

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

1. English and Scientific names: Great Black-backed Gull, *Larus marinus*
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
One 1st year
3. Locality: Jefferson Parish
Specific Locality: Jeff Davis Landfill
4. Date(s) when observed: 01/13/2018
5. Time(s) of day when observed: about 12:30 to 12:45
6. Reporting observer and address: Paul Conover, Lafayette, LA
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): Gary Byerly, Dan Lane, Marky Mutchler, Van Remsen
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): Light and heat waves were an issue, as was distance, but viewing was only made more difficult, not impossible.
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Nikon Fieldscope 20-60X, Zeiss 10s, Samsung S4 phone camera, Sony videocam.
11. Distance to bird(s): ca. 1000 feet
12. Duration of observation: about 15 minutes, I believe. The bird was easy to locate due to its size, and we watched it behave and attempted to document it.
13. Habitat: Fields adjacent to landfill.
14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation: The bird was in a large flock of gulls (Laughing, Ring-billed, Herring, and Lesser Black-backed were all noted) and was easily spotted because its long neck rose up above the heads of the other birds. As we watched, the gull walked or ran through the crowd several times, lifted up to pursue other gulls for food items they were carrying, and interacted aggressively with many standing birds.
15. Description: The bird was, if not the same bird as one seen 20 miles to the east and a week earlier, very similar to that bird, so some of this description is recycled:

A relatively huge gull with round whitish head and large black bill, mottled pale upperparts, single dark secondary bar, dark primaries, white rump and tail with narrow black terminal band of variable width.

The bird's size was visibly larger than any other species present even to the naked eye at 1000 feet. Its neck was long and the bird spent a lot of time with its head in an alert posture. Head shape was distinctive: rounded in

back with a bulbous sloping forehead, and eye set somewhat far back from gape.

Mantle of the bird was somewhat pale, with pale ground color and scattered dark markings, with darker shoulders and wings. Head white. Bill large and black.

Wings with flight feathers darker than inner wing coverts. Secondaries darker than greater coverts forming a single dark trailing bar. Primaries dark, but inner primaries more lightly marked and with dark internal markings as commonly seen with GBBG, forming a weak inner primary flash.

Rump whitish, base of tail whitish, thin but obvious dark subterminal band formed by solid but thin and irregularly-shaped markings near tail tip and sparse dark speckling just proximal to the solid markings. Band thicker in middle, gradually narrowing toward edge.

Legs pink. Eye appeared dark.

In flight, the bird was much larger than the competition, notably broader in wingspan, but very agile in chasing the smaller birds.



16. Voice: Not noted

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):

Single rear wing bar not typical for LBBG, size also much too large for that species. Hybrid GBBG X Herring always of concern out of range, but size and pattern typical for GBBG, not intermediate.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): Video stills by me.

19. Previous experience with this species: Fairly extensive in Nova Scotia etc., some in Louisiana.

20. This description is written from memory and photos.

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

22. Date: 01/18/2018