

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 as necessary. Please print or type. Attach xerox of field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed, mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216.

1. English and Scientific names: *Cory's Shearwater*, *Calonectris diomedea*
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
Six birds identified to subspecies as follows: two nominate ("Scopoli's"), one borealis, & 3 unclassified ssp.
3. Locality: Parish: Plaquemines (Gulf of Mexico)
Specific Locality: ca. 16 mi SE of South Pass of Mississippi River
4. Date(s) when observed: *10 September 2016*
5. Time(s) of day when observed: *1145-1230 CDT*
6. Reporting observer and address: *Robert C. Dobbs, Lafayette, LA*
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): *Terry Davis, Oscar Johnson, Marybeth Lima, Andre Moncrieff, David Muth, Mac Myers, Van Remsen, and others*
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): *Overcast*
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): *Swarovski 8x30 binos (good cond), Nikon f5.6 / 70-200 mm lens (good cond)*
11. Distance to bird(s): *100-150+ m*
12. Duration of observation: *30 sec - 2 min each (?)*
13. Habitat: *pelagic, "blue" water*
14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and

stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): Details not recorded for all birds, but two birds (putative Scopoli's and borealis individuals) landed on the water, relatively close (100 m?) to the boat, and allowed good comparisons; other birds observed in flight only.

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): Large shearwaters, pale grayish-brownish above and white below. Entire head pale grayish, gently fading to white throat and breast; darker gray around eye. Large, relatively deep, bright yellow bill.

Putative Scopoli's and borealis individuals were observed together on the water at relatively close range. Subspecies IDs not confirmed with in-flight shots (of undersides of primaries), but one of the birds (Scopoli's) was distinctly smaller, with a smaller, thinner bill, than the other (borealis).

16. Voice: Not vocal

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Great Shearwater, the other large shearwater expected in the Gulf of Mexico, readily distinguished from Cory's by a distinct dark cap well demarcated from mostly white neck, gray collar, all-black bill, and variable black feathering in underwing coverts. Other expected shearwaters include Audubon's and Manx, both of which are significantly smaller than Cory's, and contrastingly colored black (above) and white (below), have shorter, rounder wings, and small all-dark bills.

Cape Verde Shearwater similar to Cory's, but only occurs in North American waters as a vagrant (North Carolina). Cape Verde has a smaller, more dull/dusky yellowish bill, a darker gray head and more capped appearance.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? Attached?): Photos of five birds, including singles ID'd as nominate ("Scopoli's") and borealis spp., by Robert C. Dobbs

19. Previous experience with this species: No experience prior to this trip, but quite a bit of experience by day's end, after seeing over 20 Cory's, including both subspecies

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

a. at time of observation:

b. after observation: Sibley Guide to Birds; Howell (2012) Petrels, Albatrosses and Storm-Petrels of North America

21. This description is written from: _____ notes made during the observation

(____notes attached?);____notes made after the observation (date:____);
____memory; X notes made from photos.

22. Are you positive of your identification if not, explain: Yes, positive of Cory's ID.

23. Date: 26 November 2016 Time: 2130 CST

24. May the LBRC have permission to display this report or
portions of this report on its website? Yes

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

Nominate "Scopoli's" (left) and borealis (right) ssp. together



ssp unclassified



