

LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY

BIRD STUDIES CANADA

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RARITY REPORT

In order that any sight record or banding of a rare species can be accepted for the historical record, it must be properly documented. LPBO co-operators are therefore asked to complete a form in every case where a rarity is being claimed. Guidance as to which species are considered rare in the Long Point area may be obtained from the LPBO staff. Each observer should prepare his/her description independently and preferably before consulting any field guides or other literature. PLEASE PRINT.

Species claimed: Arctic Tern

No. of birds: 4 **Age:** 2 adult, 2 young **Sex:** unknown.

Date(s): October 30 and November 5, 2004 (one young heard and observed).

Place: Eastern Tip of Long Point

Time(s) of Observation: ~1330

Who first saw the bird(s): Stu Mackenzie,

Who first identified it: Stu Mackenzie and Ross Wood

Other observers (names and addresses):

Ross Wood – ross.w.wood@gmail.com

Any who disagree: No

Your previous experience with the species: I have observed the species regularly off both coasts in all plumages and a couple of times in Ontario (mostly in breeding plumage).

Your previous experience with any closely similar species:

(a) Formerly: Experience identifying and observing many species of the genera from the western hemisphere.

(b) Same day: ~ 200 Common Terns accompanying the terns in question and loafing at the Tip throughout the day.

Species present for comparison: Common Tern, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed, Herring, Great Black-backed Gull,

Which were beside it for comparison: Common Tern

Distance from observer(s): 10 to 200 m

How measured: estimate

Optical aids used: 10 X 42 Bushnell Legends.and TSN-822 Kowa Telescope

Weather conditions (at time of observation)

Visibility: fair considering wind and rain

Cloud Cover: 10/10

Lighting: good - overcast

Wind direction and speed: strong SW winds – 4/5 gusting 6 beaufort

Other relevant conditions:

(eg. rain, snow cover, etc.) Intermittent rain

For "Waterbird " records only

Lake conditions: waves

Wave height: ~2m

Height of observer above lake: ~1m

Was observer's position sheltered: Yes – the original ‘Slanty-shanty’

Weather system preceding the date of observation (if known): unknown

Attach weather map clipping from local or national newspaper if relevant.

Associated movements of other species: Small groups of Common Terns were flying west by the Tip throughout the day, some stopping to rest briefly at the Tip. A couple of thousand Bonaparte’s Gulls were doing the same.

Was the bird trapped: no

Band # if banded: no

Was it photographed: no

If yes, by whom (name and address):

Specimen or parts preserved: no

Present location:

Circumstances:

Ross and I were sitting in the shanty examining the gulls and waterfowl loafing on the Tip and flying by on the Lake. We had taken

note of 4 unusually small and lightly coloured terns with the group of Commons. We examined them for sometime and every time the terns would lift we were able to relocate them easily. On two occasions the group of terns were quite vocal allowing for us to hear them and confirm that they were different by plumage, size, shape, and vocalization.

Description:

Give separate description for (a) in the field (b) in the hand. Include full measurements and wing formula with hand descriptions.

ADULTS:

Head: - small stout bill, greyish white forehead blending into a dark cap and head. White neck.

Body: A smallish, stout, pot-bellied, *Sterna*. Smooth light grey back and scapulars. White belly and under tail coverts.

Wings: Upper-wings uniform grey from scapulars towards primaries. Very faint black/greyish edging on the tips and trailing edge of the primaries. Secondaries and inner primaries where a light grey almost whitish on the trailing edge. Underwings – white and the outer leading and trailing edge of primaries were black and formed a striking distal border to the upper and lower wing.

Tail: Tail was long, white and forked with black edging to the outer retrices.

Separated from Common tern by whitish upper wings, strong black edging to the leading and trailing edge of the outer primaries. Overall grey and white clean appearance. Birds were obviously stouter, stockier and shorter-billed than the Common's.

Separated from Forster's tern by strong black edging to the leading and trailing edge of the outer primaries – especially on the upper wing. Bird appeared to be stockier, shorter-billed, shorter winged, and tailed than Forster's. Black head - no face mask.

YOUNG:

Head: - small stout bill, greyish white forehead blending into a dark cap and head. White neck.

Body: A smallish, stout, pot-bellied, *Sterna*. mottled grey back and scapulars. White belly and under tail coverts.

Wings: Wing coverts light grey lightly mottled with dark-grey/black. Very faint carpal bar on the leading edge of the wing fading away into the grey secondary coverts. Secondaries and inner primaries were whitish forming a thin white chevron in the middle of the wing which faded into a greyish trailing edge when in flight. On the ground the primaries were light grey not contrasting greatly with the rest of the mantle as in the Commons. In flight the outer leading and trailing edge of primaries were black and formed a striking distal border to the upper and lower wing. Underwings and body white.

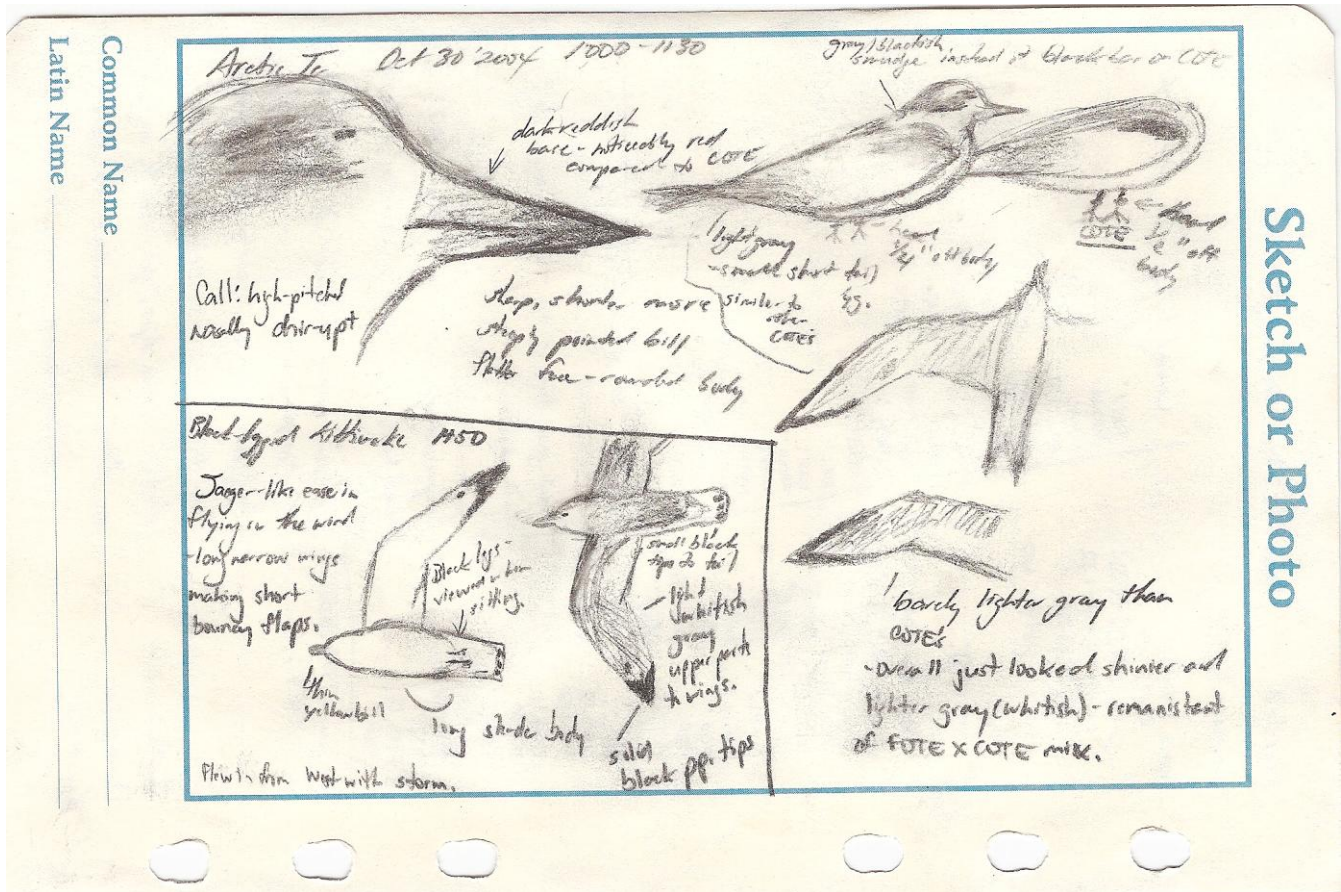
Tail: Tail was long, dirty-white and forked with darker edging to the outer retrices. Not as long or as deeply forked as the adults.

Separated from Common tern by whitish upper wings, strong black edging to the leading and trailing edge of the outer primaries. Dark carpal bar was faint compared to Commons. Secondaries were light gray, not brownish-dark-gray. Overall grey and white clean appearance. Birds were obviously stouter, stockier and shorter-billed than the Common's.

Separated from Forster's tern by strong black edging to the leading and trailing edge of the outer primaries – especially on the upper wing. Bird appeared to be stockier, shorter-billed, shorter winged, and tailed than Forster's. Black head - no face mask.

BOTH:

Vocalizations: Although the Arctic's were quite distinct and different from the accompanying Common Terns, it was their vocalizations which confirmed the identification for us and stimulated us to investigate them further. The kee-yar call was higher pitched than raspier, and a little longer than the Commons. They were also not nearly as aggressive and choppy. The Common's tend to be very two-pieced KEE,-yar!, the Arctic's tended to blend the two notes together – kee-yar. The kip notes on the other hand were deeper and lower pitched than the Commons.



Did you refer to any guides/other literature: no

(a) at the time: no

(b) afterwards: no

Finally, is this record 100% certain? yes

Signed:

Shant Mackenzie

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Date:

Jan 30, 2012

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