

TEXAS GULLS OVERVIEW

2025



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

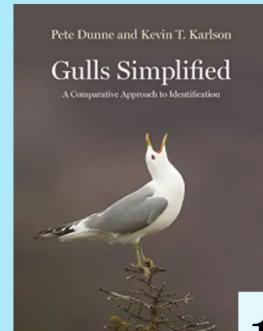
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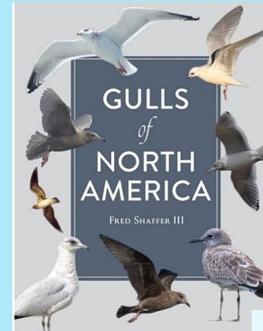
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REFERENCES

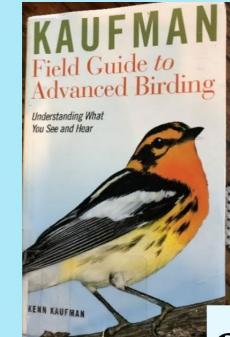
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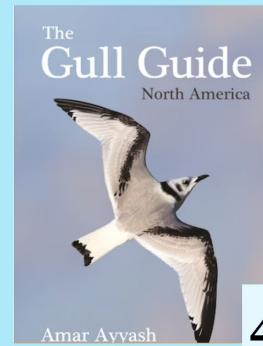
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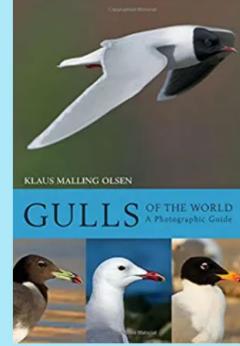
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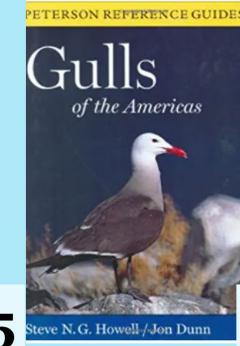
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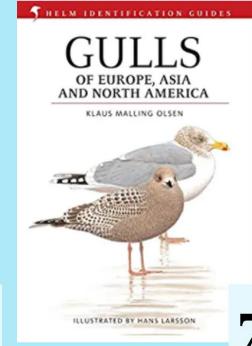
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5



6



7

- ▶ 1— a very good book and a very good place to start. Well organized, slightly simplified approach with excellent self-tests.
- ▶ 2— A good beginner's look at gulls.
- ▶ 3—Contains a great chapter on how to approach gull study.
- ▶ 4—A high level, well-organized approach to gulls.
- ▶ 5,6,7—Wealth of information, but not necessarily organized for quick assimilation.



GULL LINKS

Anything Laurus Website (**Amar Ayyash**)
<http://www.anythinglarus.com/>

Gull Identification Website (**Steve Hampton**)
<http://www.tertial.us/gulls/gulls.htm>

<http://gull-research.org>

Facebook Group: North American Gulls

DISTRIBUTION

- ▶ The overwhelming majority of gulls in Texas will be from the Texas Hex group.
- ▶ Gulls wander widely, so the the Wandering 7 show up regularly, but sparsely in Texas.
- ▶ Rare gulls also do show up in Texas, but first think horses, not unicorns!!
- ▶ The distribution of over 99% of Texas gulls is summarized in “Jeff’s Texas Gull Rule” – so commit it to memory!!!!

Gulls of the World

World ~61

North America (32+1)

Gulls of Texas (28+1)

The Texas Hex

Bonaparte's
Franklin's
Herring
Laughing
Lesser Black-backed
Ring-billed

6 (+1)

Wandering Texans
Black-legged Kittiwake
California
Glaucous
Iceland (kumlienii)
Iceland (thayeri)
Little
Sabine's

13 Lucky Texans

Heermann's
Black-headed
Black-tailed
Glaucous-winged
Gray
Great Black-backed
Kelp
Short-billed
Slaty-backed
Vega Gull
Western
Yellow-footed
Yellow-legged

3 Range Restricted Rarities

Ivory
Red-legged Kittiwake
Ross's

6 North American Vagrants

Belcher's
Common
Gray-hooded
Pallas's
Swallow-tailed

28
Additional species

28 (+1) NORTH AMERICAN GULLS

FOCUS ON
The Texas Hex

BE READY FOR
6 (+1) Wandering
Texans

BE AWARE OF
The Lucky
13 Texans

FURGIT ABOUT
3 Range Restricted
Rarities
(far north)

#	Species
1	Ring-billed
2	Laughing
3	Franklin's
4	Bonaparte's
5	Herring
6	Lesser Black-backed
7	Black-legged Kittiwake
8	California
9	Glaucous
10 (+1)	Iceland (thaveri) Iceland (kumlieni)
11	Little
12	Sabine's
13	Heermann's
14	Short-billed
15	Western
16	Yellow-footed
17	Glaucous-winged
18	Great Black-backed
19	Black-headed
20	Yellow-legged
21	Slaty-backed
22	Black-tailed
23	Vega Gull
24	Kelp
25	Gray
26	Ivory
27	Red-legged Kittiwake
28	Ross's

SUGGESTED APPROACH TO GULLS: DIVE – IN!!!!

- ▶ **Distribution** – See Jeff's Texas Gulls Rule
- ▶ **Structure** – the size, body shape, bill & head shape, and wing length & shape are more important clues than plumage.
- ▶ **Plumage Details** – should not be ignored, but an identification should not be based on them alone.



Photo by Ian K Barker

		TEXAS SEASON		
		SUMMER	WINTER	Migration
TEXAS LOCATION	COAST	Ring-billed	Rare	Common
	COAST	Herring	Rare	Common
	COAST	Laughing	Abundant	Abundant
	COAST	Bonaparte's		Uncommon
	COAST	Franklin's	Rare	Uncommon
	COAST	LBBG		Common
TEXAS LOCATION	INLAND	Ring-billed	Rare	Abundant
	INLAND	Herring	Rare	Uncommon
	INLAND	Laughing	Rare	Rare
	INLAND	Bonaparte's		Common
	INLAND	Franklin's	Rare	Uncommon
	INLAND	LBBG		Uncommon

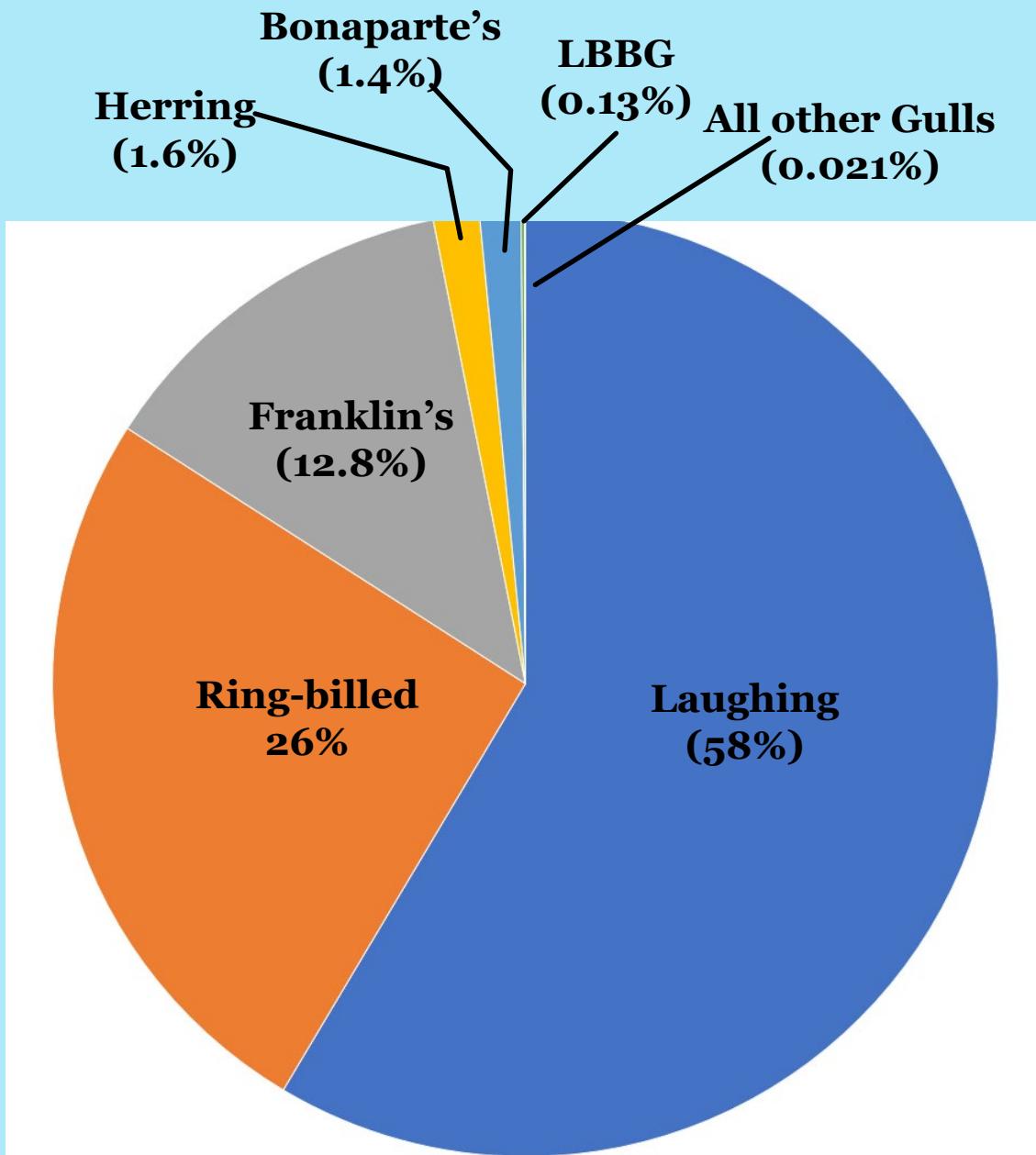
THE TEXAS HEX DISTRIBUTION (JEFF'S TEXAS GULLS RULE)

Place this carefully
in your head and
LEAVE IT THERE
!!!

Jeff's Texas-Gull Rule

- 1) Coast year-round – think **Laughing** first
- 2) Inland in winter – think **Ring-billed** first
- 3) Migrating overhead – think **Franklin's** first
- 4) If it's a bigg-un – think **Herring** first
- 5) Black back – think LBBG first

EBIRD DATA SUPPORTING JEFF'S TEXAS GULLS RULE



AGING GULLS

- ▶ After distribution & size, determining the age of a gull is the next most important step.
- ▶ Small gulls take 2 or 3 years to reach maturity (including plumage). Large gulls (which is most species) take 4 years. So they are called: 2-year, 3-year or 4-year gulls.
- ▶ Gulls are traditionally aged as juvenile, 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year & adult.
- ▶ The Gulls Simplified approach, which I recommend, uses 3 age classes – **Juvenile, Sub-adult, and Adult**.
- ▶ **Juvenile** plumage is characterized by brown feathers, and often white edged feathers, forming a scaly look. **Adult** plumage is the typical gull pattern of dark back and white underside. **Sub-adult** plumage is a mixture of these two.
- ▶ In addition to the overall plumage changes, typical aging characteristics include:
 - ▶ **Eye color** – dark changing to light (in most species).
 - ▶ **Bill color** – dark changing to adult shades. The change in color starts at the base of the bill and proceeds over time to the tip.
 - ▶ **Leg color** – yellow, blueish, grayish, blackish changing to adult colors often of pink or yellow.
 - ▶ **Mantle & scapular feathers** – the change to adult back color starts with these feathers, so look here on a juvenile bird for any hint of adult color.
 - ▶ **Wing coverts** – all feathers are replaced in the fall (**pre-basic molt**). Flight feathers are not replaced in the spring molt (**pre-alternate molt**). So the wear of the wing coverts is an important feature to note. Worn, slightly worn or any hint of brown can indicate a less-than fully adult bird.
 - ▶ **Pointed primary tips** – adults have more rounded primary tips. Juveniles are more pointy.

GENERIC MOLT CYCLES OF ADULT GULLS

All the big white-headed gulls follow this schedule

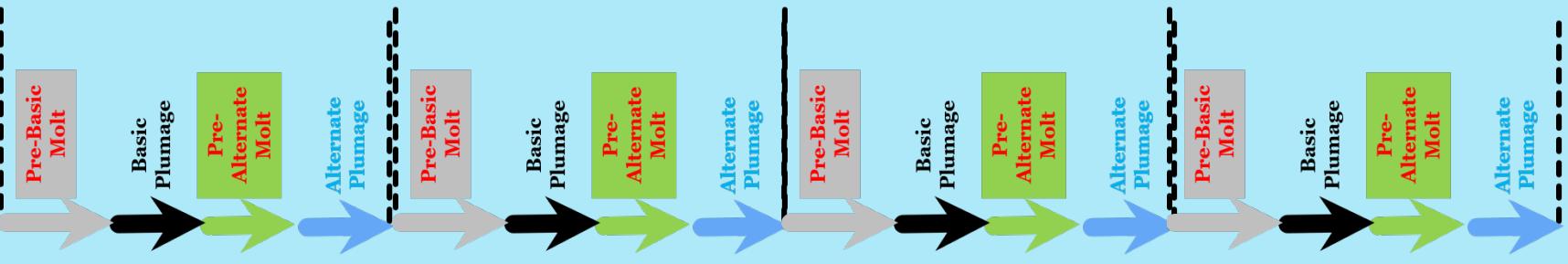
Cycle 1

Cycle 2

Cycle 3

Adult

4-Year Gull



TIME

GULLS SIMPLIFIED APPROACH

(KARLSON & DUNNE)

3 AGE GROUPS

► **Immature (or Juvenile)**

- Mostly brown or grayish brown
- Often a tail band
- Dark eye
- Dusky or dark bill



► **Sub-adult**

- Mix of immature & adult plumages
- Upper back –adult feathers begin
- Tail & wing – worn immature plumage
- Bill often transitioning in color



► **Adult**

- Upperparts – fully adult-gray, white, or black
- Underparts – white
- Leg, bill, eye – consistent with adult colors



Photos by Jeffrey E. Patterson

JUVENILE

Mostly brown or
grayish-brown

Dark eye



Primary tips
pointier

Often a tail-band

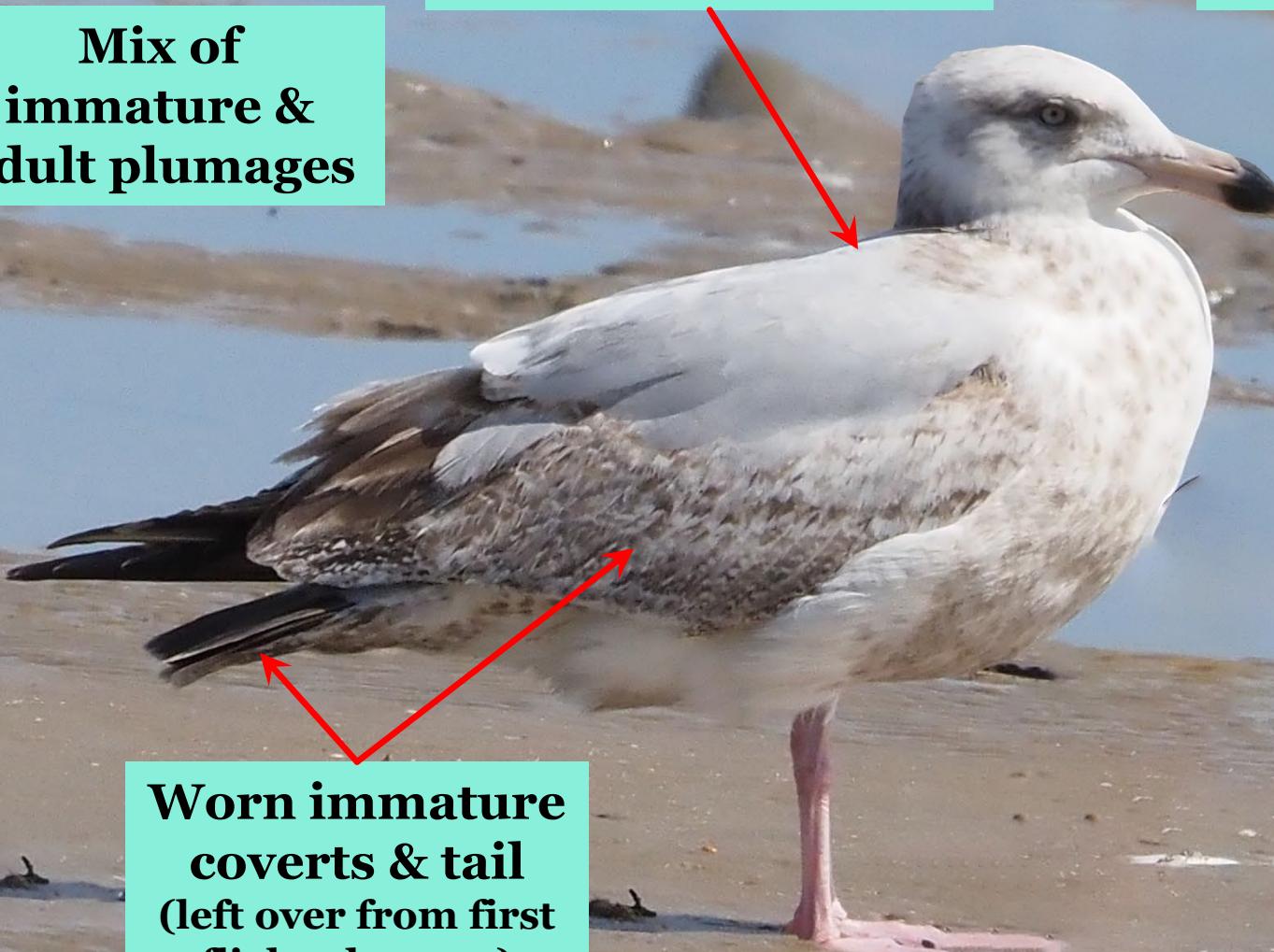
Dark
bill

SUB-ADULT

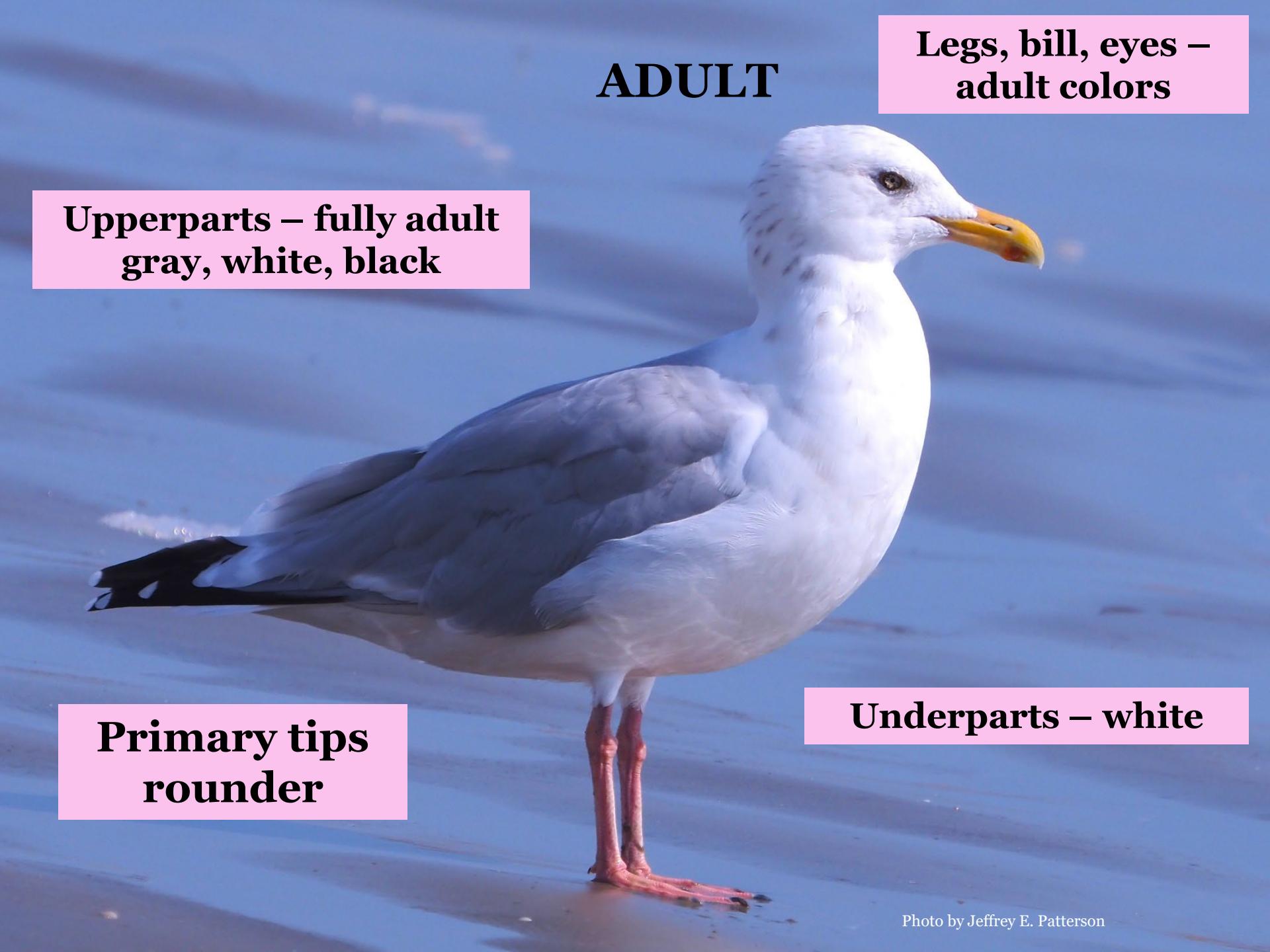
Upper back – adult feathers begin

Bill & eye transitioning

Mix of immature & adult plumages



Worn immature
coverts & tail
(left over from first
flight plumage)



ADULT

**Upperparts – fully adult
gray, white, black**

**Legs, bill, eyes –
adult colors**

**Primary tips
rounder**

Underparts – white



Juvenile

Mantle & scapulars (Herring)



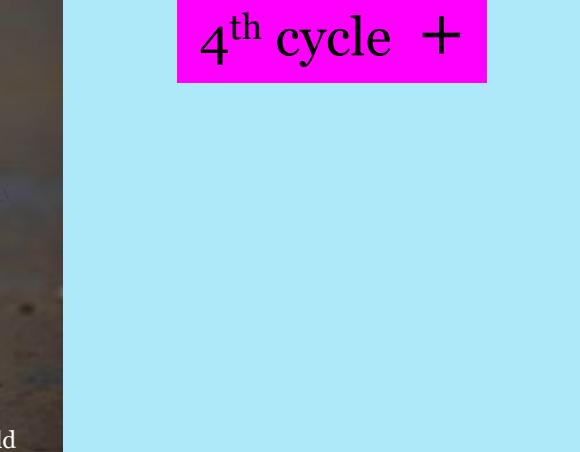
1st cycle



3rd cycle



Photo by Michael Stubblefield



4th cycle +



Photo by Blake Matheson

Photo by Brian Sullivan



Juvenile

Photo by Bill Chambers



1st cycle

Primary Tips (Herring)



4th cycle +



3rd cycle

Photo by Michael Stubblefield



2nd cycle

Photo by Blake Matheson

BILL & EYE (Herring)

Juvenile

Photo by Bill Chambers

1st cycle

Photo by Brian Sullivan

3rd cycle

Photo by Michael Stubblefield

2nd cycle

Photo by Blake Matheson



4th cycle +

Photo by Joe Wing





Herring

Photo by Bill Chambers

Juvenile



1st cycle

Photo by Brian Sullivan



Photo by Chris Wood

1st summer



2nd cycle

Photo by Blake Matheson

2nd winter



Photo by Miguel Rodríguez Esteban

2nd summer



3rd cycle

Photo by David McCorquodale

3rd winter



Photo by Jim Stasz

Photo by Michael Stubblefield

3rd summer



4th cycle
(adult)

Photo by Jim Stasz

4th winter



Photo by Joe Wing

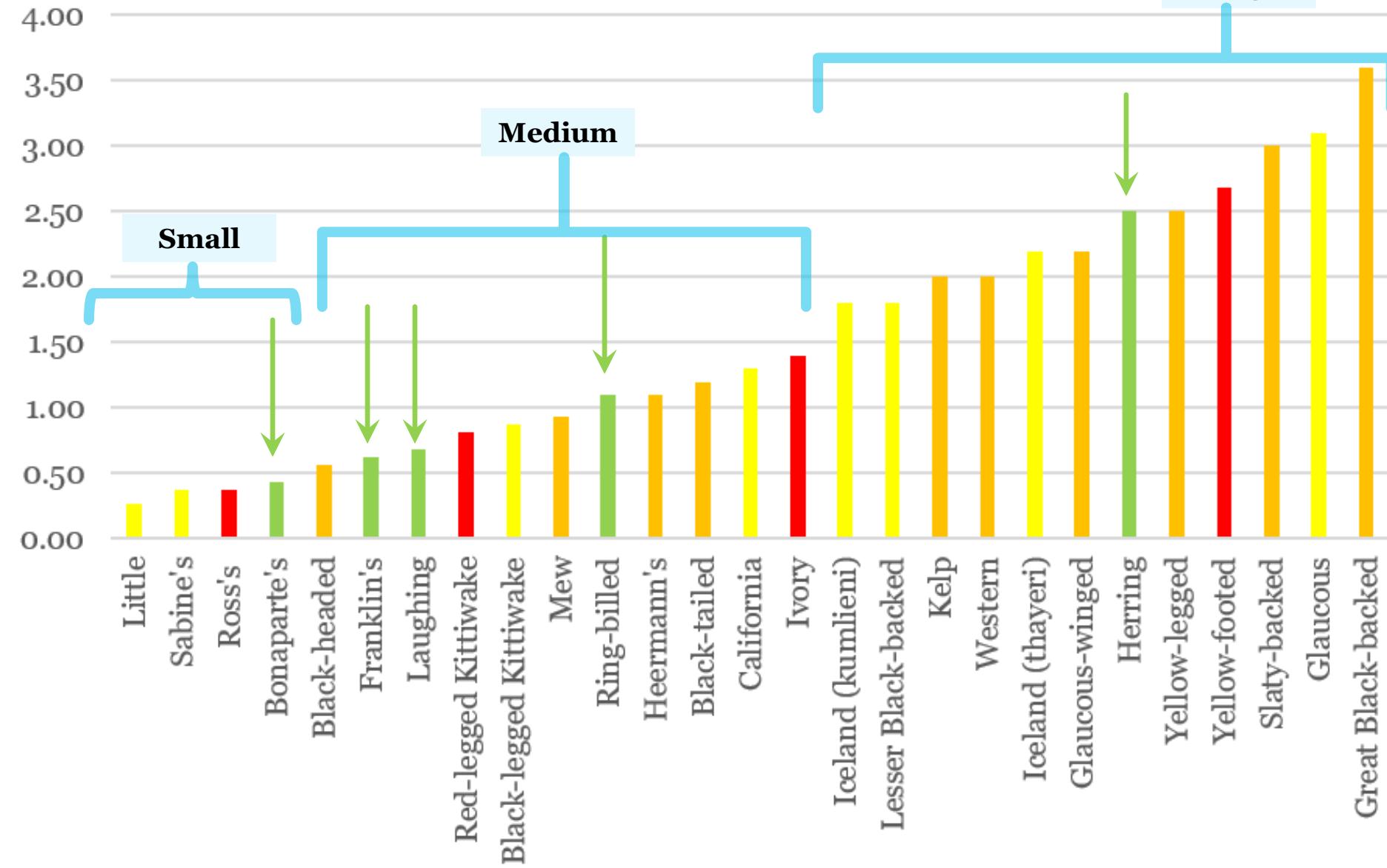
4th summer

SIZE

- ▶ As can be seen on the graph on the next page, the size of the 28 or so gull species regularly found in North America gradually increases from the smallest (**Little Gull**) to the largest (**Great-black-backed Gull**).
- ▶ Therefore, knowing the size of the Texas Hex, especially **Herring, Ring-billed & Laughing**, makes identifying less common species easier.
- ▶ One should initially scan a flock of gulls for known species, then try to pick out gulls of different sizes for further study.
- ▶ In gulls, females are typically smaller, have more rounded heads and are slightly longer- and pointier-winged. Plumage differences are negligible. However, it's usually considered safe to sex gulls only when they are in matched-up pairs which can be compared side-by-side.

These are informal size groupings.

North American Gulls WEIGHT (pounds)



DIFFERENCES IN THE SEXES (HERRING)

Males (of larger gull species) – larger, broader, more rectangular heads, stouter bills.



Females – smaller, rounder heads, and often longer wings.



Experts usually say “probably”. Best determined with mated pair.

PLUMAGE

- ▶ As mentioned, structure is the first place to begin an identification, but plumage cannot be ignored.
- ▶ However, the details of various plumages can be overwhelming for a novice gull watcher.

PLUMAGE – COLOR & PATTERN

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Shade of Adult Gray

Precise shade of gray. Consider lighting conditions & effects.

Condition of Feathers

Examine feathers for wear & molt, especially wing coverts

Bill color & pattern

Always worth noting, never diagnostic on its own, age & season dependent

Orbital ring color

Exact color sometimes useful

Eye color

Variable – never diagnostic, but always worth noting
Iris dark in juveniles, paler with age (usually)

Leg color

Varies with age & season
Often significant in adults
Never infallible
Frequent cases of the “wrong leg color”
Use to sort through flocks

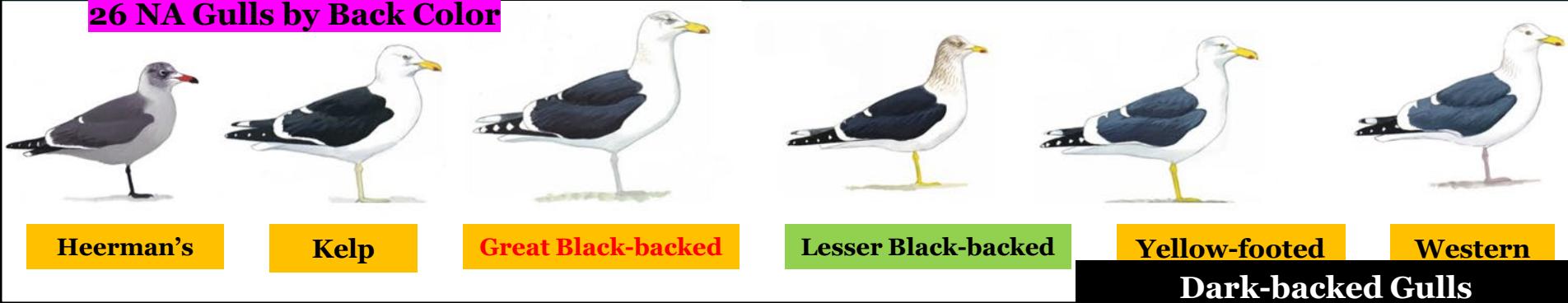


Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

Wings

Adults – examine wing-tip colors, patterns and demarcation (sharp or gradual transition of colors)

26 NA Gulls by Back Color



Medium-Dark-backed Gulls



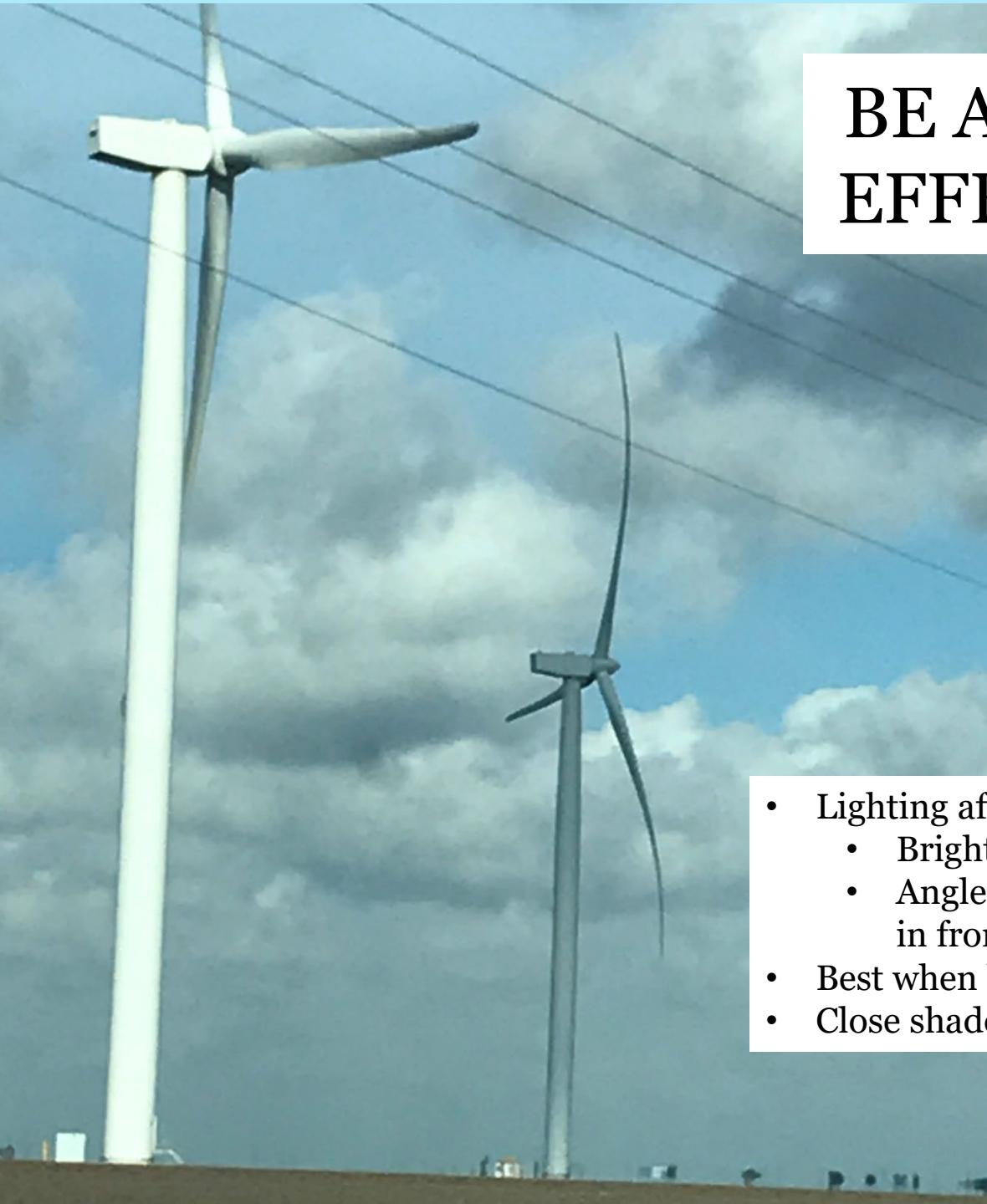
Medium-backed Gulls



Paintings by David A. Sibley

Pale-backed Gulls



A photograph showing a wind turbine on the left and a bird in flight on the right. The bird is dark on its back and lighter on its front, making it difficult to distinguish from the dark clouds in the background.

BE AWARE OF THE EFFECTS OF LIGHT

- Lighting affects.
 - Bright sun or shade (as in photo)
 - Angle of bird (darker from behind, lighter in front).
- Best when birds side by side.
- Close shades of gray can be indistinguishable.

EFFECTS OF ANGLE OF LIGHT



These are both Forster's Terns, but at different angles to the sun in this non-composite photo.

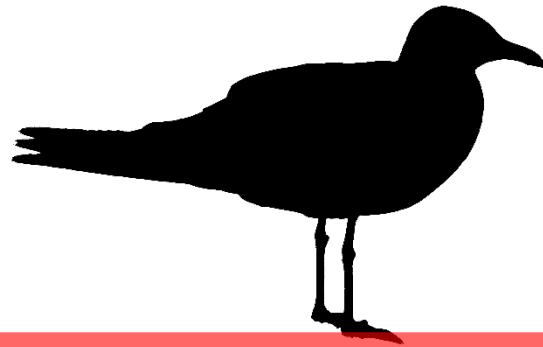
RING-BILLED

REFERENCE BIRD

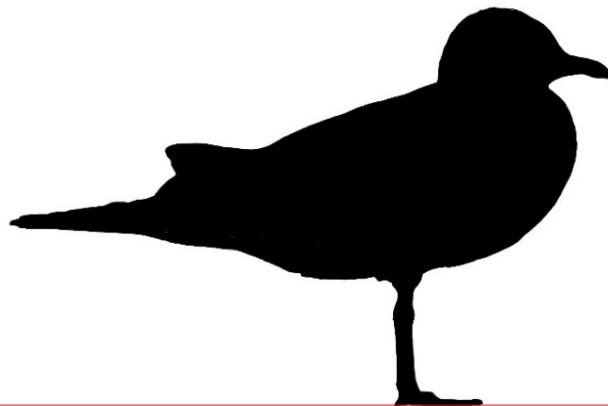
- ▶ Get to know the structure and plumages of **Ring-billed**.
- ▶ It is the most common gull inland during the winter gulling season and is also present on the coast in lower numbers.
- ▶ The **Ring-bill** represents the “standard gull” for many of the structural characteristics: size, build, leg position, bill length, etc. Therefore, think of the **Ring-billed** when comparing the structural characteristics of other gulls. Also use the Ring-billed (& Laughing on the coast to directly compare characteristics of unknown species).
- ▶ Length of wings is one exception to this rule: the **Ring-billed's** wings project slightly longer than average beyond the tail.
- ▶ Since gulls generally arrive in Texas in early November, and **Ring-billed** Juveniles have already transitioned to Sub-adults by this time, only 2 plumages of **Ring-billed** are expected in Texas during the gulling season. Though the Sub-adults are quite varied.
- ▶ Don’t mistake the wings for the tail. As in shorebirds, be careful to note that the wings sit atop the tail in repose, and that they are generally longer than the tail in gulls.

SIZE COMPARISON

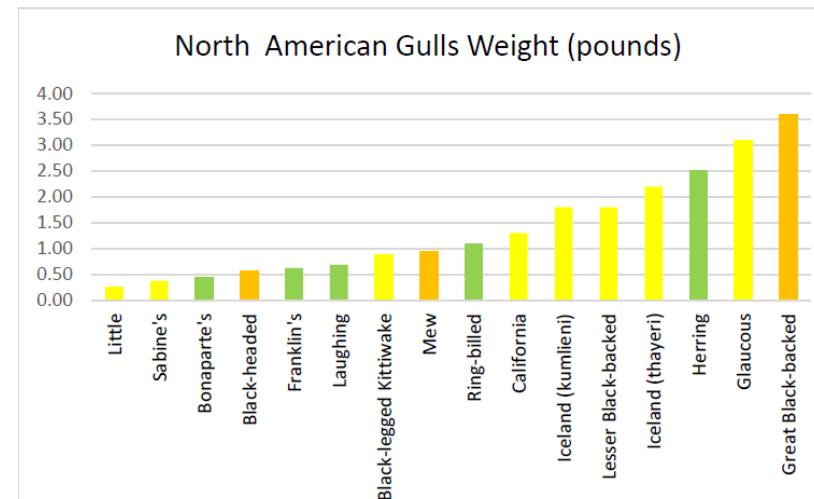
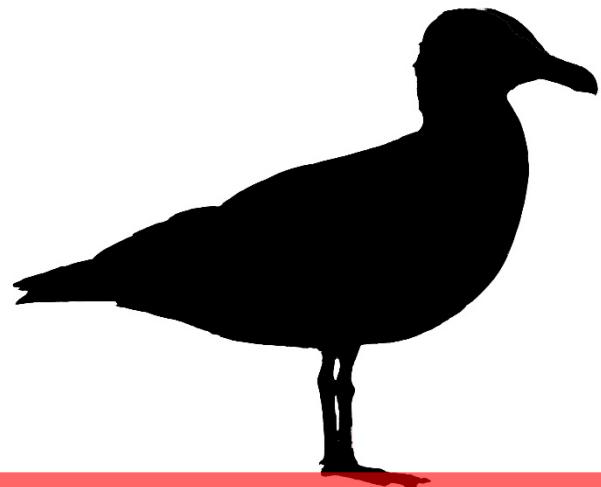
Laughing



Ring-billed



Herring



REFERENCE BIRD RING-BILLED GULL “THE STANDARD GULL”

Medium bill
(thickness &
length)

Average
head size

Average build,
balanced,
well-proportioned

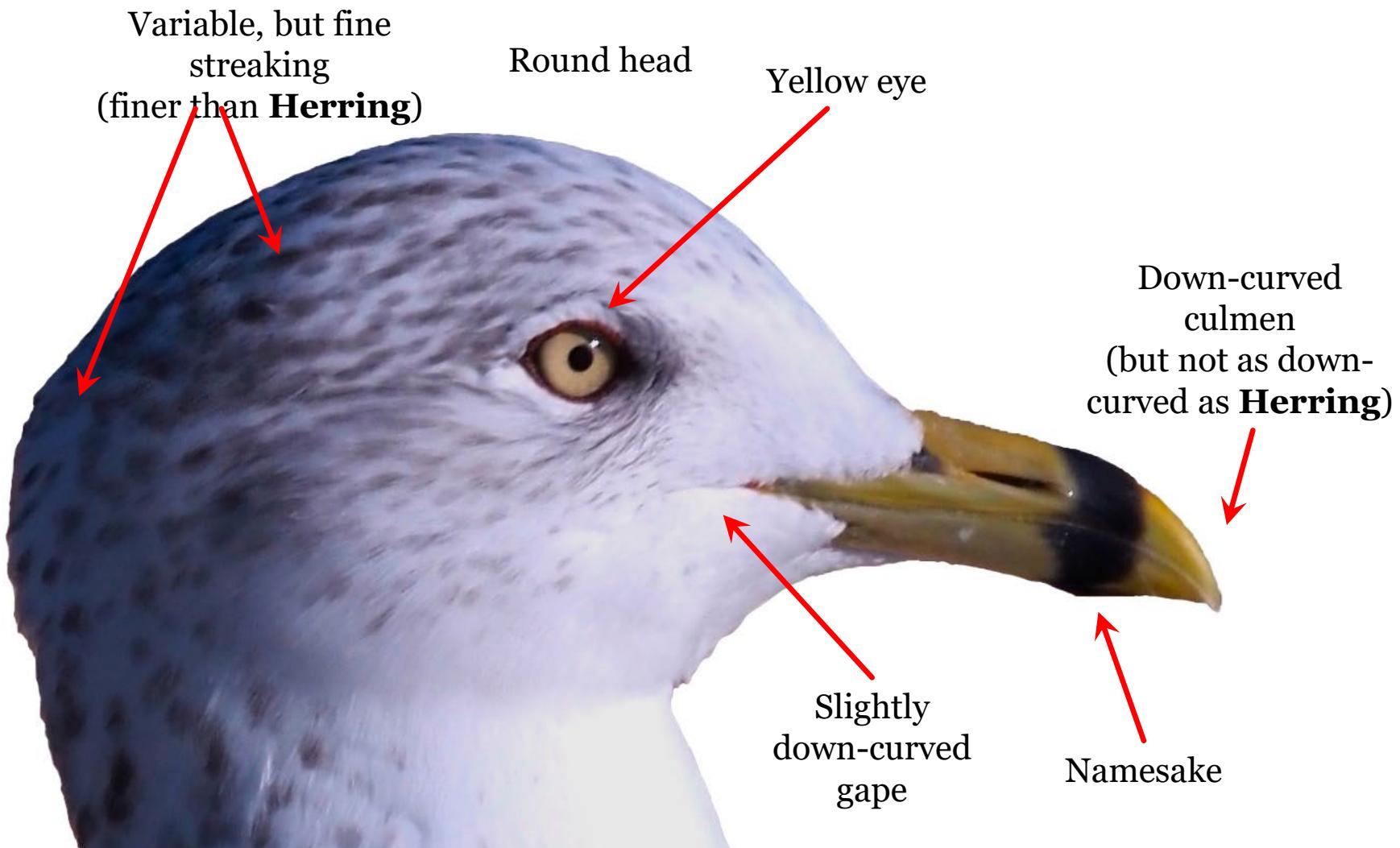
Chest & belly
neither bulky
nor lanky

Neither long
nor short

Proportionately
slightly
long-ish wings

HEAD & BILL

RING-BILLED – ADULT NONBREEDING



AGING RING-BILLED A 3-YEAR GULL

Immature



Photo by Daniel Jauvin

Sub-adult



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

Adult



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

LAUGHING

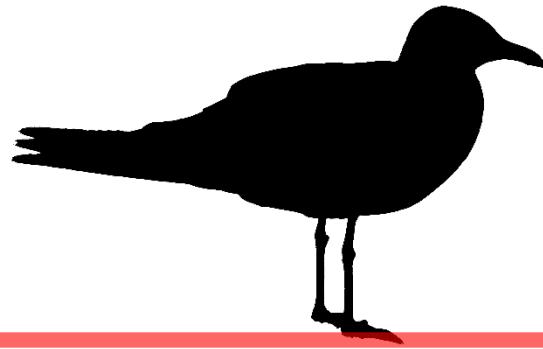
REFERENCE BIRD

GULF COAST

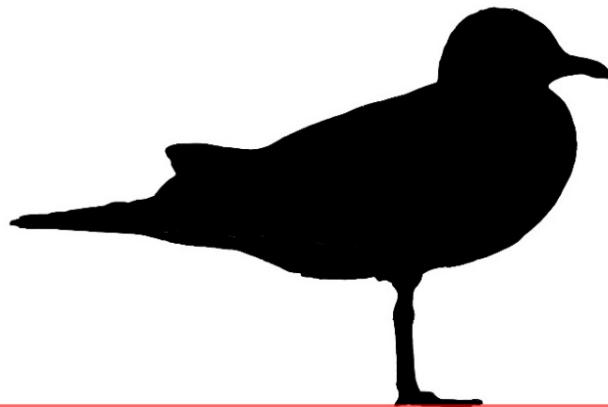
- **Laughing Gulls** are ubiquitous on the Gulf and East Coasts.
- They are characterized by their long, pointy wings with black outer undersides, long legs, small heads, and droopy black, or during the breeding season, red bills.
- The extensive black on the underside of the pointy wings gradually grades from black to gray to white towards the body.

SIZE COMPARISON

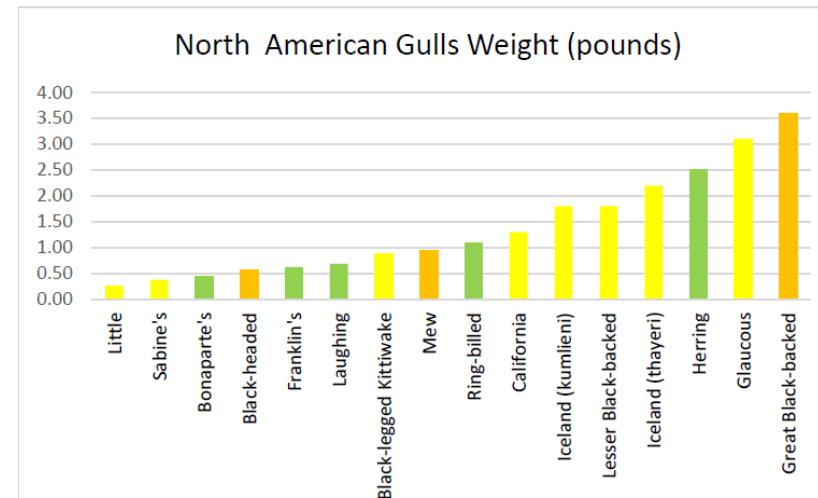
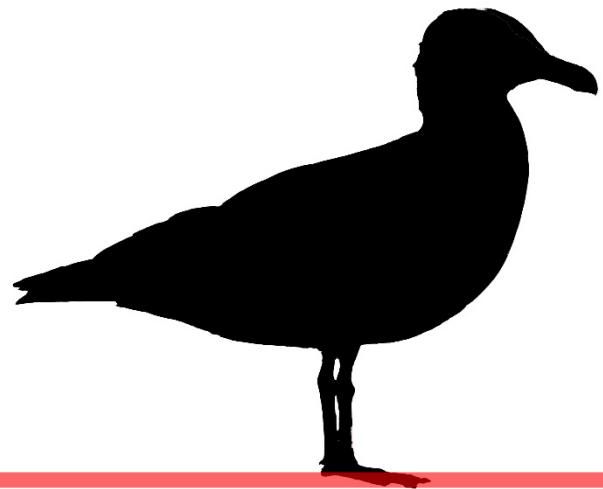
Laughing



Ring-billed



Herring



STRUCTURE

LAUGHING ADULT BREEDING

Black hood

Charcoal
gray back

Broken
white
Eye-ring

Long, slender, droopy bill

Pointed
wing-tips

Wings extend
well beyond
tail

Black wingtips,
inconspicuous
to obvious
white spots
(variable)

Slender, tapered,
long-winged profile

Long
legged,
lanky

Horizontal posture

Gleaming
white
undersides

LAUGHING ADULT NON-BREEDING

Pointy tips

Long,
slender
wing



Fully white
tail & rump

Extensive black with
gradual transition to
gray, then white



FRANKLIN'S

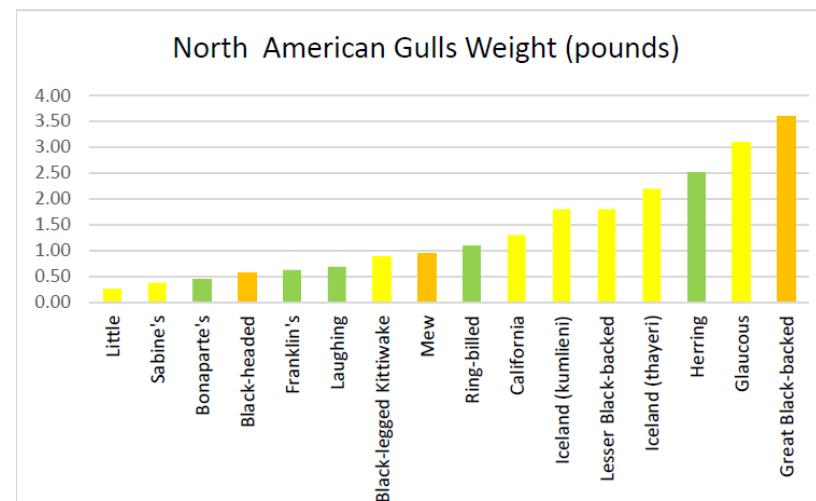
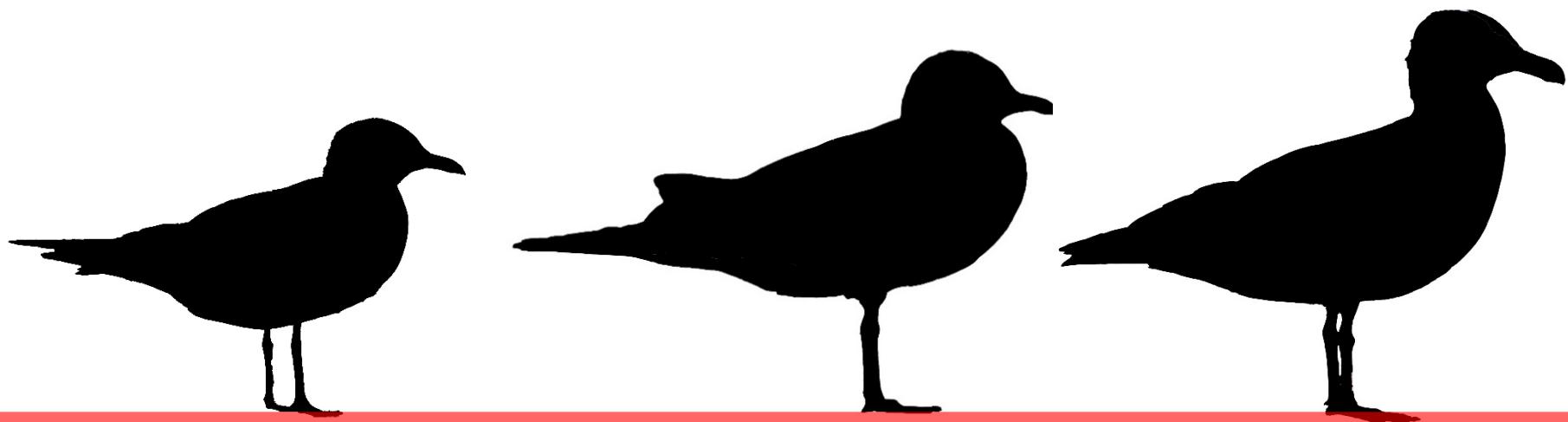
- ▶ Although a few are seen in winter and summer, for the most part **Franklin's** are migrants in Texas. Often seen overhead in loose follow-the-leader flocks in April & October.
- ▶ Note the call and the white-black-gray pattern of the wing-tips for overhead birds.
- ▶ Due to their hooded, or partially hooded (non-breeding) plumage, they are usually only confused with **Laughing**.
- ▶ In comparison to **Laughing**, **Franklin's** have shorter bills, wider eye-arcs, shorter legs, have a shorter, more-rotund build and more rounded wings.
- ▶ In the past the larger white spots on the folded primaries of the **Franklin's** has been touted as an ID point, but this can be ambiguous. Structure and the points mentioned above are better field marks.

SIZE COMPARISON

Franklin's

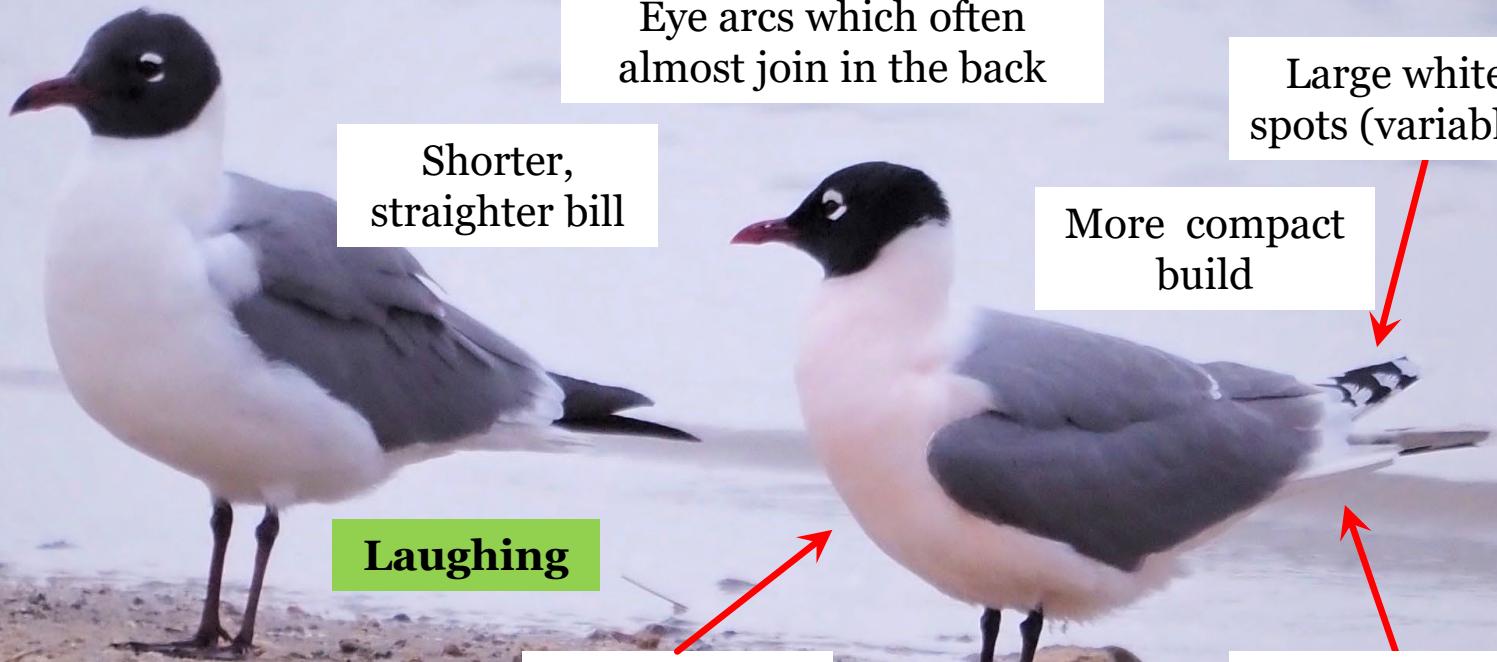
Ring-billed

Herring



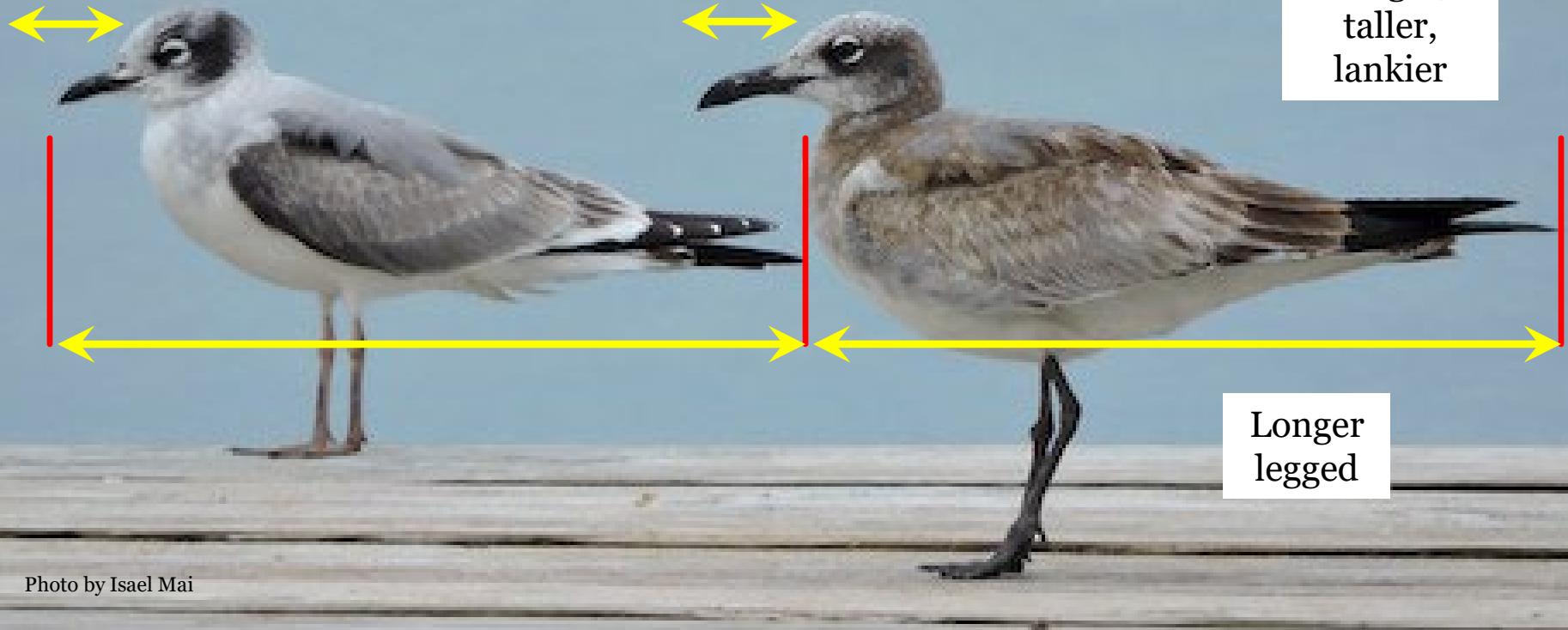
PLUMAGE

FRANKLIN'S ADULT BREEDING

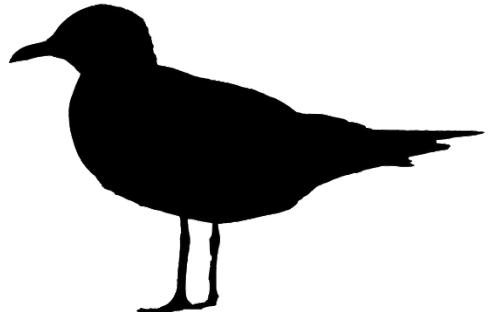


Note that the head on the **Laughing** in this photo is turned slightly towards the camera, making the bill appear shorter than it is.

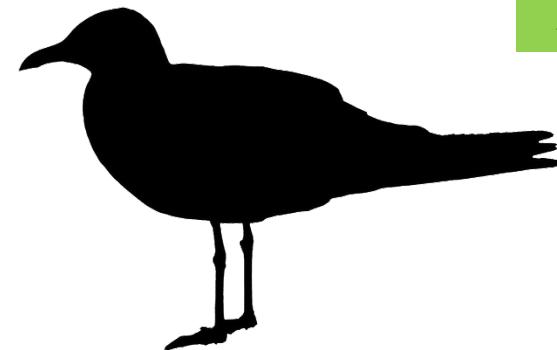
FRANKLIN'S VS LAUGHING



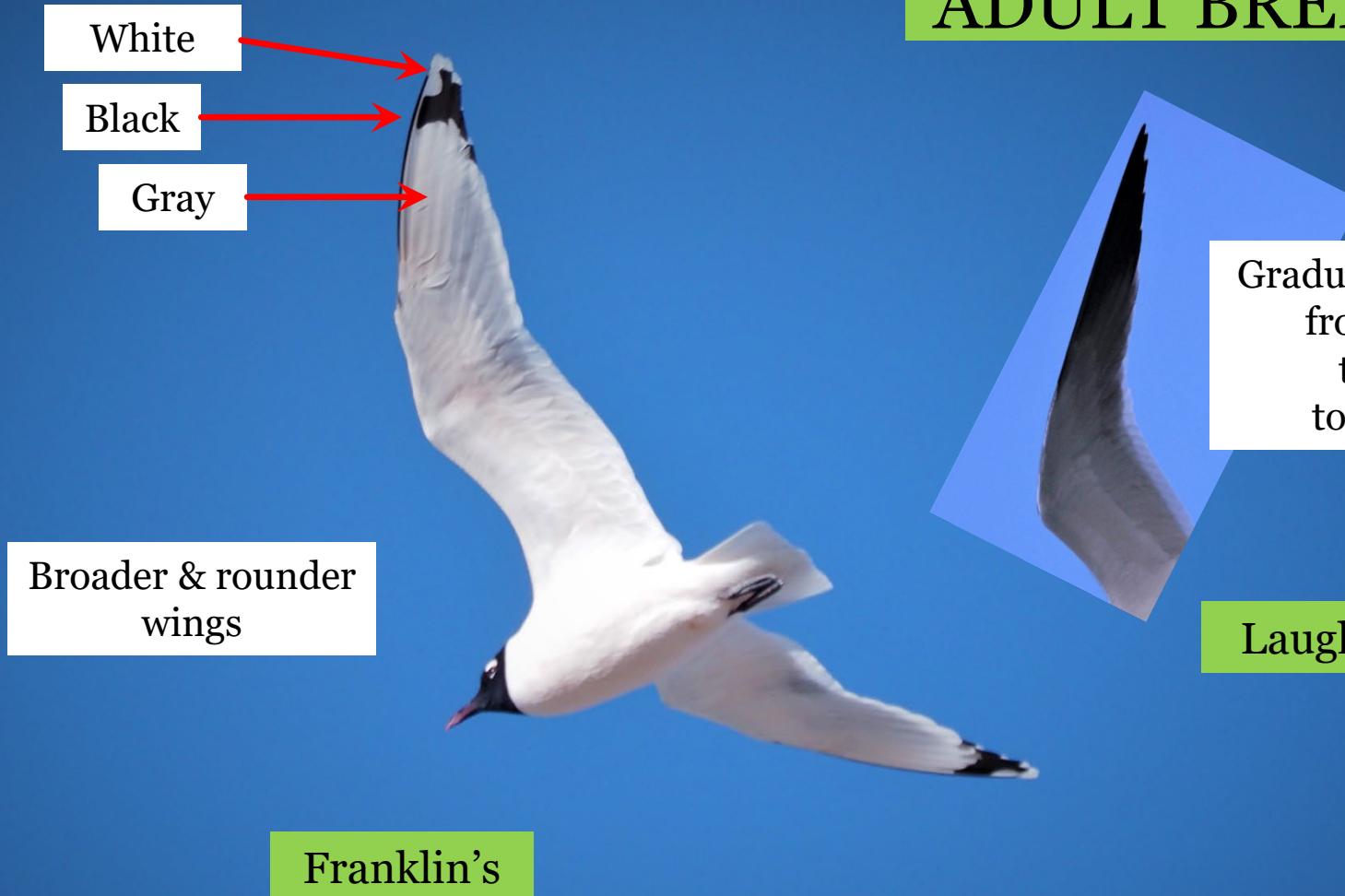
Franklin's



Laughing



FRANKLIN'S ADULT BREEDING

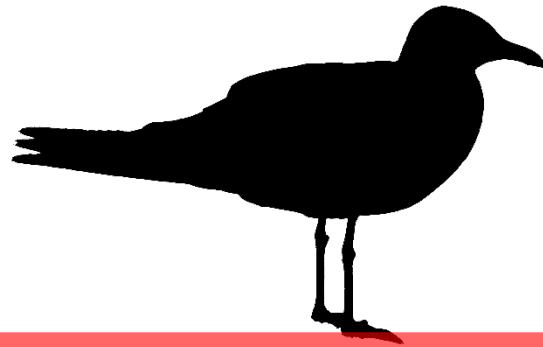


HERRING

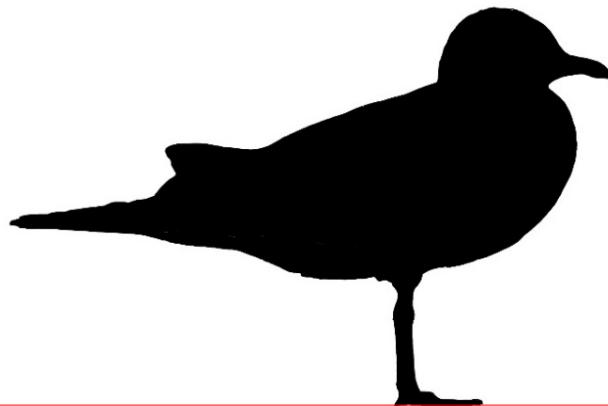
- ▶ **Herring** are by far the most common large white-headed gull.
- ▶ They vary in size and build, but should be considered the default pink-legged, large gull in Texas. They are distinctly larger than all the other common gulls.
- ▶ Their structure is variable, but generally more bulky in the belly than in the chest. They usually have relatively moderate wing projection beyond the tail, but some females can appear fairly long-winged.
- ▶ The bill of the **Herring** should be studied carefully it is medium-long and sports a fairly conspicuous gonydeal angle.
- ▶ The eye is usually light yellow in adults.

SIZE COMPARISON

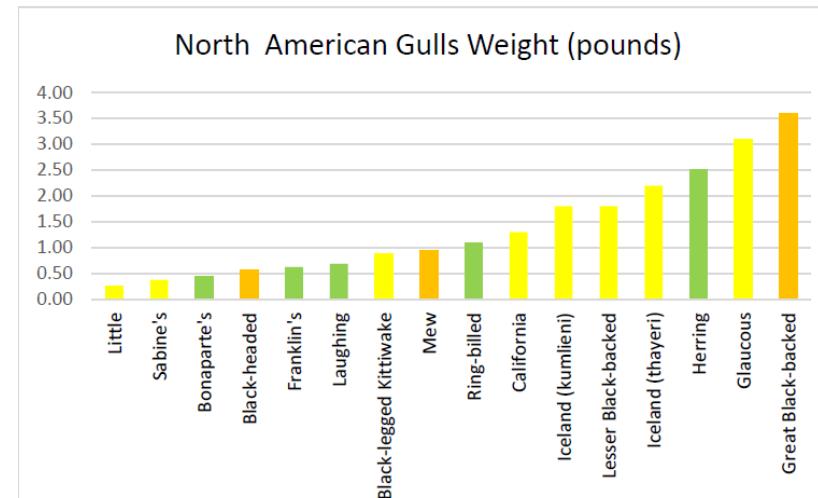
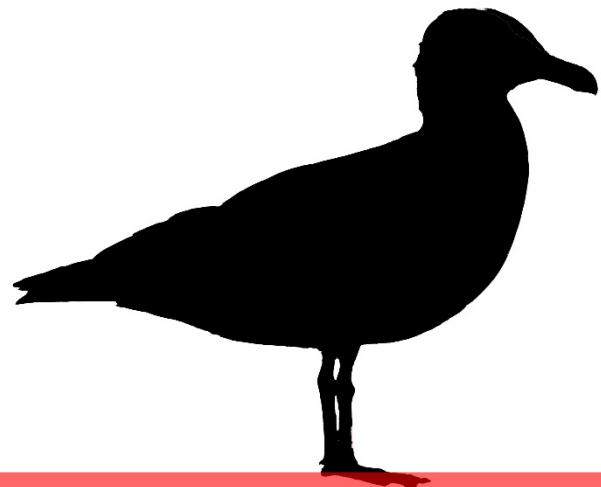
Laughing



Ring-billed



Herring



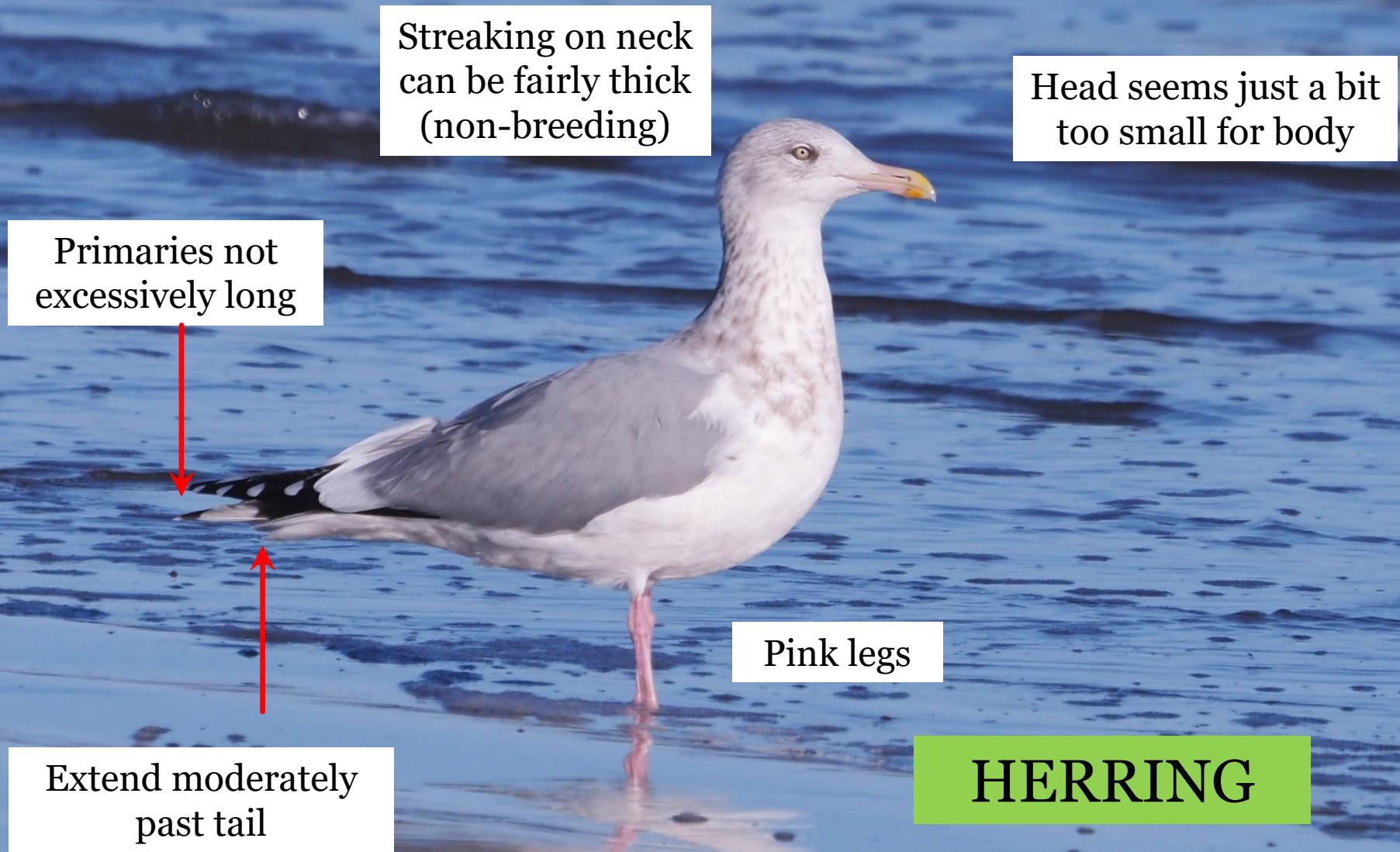
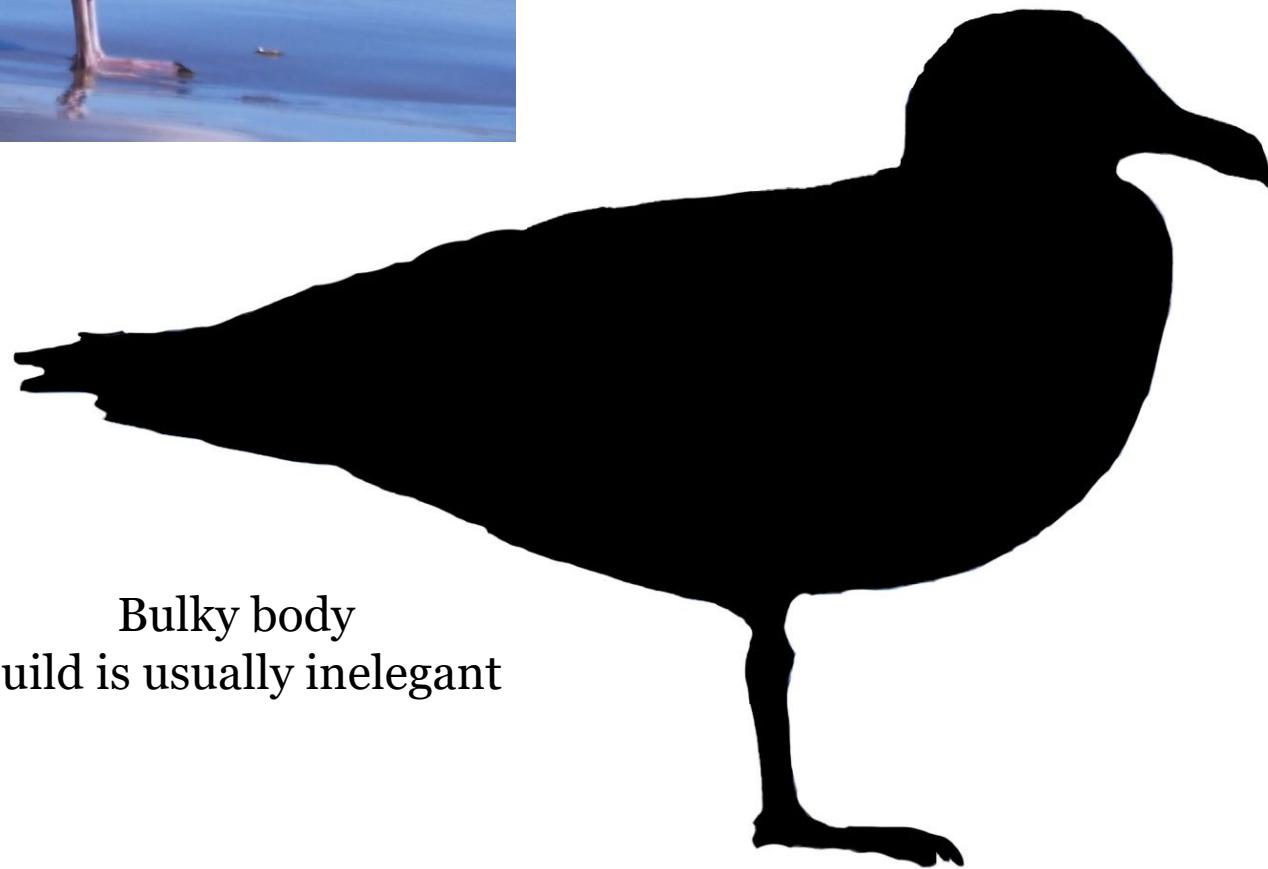


Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson



HERRING STRUCTURE



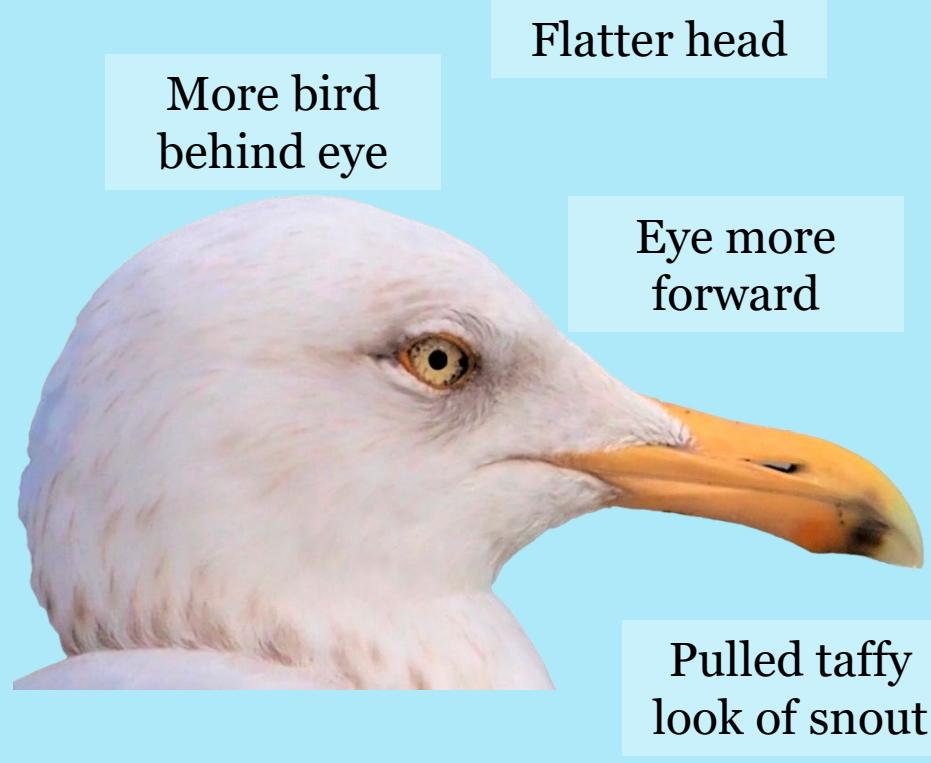
Bulky body
Build is usually inelegant

STRUCTURE: BILL & HEAD

Ring-billed



Herring



HERRING VS RING-BILLED VS LAUGHING



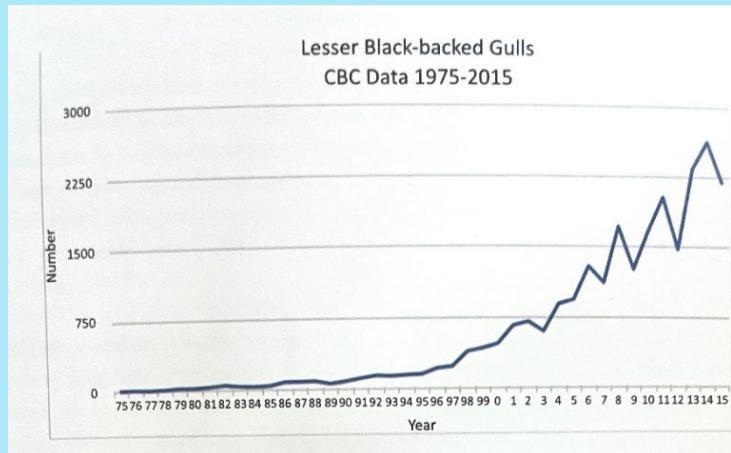
Photo by John Schwarz

LBBG

- ▶ The **Lesser Black-backed** has established a strong winter presence in North America and Texas over the last 25 years or so. It hatches primarily in Europe, Iceland and Greenland, but wanders to Texas in increasing numbers.
- ▶ Its characteristics should be compared to the **Herring** and **Ring-billed** for ID.
- ▶ The **LBBG** has long, narrow wings which usually extend well beyond the tail when standing.
- ▶ The structure is leaner and more chesty than the **Herring**, but not as lean as the **Ring-billed**.
- ▶ The bill is bullet shaped – slimmer and less hooked than the **Herring**.
- ▶ The LBBG often sports a “punched-in-the-eye” look due to dark feathers around the eye in winter.
- ▶ The leg color is yellow and this along with the dark back-color easily separates adults from **Herring**.
- ▶ Juvenile **LBBGs** are IDed by their structure and darker, if not black, back.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED (LBBG)

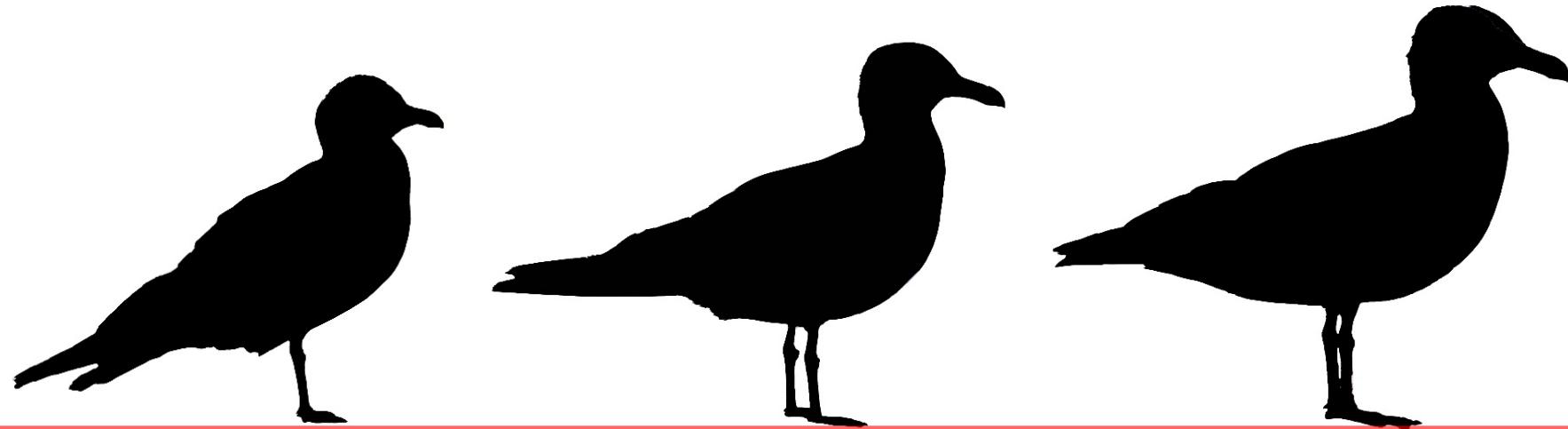
- ▶ Not part of North American avifauna until 1934
- ▶ Increased rapidly in 80s and 90s
- ▶ Originally a breeder in Europe
- ▶ Expanded to Iceland, Greenland, & then NA
- ▶ Same for Texas
 - ▶ A few in the 60s & 70s
 - ▶ More in the 80s & 90s
 - ▶ Removed from Review List in 1997
- ▶ If you go gulling enough – you will find one



National Audubon Society. The Christmas Bird Count Historical Results [Online]. Available <http://www.christmasbirdcount.org> [April 26, 2017]

Source: birds.audubon.org/historical-results

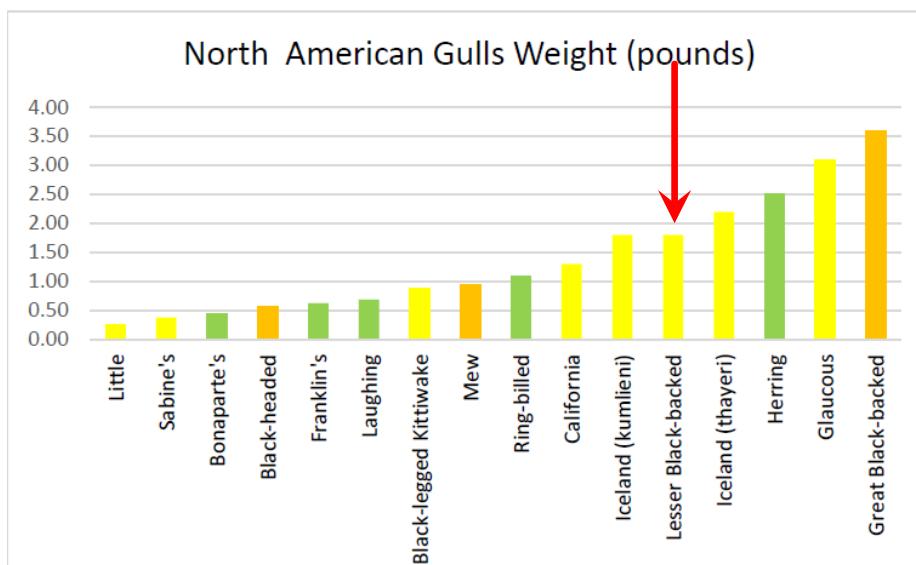
SIZE COMPARISON



Ring-billed

LBBG

Herring



Photos by Jeffrey E. Patterson



LBBG

Long primary projection
Dark back
Punched in the eye look
Chesty build
Slimmer, bullet-like bill

LBBG



Slimmer than **Herring**,



LBBG

Slightly bulkier than
Ring-billed

Ring-billed

LBBG

Punched in eye look

Bullet-shaped
bill

Dark back

Long wings
beyond tail
(usually)

Yellow
legs

Note the effects of the angle of light in this photo. **LBBG** is much darker backed than **Ring-billed**, but because of the angle to the sun, they both appear fairly dark.

LBBG



Yellow eye, slim head and
“punched in eye” often
results in a fierce look

STRUCTURE COMPARISON

Long and tapered



Ring-billed

Bulky,
but not in upper chest



Herring

Longer, more tapered
with bulky upper chest



LBBG

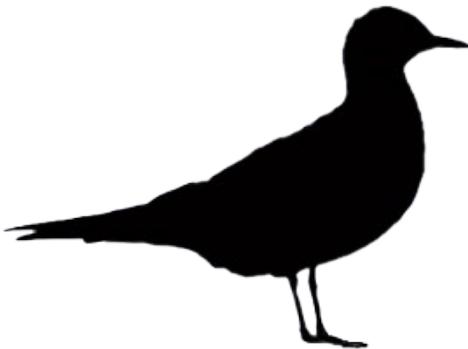
Photo & slide by Kevin Karlson

BONAPARTE'S

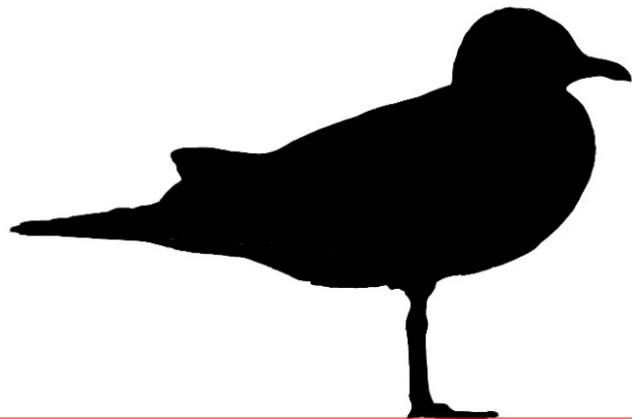
- The smallest of the Texas Hex, the **Bonaparte's** is usually seen snatching food items from the surface of lakes and the Gulf shores in the Texas winter.
- With practice it can be identified from a distance by its buoyant flight style, delicate structure and habit of picking food items from the water's surface.
- The white leading edge and black trailing edge of the wings are often visible from a distance.
- At closer range the Bonaparte's size, thin black bill and black spot behind the eye are the best field marks.
- It has pink legs.
- Juvenile **Bonaparte's** are one of the "M-birds" showing a black bar across the wing coverts and a black leading and trailing edges of the wing.

SIZE COMPARISON

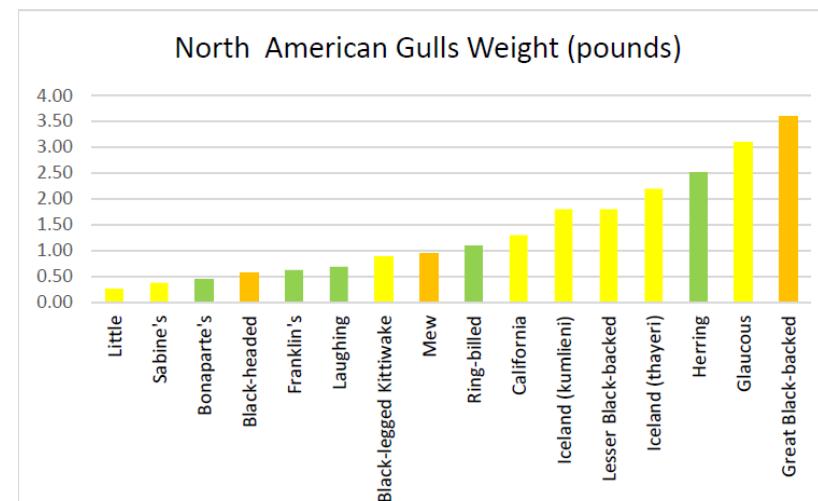
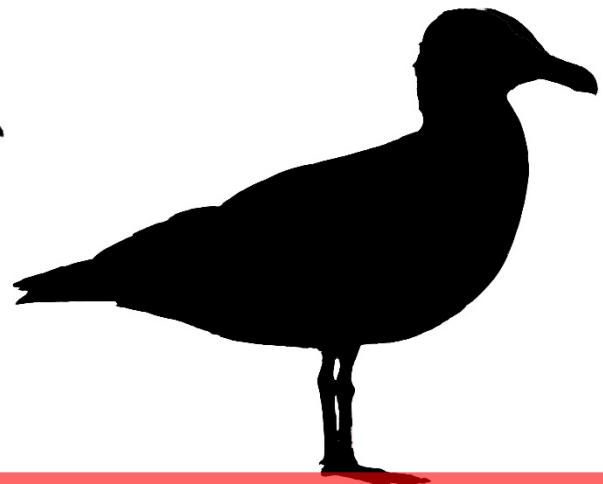
Bonaparte's



Ring-billed



Herring



WHY IS THIS NOT A RING-BILLED?

Smaller

Taller head

Ear patch

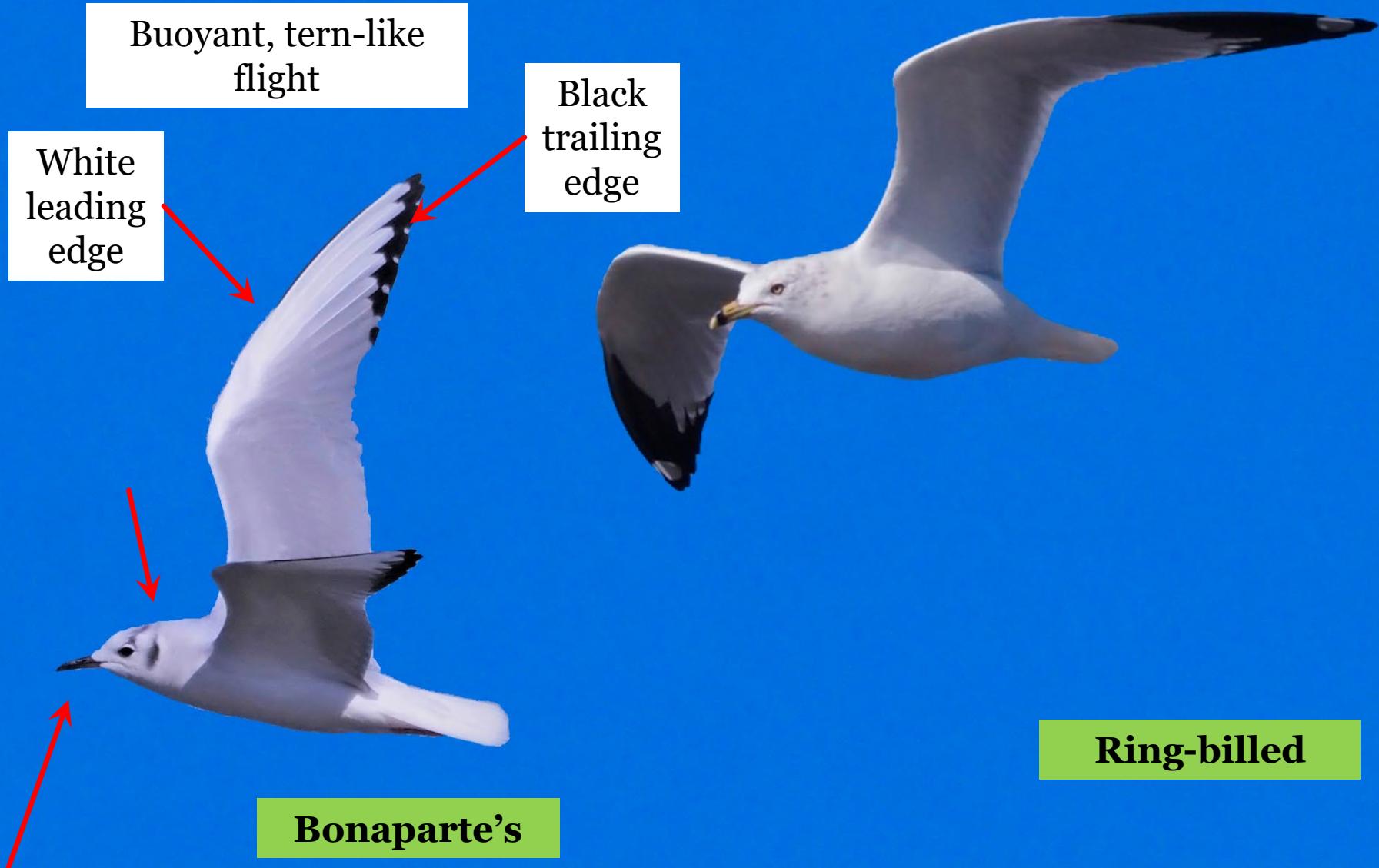
Thin, black
bill

Leg color

Bonaparte's

Ring-billed

WHY IS THIS NOT A RING-BILLED?



BONAPARTE'S AGE PROGRESSION

August



Photo by Robert G Buckert

October



Photo by Dan O'Brian

December



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

March



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

March



Photo by Nancy Villone

January



Photo by Brian Johnson

BONAPARTE'S ADULT – BASIC

Head white with
black ear-spot

Basic (Aug-Apr)

Gray sides of neck
against white
under body

Legs pink
to orange

Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

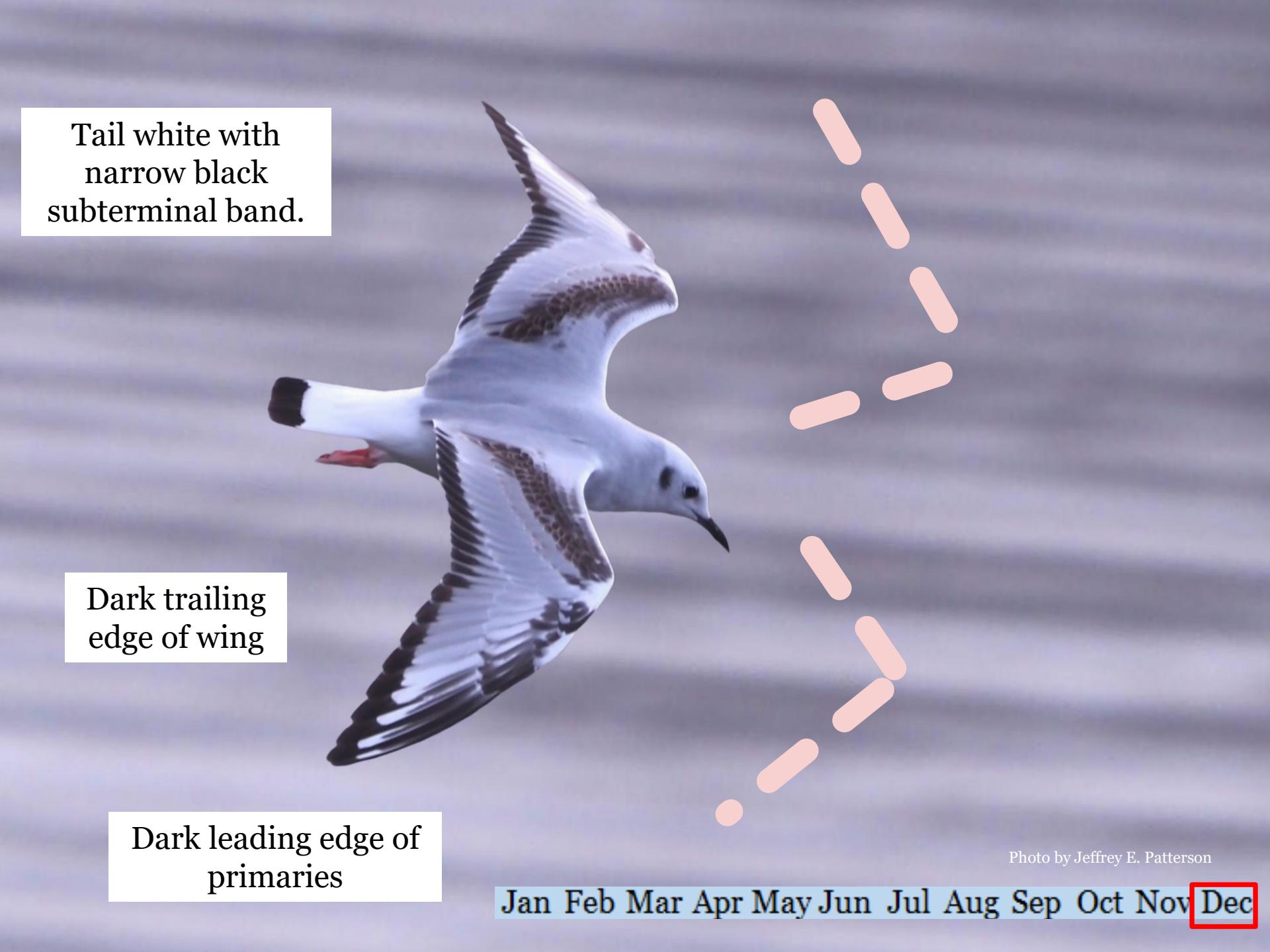
Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec



BONAPARTE'S
ADULT – BASIC

Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson



Tail white with
narrow black
subterminal band.

Dark trailing
edge of wing

Dark leading edge of
primaries



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

Texas Hex & 6+1 Wandering Texans By adult back color



Lesser Black-backed

Dark-backed Gulls

Medium-Dark-backed Gulls



Laughing



Franklin's



Sabine's

Paintings by David A. Sibley

Medium-backed Gulls



Black-legged
Kittiwake



Little



California



Bonaparte's



Iceland



Ring-billed



Herring

Pale-backed Gulls

Reference bird



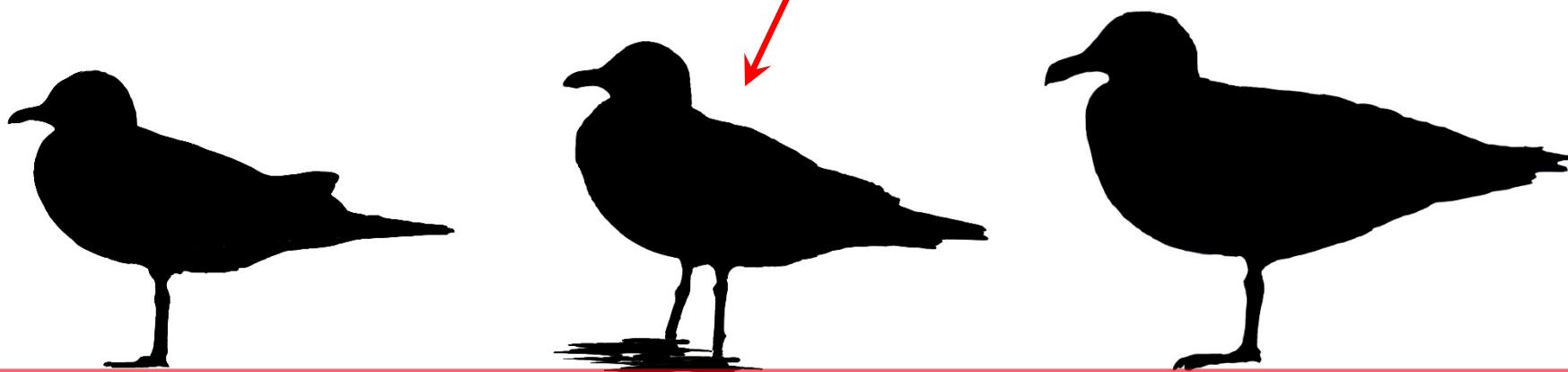
Glaucous

ICELAND

ICELAND

- The smallest of the Texas Hex, the **Bonaparte's** is usually seen snatching food items from the surface of lakes and the Gulf shores in the Texas winter.
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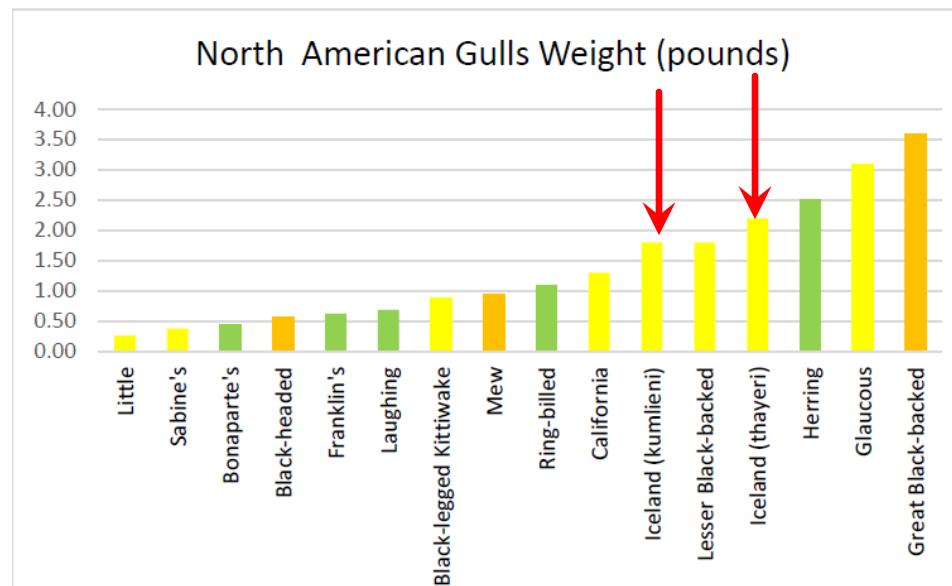
SIZE COMPARISON



Ring-billed

Iceland

Herring



ICELAND VS HERRING



Herring

Iceland



Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

ICELAND
(*THAYERI*)

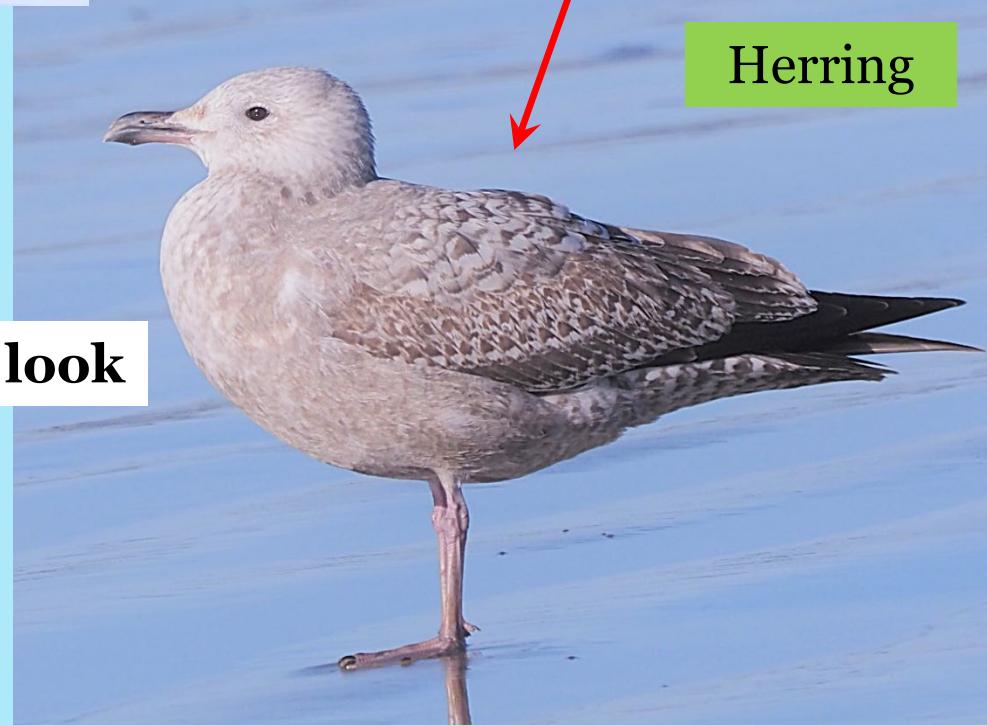
Juvenile scapulars
(same age as coverts)



Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec



**Iceland
(*thayeri*)**



Herring

2-toned look

HEAD & BILL

ICELAND
(*THAYERI*)



ICELAND
(*THAYERI*)



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

Herring



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

A seagull is captured in mid-flight, its wings spread wide, over a body of water with visible ripples and reflections. The bird's plumage is a mix of white and light brown. The background is a soft-focus view of the water.

ICELAND (KUMLIENI)

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

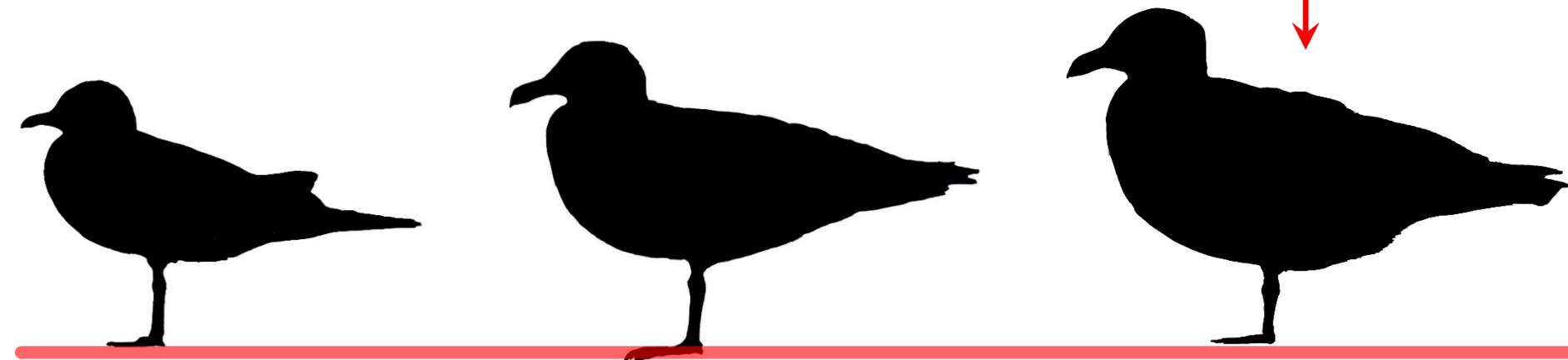
ICELAND (*GLAUCOIDES*)



Photo by Blair Dudeck

GLAUCOUS

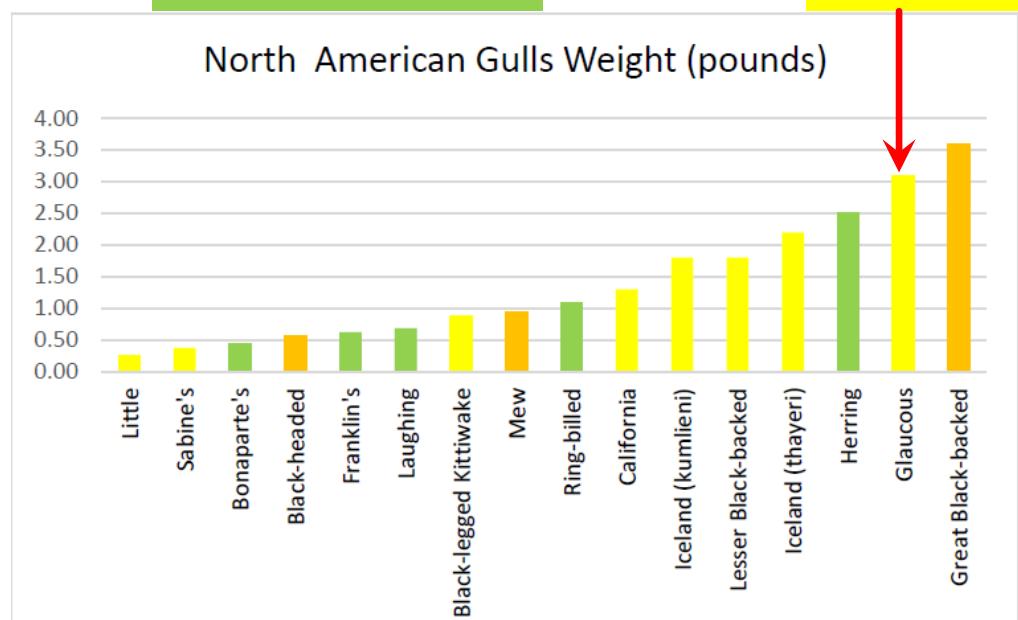
SIZE COMPARISON



Ring-billed

Herring

Glaucous



GLAUCOUS 1ST CYCLE

Large, robust,
proportionate
head & neck

Short-ish
stout bill



Pink & black
Sharp
demarcation

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

GLAUCOUS

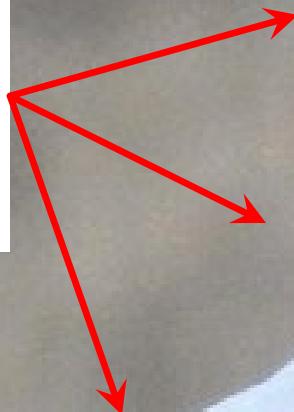
1ST CYCLE



Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

GLAUCOUS ADULT

**Big head,
thick neck
robust
proportions**



CALIFORNIA

SIZE COMPARISON

Ring-billed

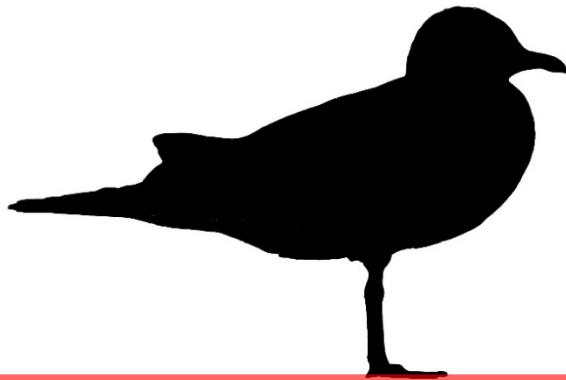


Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

California

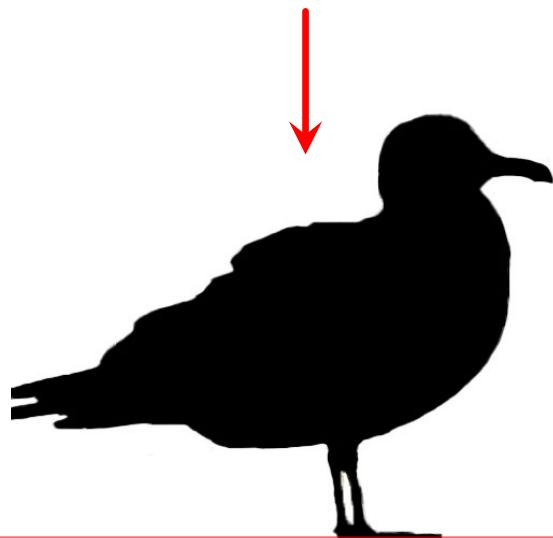


Photo by James Rieman

Herring

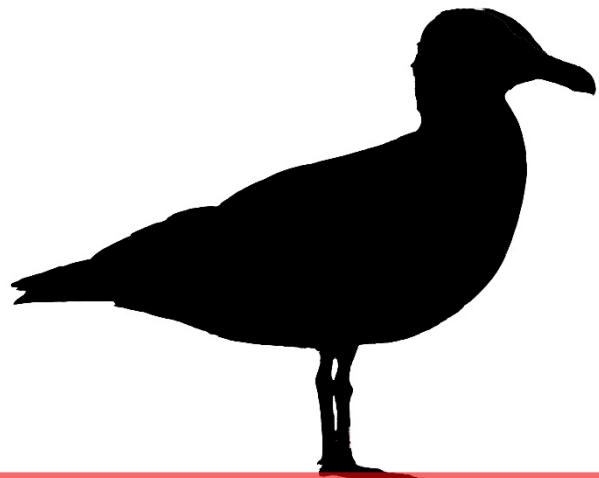
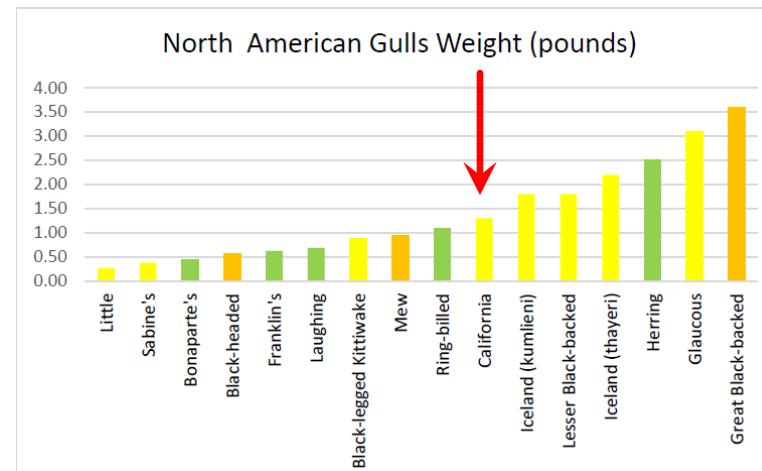


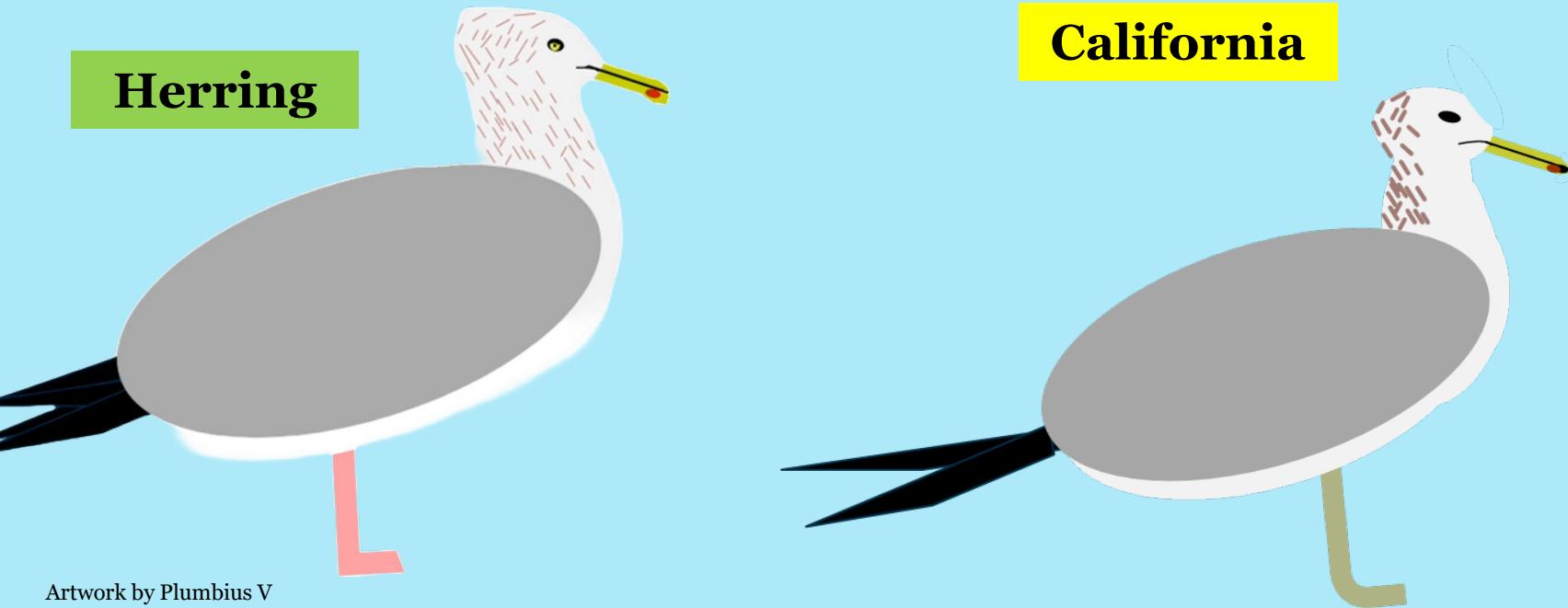
Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

Larger than
Ring-billed
Smaller than
Herring



HERRING VS CALIFORNIA

(MASTER ARTWORK BY PLUMBIUS V)



STRUCTURE

Fairly long,
parallel-sided
bill

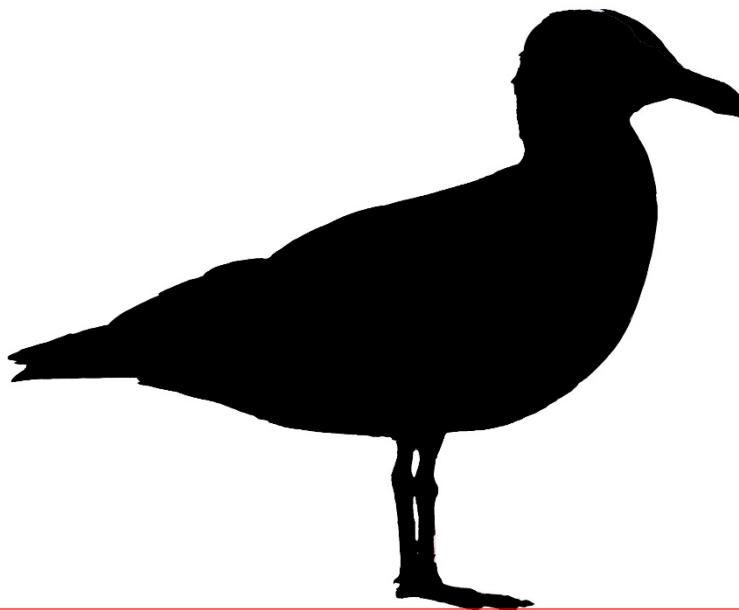


Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

Herring

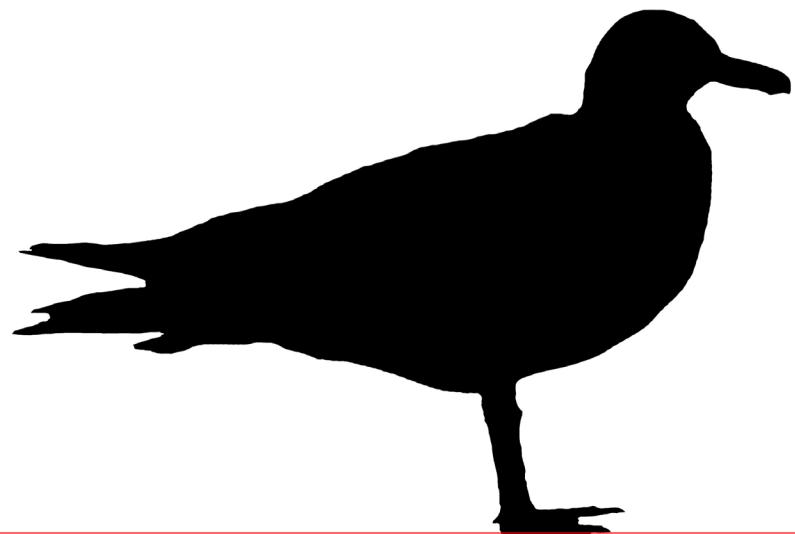
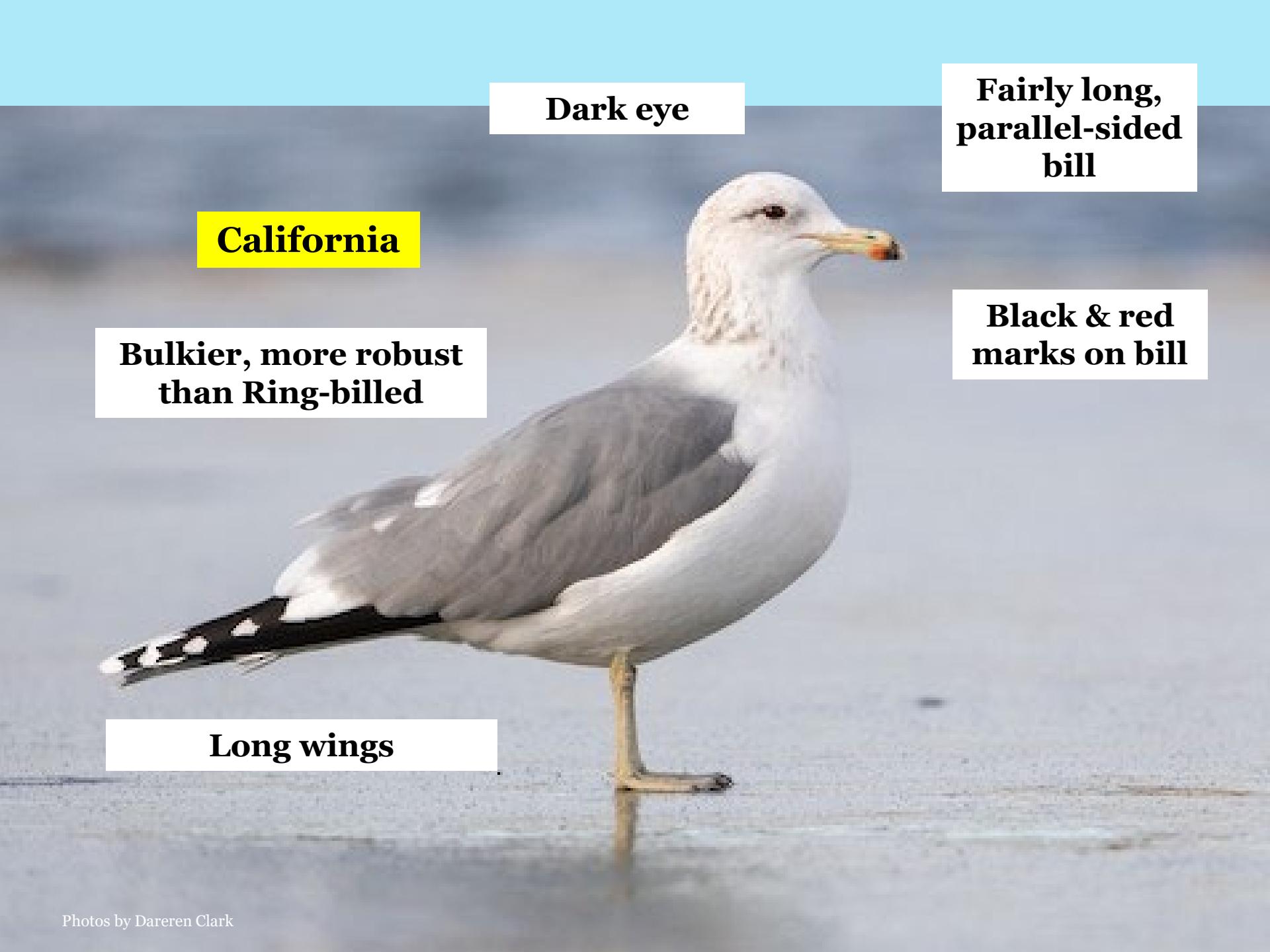


Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

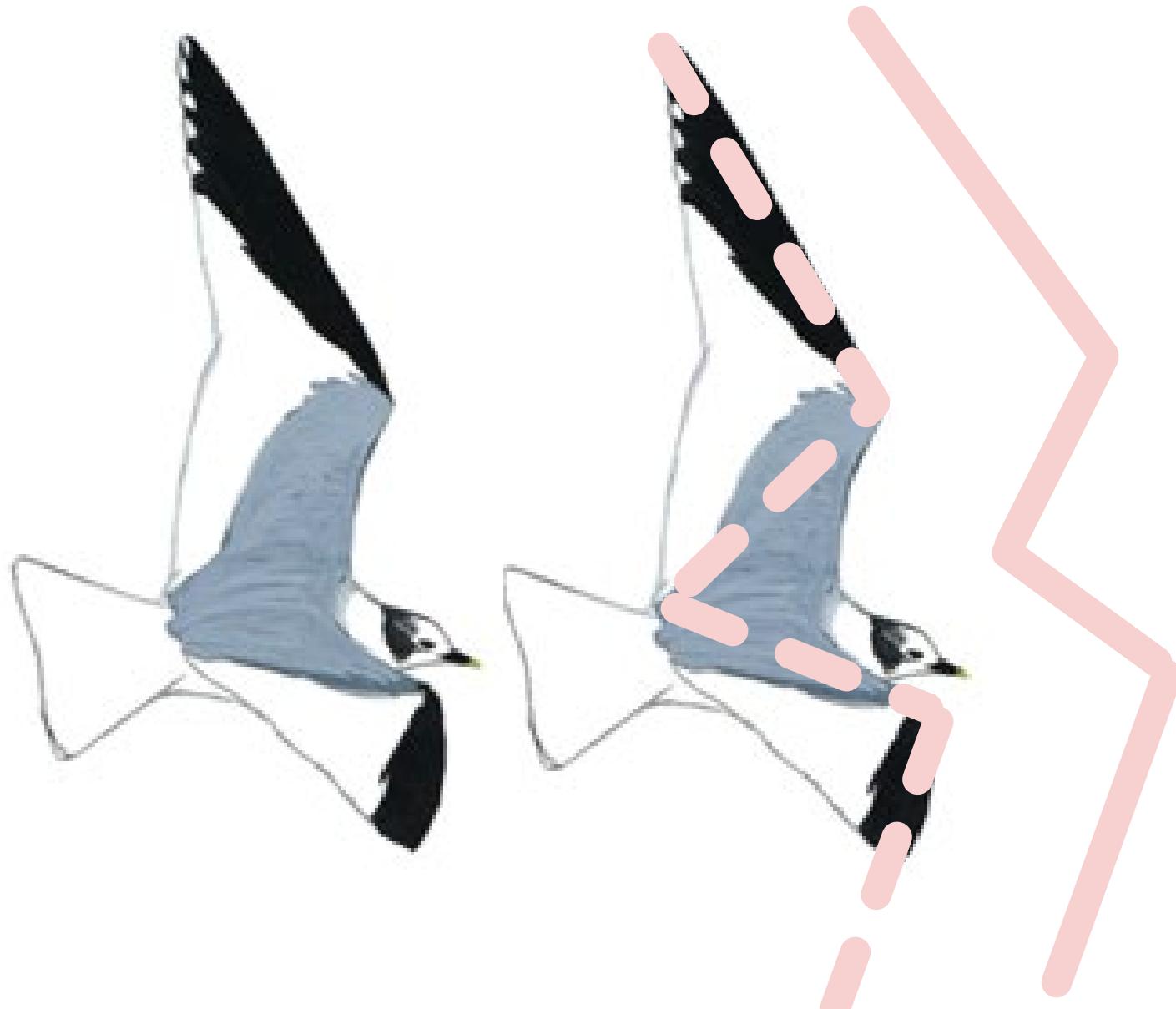
California

Between Herring &
Ring-billed size



SABINE'S

ID GROUP: THE “M-BIRDS”



SIZE COMPARISON



Photo by Darren Clarke



Photo by Matthew Pendleton

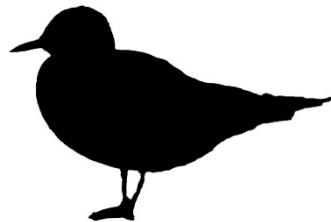


Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

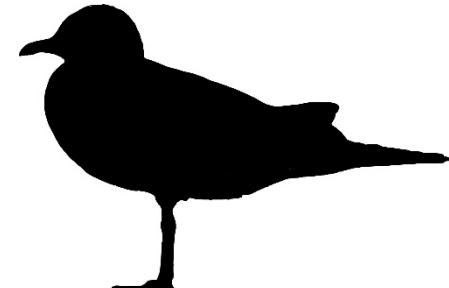


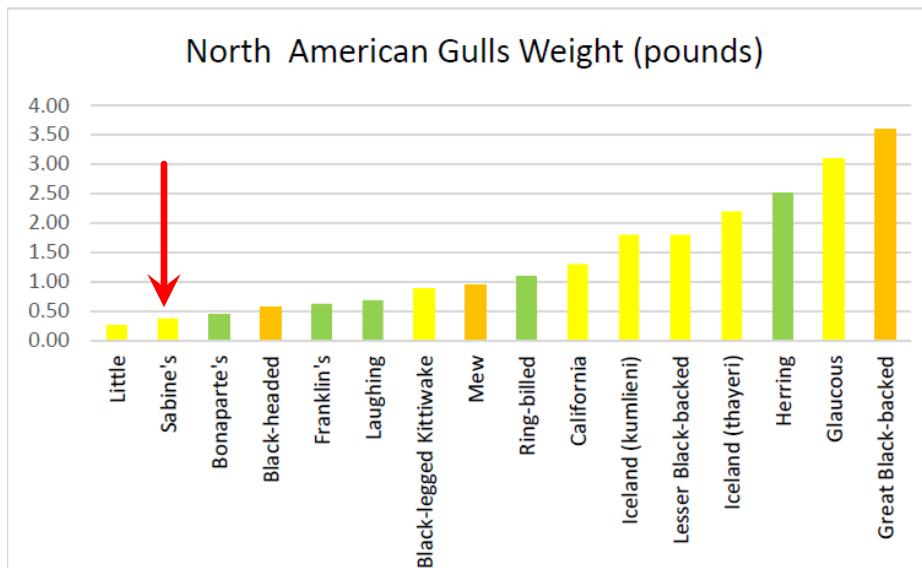
Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

Little

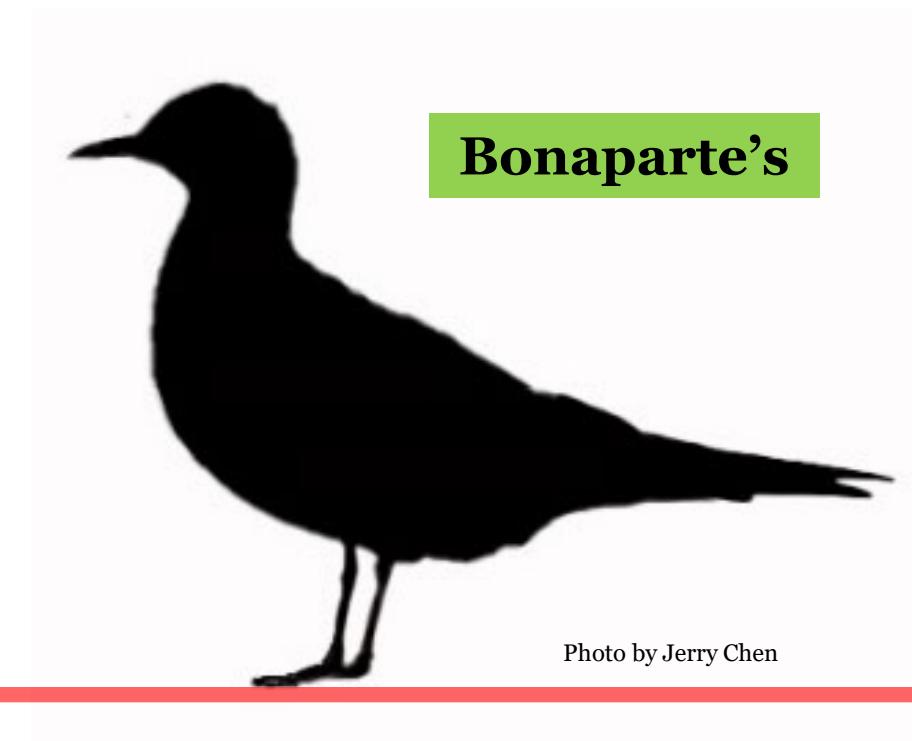
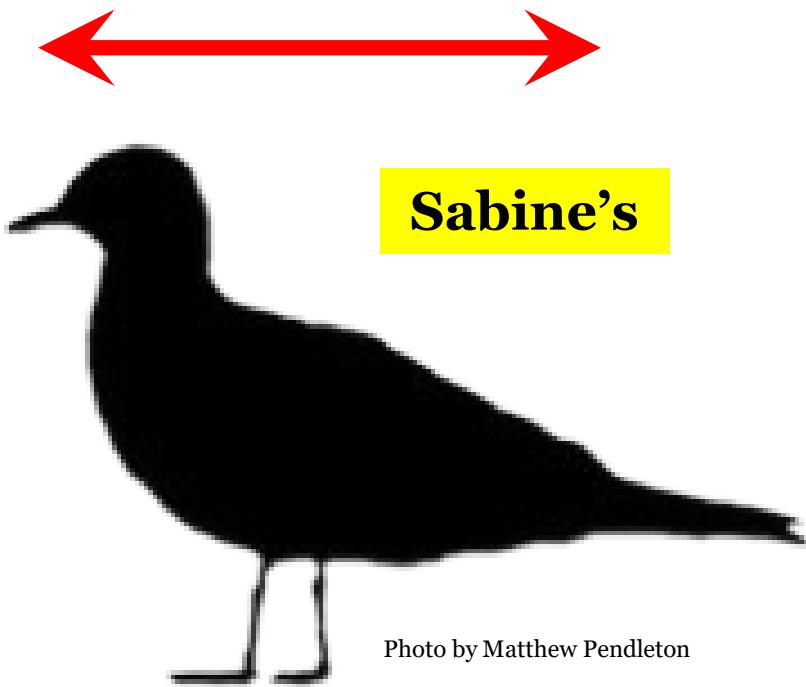
Sabine's

Bonaparte's

Ring-billed



STRUCTURE





SABINE'S
JUVENILE
(1ST WINTER (SEPT))

Scaley back



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

SABINE'S JUVENILE HORNSBY BEND (SEPT 2016)

Long neck
with gray sides

High “keel” in back



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson



SABINE'S ADULT (WINTER)

Photo by Bryant Olsen



Photo by Jay McGowan

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE

SIZE COMPARISON

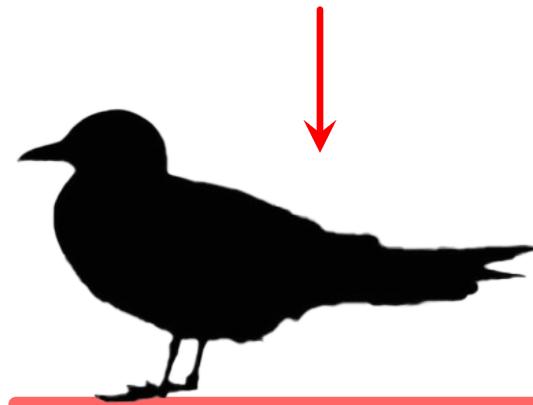


Photo by Alex Lamoreaux

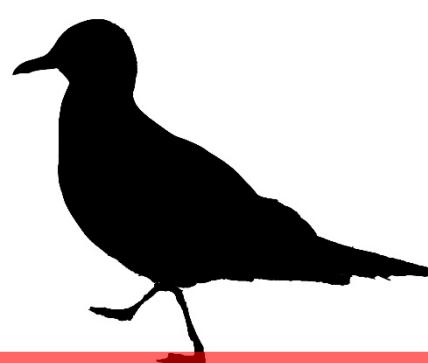


Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

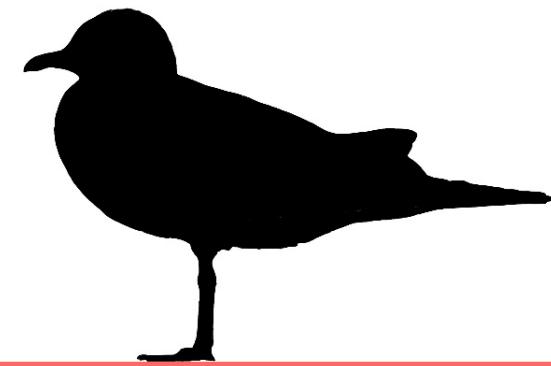


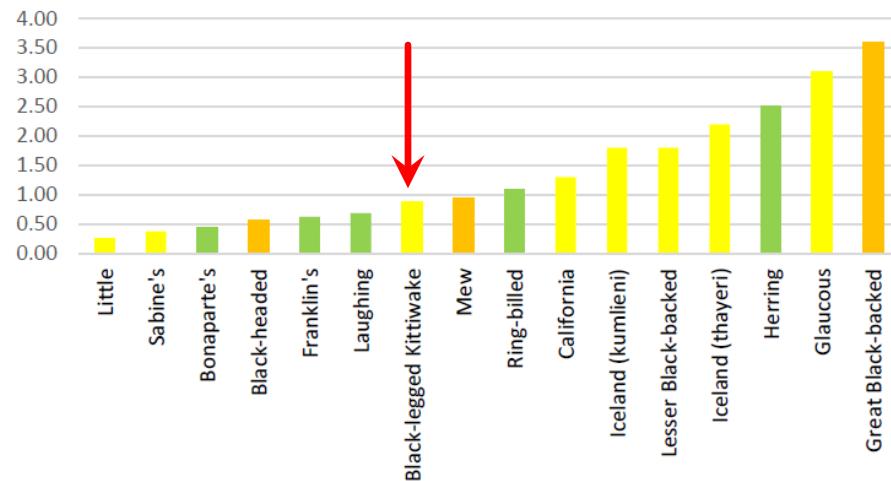
Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

Black-legged Kittiwake

Short-billed

Ring-billed

North American Gulls Weight (pounds)



STRUCTURE

**Black-legged
Kittiwake**



Photo by Alex Lamoreaux

Ring-billed

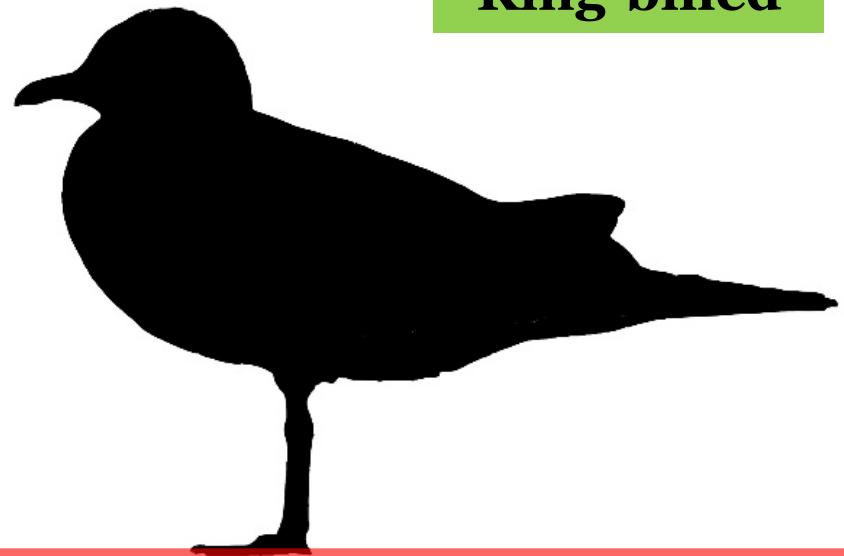


Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

LAKE BALMORHEA

NOVEMBER 2021

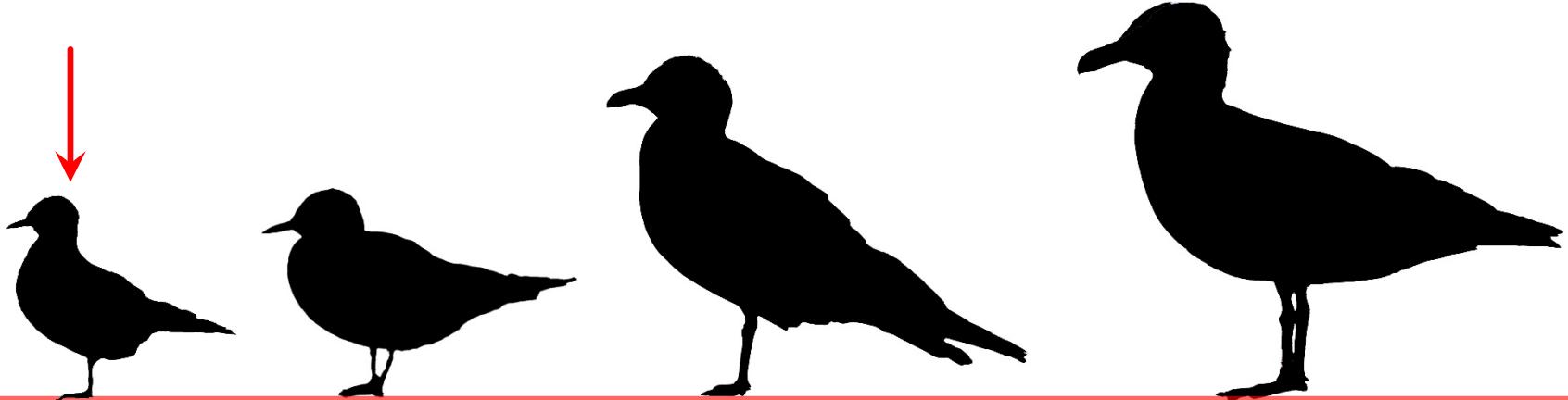
**Black-legged
Kittiwake**



Photo by Jeffrey E. Patterson

LITTLE

SIZE COMPARISON



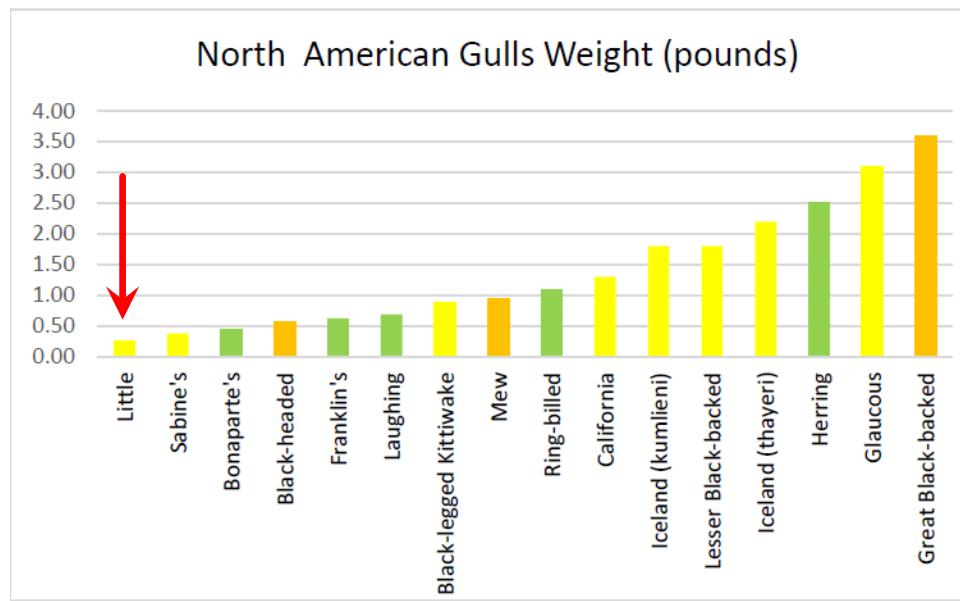
Photos by Jeffrey E. Patterson

Little

Bonaparte's

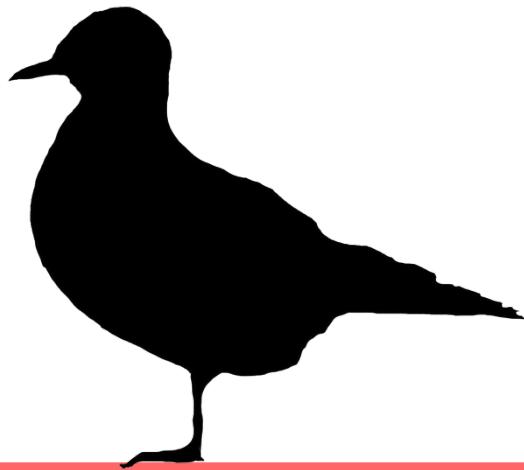
Ring-billed

Herring

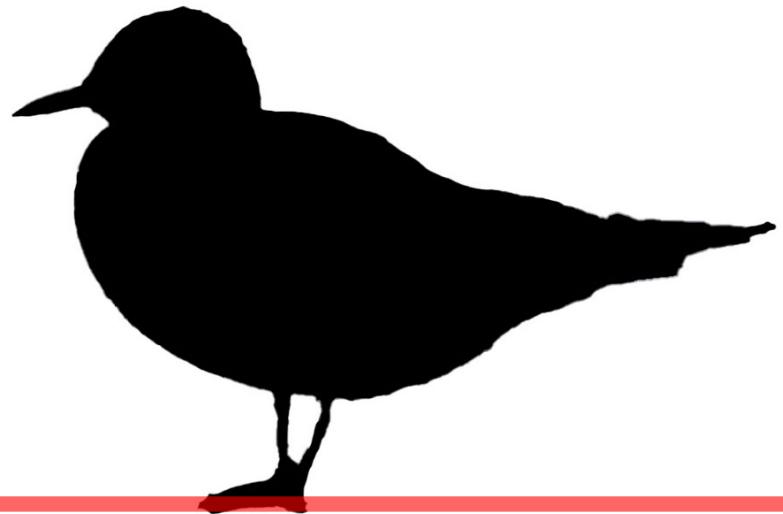


STRUCTURE

Little



Bonaparte's



Photos by Jeffrey E. Patterson

SIZE COMPARISON



LITTLE
ADULT – ALTERNATE
(JUN)



Photo by Lars Peterson



Little

LITTLE
ADULT – BASIC

WHY IS THIS NOT A KITTIWAKE ?



Black collar

Little

Photo by Joe Wing

**Black-legged
Kittiwake**

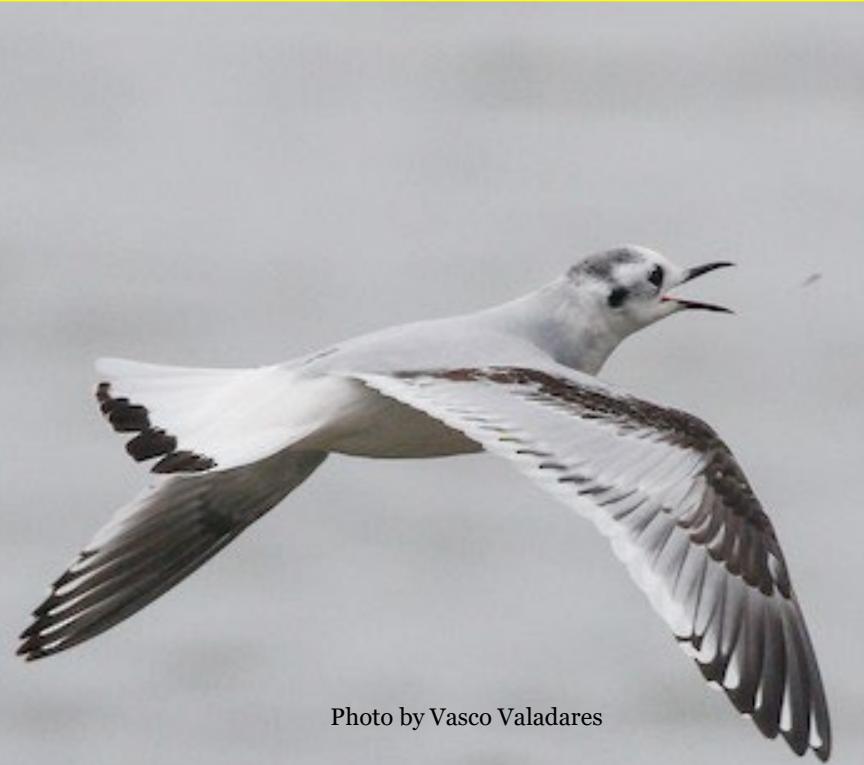


Photo by Vasco Valadares