

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> .

1. English and Scientific names: Western Gull *Larus occidentalis*

2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage): one early second cycle immature.

3. Parish: Caddo

Specific Locality: Cross Lake

4. Date(s) when observed: 9/11/18, 9/12/18, 9/13/18

5. Time(s) of day when observed: On 9/11/18 sightings were: 12:44pm to 12:47pm when the bird was first noted as a fly by; 2:45pm to 2:54 when the bird was noted standing on some pilings and it also took flight; 3:17 to 3:18 noted as a fly by; and 3:47 to 3:48 as a fly by shortly before our departure. On 9/12/18 the bird was observed just before sunset from 7:09pm until 7:18 pm perched and flying. On 9/13/18 the bird was noted perched and flying from 6:48pm until 7:03pm.

6. Reporting observer and city/state address

Reporting observer: Charles Lyon
City: Shreveport
State:LA

7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s):

Jeff Trahan was with me on 9/11/18 and Rosemary Seidler was with me on 9/13/18

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): 9/11/18 overcast: 9/12/18 overcast with sunset approaching 9/13/18 mostly cloudy with rare glimpses of sunlight as sunset was approaching.

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): 10x42 Swarovski binoculars

11. Distance to bird(s): As close as 15 feet and at times it flew directly over my head as it flew around the boat.

12. Duration of observation: note times previously given

13. Habitat: open water of Cross Lake and it was also seen perched on pilings on the lake near the northeast side

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): I was in the boat which allowed for close approach to the bird while perched and while in flight.

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*): Refer to multiple photos which show multiple angles of the perched and flying bird, and also show multiple light conditions. In some photos the bird will overall appear to be lighter than in others but a good overall balance is illustrated. The bill alone rules out most every other large white headed gull species other than YFGU. It was bulky with a bulbous tip and pronounced gonydeal angle. The bill was blackish with the exception of the pinkish base of the lower mandible, which is a good field mark for an early SY WEGU. The bird was very dark overall and darker with browner tones than any first cycle/second cycle HERG I have ever seen. The dark back contrasting with the white rump and all black tail also points to WEGU and away from HERG. The wing tip projection appeared shorter than expected for HERG and in flight the bird had a stocky appearance with shorter wings than HERG. Darker inner primaries were noted with absence of white wing panel. The secondaries were tipped with white giving a narrow white trailing edge to the wings. The underwing coverts were dark chocolate brown and the underbody was thickly diffusely streaked dark brownish with less streaking toward the vent. An SY YFGU would be much whiter below than this individual and would have a more advanced molt pattern...as per Van Remsen, Donna Dittman, and Steve Cardiff. Steve Howell agrees with this being a WEGU, although Alvaro Jaramillo had concerns about this being a possible YFGU. P10 may just be stunted and not molting and inner primary molt seems complete, all consistent with expected timing of molt in this age WEGU. Steve Cardiff as per our discussions has extensive and recent experience in analysis of YFGU specimens and their molt patterns and sequence. The legs were pink. There is nothing in the plumage pattern that is suggestive for a Glaucous-winged hybrid. Also noted was large flat crown with a darkened auricular area giving a masked effect noted on many photos. The eye was dark and appeared highly set on the head. This description and numerous photos are consistent with this bird being a young WEGU.

16. Voice: silent

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

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?) Multiple photographs were taken during all dates of observation 47 of my better photos have all been submitted to the LBRC.

19. Previous experience with this species: Fairly extensive and I was just out in California where I noted a number of immature as well as adult Western Gulls. This did not help me in this observation however, as I did not initially consider Western Gull as a possibility. Van Remsen and Steve Cardiff did and related this to me.

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

a. at time of observation: none

b. after observation: Gulls of the Americas by Howell and Dunn, Sibley, National Geographic Birds of NA 7th edition, Gulls of NA, Europe, and Asia by Olsen and Larsson

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"/>	Reviews of my multiple photos		
<input type="checkbox"/>	study of images		

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

Yes now after extensive review of photos, references, and discussion with others, as well as review by birding experts.

23. Date: 9-16-18

Time: 2:15 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 _____