

BLACK-HEADED GULL (*LARUS RIDIBUNDUS*) SEEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED AT GOVERNOR'S HARBOUR, ELEUTHERA, BAHAMAS

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ON 14 NOVEMBER 1996 Aileen M. Bainton, Katherine L. White, and I were birding in Governor's Harbour, Eleuthera when we noticed a single gull on the tidal flats near the boat launching ramp. This gull was present throughout our stay in Eleuthera until 18 November 1996. It was a medium-sized gull with a long slender bill. The distal half of the bill was black and the basal half pale flesh colored. The legs were pinkish-flesh colored. The head was dirty from feeding, but there were noticeable streaks along the back of the neck and a black auricular spot. When the bird flew, we noticed a black terminal band on the tail. The outer half of the upper wings had a large white section on the leading edge. The underside of the wings had a black band near the end of the primaries. When the bird roosted on pilings near the community clinic, it appeared slightly larger than a Sandwich Tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*) and noticeably smaller than the Royal Terns (*S. maxima*) roosting nearby. We identified the gull as a first-winter Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) based on its size, wing pattern, head pattern, bill color, and tail band (National Geographic Society 1983, Grant 1986). Distant, but identifiable, photographs of the gull are available from the author.

The Black-headed Gull is a common Eurasian species that has recently colonized northeastern North America. It has nested in Newfoundland and Quebec, and attempted to nest in Massachusetts in 1984 (Veit and Petersen 1993). The Black-headed Gull is an uncommon migrant along the east coast of North America as far south as Florida (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992). It is casual in the West Indies, where it has been found in Cuba, Puerto Rico, St. Thomas, and the

Lesser Antilles (Raffaele 1989, Bond 1993). Raffaele has seen single Black-headed Gulls regularly in winter in San Juan Harbor, Puerto Rico (pers. comm.). It has been recorded once in the Bahama Archipelago – an adult seen and photographed on Grand Turk, 30 and 31 December 1985 (Faanes 1986; G. Rosenberg, in litt.). I am unaware of any previous published report of this species within the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

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PELAGIC BIRD SIGHTINGS OFF DOMINICA

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DUE TO THE PAUCITY OF OBSERVATIONS OF OCEANIC BIRDS from waters near the central Lesser Antilles, the following notes recorded by a Boston University Marine Program marine mammal class led by Ward are of considerable interest. The purpose of the course was to collect occurrence, distributional, and behavioral data on cetaceans in the deep water (200-1000 fathoms) west of Dominica in an area bounded by 61° 38.5' W Longitude, 15° 13' N Latitude and 15° 32' N Latitude. Observations were made daily during the period 15

to 23 January 1997 except for 20 January when no trip was made offshore. Although the primary focus was on whales and dolphins, the bird species encountered were recorded using GPS data for nearly all observations.

The following bird species were recorded:

Audubon's Shearwater *Puffinus lherminieri*.—One observed at close range on 23 January at 15° 20.42' N, 61° 28.73' W.