

WV BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT FORM

Please Type or Print Legibly

Species: Franklin's Gull - *Leucophaeus pipixcan* Number: (leave blank) WVBRC 2020-4
 Location: Mason Co. - Gallipolis Ferry - Plymale Lane Date: April 24, 2020 Time: 11:00 AM
 Bird Seen: 11:00 AM To: 1:00 PM Age/Sex: Adult - Breeding (Alternate) Plumage

Description: In lieu of physical material substantiating a record (e.g., specimen, diagnostic photograph, vocal recordings) a complete written description can serve as verification for the biological record. Please be as thorough as your field notes allow. Do not feel constrained by the space provided. Additional supporting descriptions/illustrations may be attached. Note that photographs or recordings WILL NOT BE RETURNED but become part of the permanent record for the observation.

Structure: (Overall size and shape plus details on the head, feet, tail, etc.)

Gull that was noticeably smaller than the Ring-billed Gulls that were present at the time.

Plumage: (e.g. markings, coloration, molt)

Head - Dark reddish bill, Blackish hood. White upper and lower eye crescents
Back - Medium gray - darker than Ring-billed Gull.
Upper Wings - Medium gray.
Primary Tips - white on outer tips with small black band inside. A narrow white band between the black band and the gray of main part of wing.
Tail - Pale gray with white rump.
Breast - Very light with pinkish tinge. Legs - Blackish

Description of any vocalizations, if heard:

None

Description of behavior:

When first observed, the bird was feeding on worms in a flooded farm field. Over the next three days, it would fly with other gulls (mostly Ring-billed) back and forth from the fields to a sand bar in the pit of a sand and gravel mining operation. This was a distance of $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

Habitat: (General and Specific)

see previous section.

Circumstances of observation: (Include details of distance to bird, optics employed, lighting in relation to observer and the bird)

The closest we were to the bird was about 30 yards. Optics used were 8.5x binoculars and 20-60x spotting scope. Photos were taken with scope and cell phone. Lighting was good.

Previous experience with this species:

I have seen Franklin's Gulls 3 times previously in WV. Also, numerous times in western U.S.

Experiences with similarly appearing species which are eliminated by your description: (Please be specific)

Bonaparte's Gull - Smaller, paler wings, black bill, pink legs.

Black-headed Gull - Paler wings, dark brown head.

Sabine's Gull - Smaller overall, smaller bill (black with yellow tip).

Laughing Gull - Larger with larger bill and longer wings.

All of the above have very different upper wing patterns. None of the above have eye crescents as distinctive as Franklin's Gull.

Other observers: (Names, Addresses, E-mail please)

If the others agree with your identification they can sign this form here. If they care to provide additional details they can submit their own report.

This bird was first seen by Janet Keating and myself. Later that day Josh Holland, Gary Rankin, and David Patrick saw it. Over the next three days numerous observers saw the bird. It was last seen on April 27.

Additional observer signature:

Additional observer signature:

Additional observer signature:

Janet Keating

Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and especially how did these influence this description:

National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America
Dunn and Alderfer
The Sibley Guide To Birds - David Sibley
Gulls of the Americas - Howell and Dunn

How long after observing this bird did you first write this description?

2 Days

Name:

Mike Griffith

Address:

Date:

May 1, 2020

Signature:

Mail to: WV Bird Records Committee
Attn: Wil Hershberger
170 Stallion Ct.
Hedgesville, WV 25427
Or E-mail to:
wilhershberger@mac.com



