

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

1. English and Scientific names: Cory's Shearwater, broad sense
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
1 individual seen in flight only
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 1:36-1:36 p.m.
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): probably about 75 yards, judging from image quality
12. Duration of observation: Brief chase of bird lasted about a minute.
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): In somewhat roundabout route away from boat.
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*):

Pale brown and whitish shearwater, larger and stronger in flight than Audubon's Shearwaters seen that day.

Mousy brown upperparts with some mottling due to differences in feather age and wear, e.g. secondaries and outer primaries worn and dark, fresh inner primaries contrastingly paler, as are some greater secondary coverts. Diffusely paler nape. Pale feather edges to some mantle feathers imparted somewhat scaly look to back.

Whitish underparts, with vague demarcation line between dark and light on face at the lower edge of the auriculars. Pale tubenose bill with dark tip. In photos, bill appears yellowish. Eye appears dark.

Tail/uppertail coverts paler than mantle, with darker tip.

Underwings white with dark borders, with dark leading edge narrow except for slight widening at level of primary coverts. Isolated small black dot around the first primary on the proximal half of the primary visible in some of my pictures but obvious in photos by some others. Trailing edge of wing dark, distinct, fairly wide. White seems to be present on the basal half of the other primaries.

In terms of separating Cory's from Scopoli's by underwing pattern, many of my photos show pale bases to the outer primaries—but my pictures are not of the highest quality—while fewer photos show a Cory's-like pattern. Judging from the photos taken by others, though, the underwing does seem to show the pattern claimed for Scopoli's. Whether this is angle or reality is a question.















16. Voice:

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Cape Verde should be more petite and with less colorful bill. Cory's vs Scopoli's a fair question.

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

19. Previous experience with this species: Occasional over the years.

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		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

22. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain: Yes, to complex. The field marks seem to show a Scopoli's like underwing pattern, but that may be photo-illusion, and I'm not sure whether that field mark is accurate or just circular ID reasoning.

23. Date: 20 September 2017

Time: 9:48 p.m.