were many other species that we turned our attention to during this period. While the photos below may show duplicate birds, 3 were in fact observed at one period.
6. Reporting observer and address: Paul E. Conover, Lafayette LA
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): Many; pelagic trip
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s):
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Sunny, light excellent
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Zeiss 10x binos, Nikon D3300 camera with 200mm lens.
11. Distance to bird(s): down to 20-30 yards, up to perhaps 70 yards.
12. Duration of observation: Each observation lasted from around 2 minutes to perhaps 3-4 minutes.
13. Habitat: blue water
14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): The birds were more or less becalmed, but flushed on approach. As we first neared the grass line area, we stumbled onto the first bird. As we approached it, we noted 2 other birds getting up within 100 yards of one another and flying out of eyesight. Later, we came upon what were anywhere from 2-3 of these birds again.
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*):

Small “black and white” shearwaters, dark above, pale below.

Blurry demarcation between dark top and white bottom of head, dark-tipped gray/blue bill, white eyering or arc above eye joined to broader white lores. Dark distal undertail coverts.



White underwings bordered by black, narrower fore, broader aft, with dark projection into forward border of white underwing around innermost wing bend. Legs in photo appear bluish-gray with black line down the back of the leg joining black feet or perhaps black toes with bluish webs. Birds in obvious primary molt, with older outer primaries paler and protruding beyond gap of incoming adjacent inner primaries. One showed such prominent white patches on the sides of the rump that I thought I saw a white rump and thought “storm petrel.”





Bird above photographed at 1:37-1:38 p.m.

Bird in shots below photographed at 1:50-1:52 p.m.







The bird below was seen around 2:05 on calm blue water, and was probably the most photographed AUSH of the day.





16. Voice:

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Dark distal undertail coverts, facial pattern, underwing pattern in combination point to Audubon's.

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

19. Previous experience with this species: Minimal; this trip topped my previous total count.

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

a. at time of observation:

b. after observation: After writing the description, I consulted the Princeton seabirds book to study similar species.

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 type="checkbox"/>	memory		

study of images

22. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain: I think that the combination of features rules out any shearwater that we could expect to occur in these numbers.

23. Date: 18 September 2017

Time: 8:37 p.m.