

WV BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT FORM

Please Type or Print Legibly

Species:	Black-legged Kittiwake	Number: (leave blank)	WVBRC 2024-2			
Location:	French Creek Wildlife Area, Pleasants County		Date:	Nov. 22, 2024	Time:	10:48 am-12:30 pm
Bird Seen:	10:55 am	To:	11:30 am	Age/Sex: Juvenile/first-winter		

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.)

Smaller than Ring-billed Gulls also present. Larger than Bonaparte's Gulls also present. While floating in water it looked very much like a Bonaparte's Gull, and in fact, at first glance, I thought it was a Bonaparte's.

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

White underparts, Gray mantle and wings. Outer edge of primaries almost black, forming a horizontal line between gray of wings and white underparts while bird was swimming. Primary tips and tail appeared black. Bill black, somewhat thicker than Bonaparte's Gull, and slightly-downturned at tip. Head white. Eye black. Vertical near-rectangular black mark behind eye (as opposed to the round mark of non-breeding Bonaparte's, Little, and Ross's Gulls and the mark on Black-headed Gull behind the eye that extends up to the crown). Very obvious black collar on nape extending to just below the vertical dark mark. Red-legged Kittiwake, which is confined to the Bering Sea area, is the only other gull with a similar collar.

Description of any vocalizations, if heard:

None

Description of behavior: Swimming with other gulls and Double-crested Cormorants.

Habitat: (General and Specific)

Shallow backwater of French Creek, just before it enters the Ohio River.

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

Temperature about 35 degrees Fahrenheit. Completely overcast. Intermittent drizzle and snow. Winds 10+ m.p.h. made it difficult to hold spotting scope steady enough to view and take mobile phone photos. Distance from bird estimated at 0.1 mile. Used Kowa TN-883 spotting scope with 60X zoom.

Previous experience with this species:

2 previous eBird sightings, both of birds in similar plumage and at this time of the year:

Nov. 30, 2021 near Columbus, OH

Dec. 10, 2008 in Rye, NH

I think I also saw this species on a pelagic trip from Seward, Alaska before I started using eBird.

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

Bonaparte's Gull—thousands seen over the years

Black-headed Gull—numerous birds seen in Europe and a few in North America

Little Gull—1 sighting

Ross's Gull--none

Red-legged Kittiwake--none

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.

None. Bird had departed within 30 minutes before other birders arrived.

Additional observer signature:

Additional observer signature:

Additional observer signature:

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

Sibley Guide to Birds, Second Edition

Sibley app

Used app during sighting to refresh my memory that it was a kittiwake.

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

About 5 hours.

Name:

Terry Bronson

Address:

Marietta, Ohio

Date:

Signature:

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

Please use the space below to add any appropriate details you feel were missing from the above form or to expand on any answers whose allotted space was insufficient for a complete response:

See eBird checklist for photos:

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S203267287>



