GULLS CHECKLIST
GULLS OF NORTH AMERICA
6 (+1) Wandering Texans (10/1/26)

		7	8	9	10	10	11	12
ADULT GULLS CHECKLIST (The Texas Hex)		**Glaucous**	**Sabine's**	**Little**	**Iceland (*L.g.kumlieni*)**	**Iceland (*L.g. thayeri*)**	**California**	**Black-legged Kittiwake**
DISTRIBUTION (Habit 1,2,3)	**TEXAS FREQUENCY (TBRC Accepted Records)**	Infrequent (formerly on review list)	Infrequent (formerly on review list)	Infrequent (formerly on review list)	Very infrequent (formerly on review list). 7 of 68 observations in Texas (1977-2015) prior to lumping were ***kumlieni***.	Infrequent (formerly on review list). 61 of 68 observations in Texas (1977-2015) prior to lumping were ***thayeri***.	Infrequent (formerly on review list)	Infrequent (formerly on review list)
	TIME PERIOD IN TEXAS	most observations between early Dec -- late Apr	Most observations between early Sept -- late Dec. Especially Sept/Oct.	all eBird observations in NA between Nov 20 and Apr 20		most observations between early Nov -- late Apr	most observations between mid Oct -- late Mar	early Nov -- late Mar
	Range	Winters northern Atlantic and Pacific coasts.	Pelagic & winters off west coast of S. America. Recorded in all lower 48. Often juveniles in migration	Atlantic coast	Atlantic & Pacific coasts	Atlantic & Pacific coasts	Pacific coast	Primarily pelagic. Vagrant throughout NA.
	Breeding	Far north	Alaska & far north.	Small breeding colony in Canada & possibly Great Lakes.	Far north	Far north	Prairies of central Canada and US.	Far north shorelines & islands
STRUCTURE & GISS (Habit 4,5)	**HEAD**	Anvil-shaped, broad and sturdy.	Petite, small. Shaped similar to **Bonaparte's**	Very petite.	Petite (for a large gull), rounded (more so than ***thayeri)***.	Petite (for a large gull), rounded.	Rounded. Smaller head than most large gulls. Head looks small for body.	Squarish head
	FACIAL EXPRESSION	Menacing	Friendly	Cute	Gentle	Gentle	Dour (due to down-turned gape).	Large dark eyes on a blank face impart a gentle expression.
	BODY	Barrel chested. Bulkier than **Herring**	Dainty, elegant	Very dainty	Plump, rounded chest. "Pleasingly proportioned". Less elongated than most **Herring**.	Plump, rounded chest. "Pleasingly proportioned". Less elongated than most **Herring**.	A slender & elegant, evenly proportioned gull with long wings.	Compact, tubular body with upright posture.
STRUCTURE & GISS (Habit 4,5) (cont'd)	**WINGS, TAIL**	Project less than a bill's length past tail. Broad-based in flight.	Fairly unique forked tail with broad, round corners.	Petite	Wings extend well past tail (more than a bill's length).	Wings extend well past tail (more than a bill's length).	Longer, more pointed wings than **Herring**.	Long, narrow, boomarang-shaped wings. Tail is narrow and long. Stiff wingbeats suggest a bulky tern.
	LEGS	sturdy			Short.	Shortish.	Shorter than Herring.	Short-legged.
	BILL [size, shape, gape]	Long, heavy, fairly straight bill.	Petite, straight.	Tiny, slim	Small, slender, petite.	Short, more slender bill than **Herring**. Gradually curving culmen. Noticiable, but not pronounced gonydeal angle.	Long, parallel-sided, slender; more so than **Herring**. Weak gonydeal angle. Down-turned gape, more so than **Herring**.	Slender down-turned, pointy bill, with a down-turned gape.
	RELATIVE SIZE	Large, only slightly smaller than most **GBBGs**. Typically conspicuously larger than **Herring**. East coast birds larger & bulkier than Alaska breeding birds.	A small, trim gull. Smaller & slimmer than a **kittiwake** or **Short-billed**.	Smallest	Smaller than **Herring**, larger than **Ring-billed**.	Smaller than **Herring**, larger than **Ring-billed**.	Medium large, but not bulky. Smaller than **Herring**, larger than **Ring-billed**.	Small, but larger & sturdier than **Bonaparte's**.
PLUMAGE COLOR & PATTERN (Habit 6,7)	**HEAD & NECK**	White	Unique dark gray hood with black lower border.	Black hood	White	White	White	White
	BODY (mantle, scapulars, belly, chest)	Pale gray back	Medium dark gray. Slightly paler than **Franklin's**.	Medium light gray. Similar color as **Bonaparte's**.	Icy-blue-gray back. Paler back than ***thayeri***.	Darker back than ***kumlieni***, but still pale.	Slightly darker back than **Ring-billed** & **Short-billed**.	Medium-pale gray, but darker than **Bonaparte's**.
	WING & TAIL [primaries (mirrors, apical spots), secondaries, tertials, wing coverts, tail, under-wing]	Very pale gray to white upper-parts. White wing tips at all ages. Much paler primaries.	"M-bird". Bold tri-colored upper wing (black, white, gray), bolder than other "M" birds. Bold white spots on outer primary tips.	Black underwings in flight. White primary tips. Trailing edge of white. Pale gray upper-wings.	Primary tips range from pure white to charcoal gray. Usually paler primaries than ***thayeri***. But can have blackish primaries.	Large white mirrors on outer primaries (**Herring** would never show such large mirrors). Underside of wings and wingtips are gray. From below narrow black band at tips of primaries. From above, blackish largely confined to tips of primaries.	Slightly larger mirrors on outer primaries than **Herring**.	Subtle, two-toned upper wing gray. More noticeable at a distance.
	COLOR OF PRIMARY TIPS AT REST	Pale gray to white	Black	Pale grayish or white	Pale gray to white	Black to tan to fairly pale.	Black	Black
	WING-TIPS IN FLIGHT	White	Outer primaries black with very narrow white tip.	See above.	White	Larger white spots in smaller black area than **Herring**.	Extensive, clean-cut black with white mirrors used to determine subspecies.	Crisply, "dipped in ink" look.
PLUMAGE COLOR & PATTERN (Habit 6,7) (cont'd)	**BILL [color]**	Bright yellow with red gonys dot.	Black with yellow tip.	Black	Yellow with red gonys spot.	Yellow with red gonys spot.	Yellow with black & red marks.	Bright yellow bill is parallel-sided, no gonys bulge, with down-turn at tip. Down-turned gape.
	ORBITAL RING & EYE [color]	Orbital ring chrome yellow to orange, rarely reddish. Pale eye.	Dark eye with red orbital ring.	Eye dark	Most have yellow eyes, a few have dark eyes. Purpleish pink orbital ring.	Dark eyes. About 1 in 4 have dusky, yellowish eyes, but not as yellow as **Herring**. Red orbital ring.	Usually dark eye, but can be dull yellow. Red orbital ring.	Dark eye with red orbital ring.
	LEG [color]	Fleshy pink to pink.	Black	Red	Deep pink	Deep pink (darker pink than **Herring**).	Yellow-green, sometimes blueish	Black
	ADULT -- BASIC (differences from alternate plumage)	Head suffused with brown in winter. Retains white primaries.	Black hood now restricted to a shadowy rear cap and upper nape, with a black ear spot connected to the dark hood at rear crown.	Hood remnants on top. Black ear spot.	Limited streaking on head and neck.	Head suffused with brown in winter.	Heaviest streaking on nape.	Smudges on head.
ADULT ID GROUP	**Large White-headed**	X			X	X	X	
	Hooded		X	X				
	Dark-backed (adults)							
	Medium-backed (adults)		X	X	X	X	X	X
	Pale-backed (adults)	X						
	Black Primaries		X	X		some	X	X
	Non-black primaries (white, gray, light brown, brown)	X			X	some		

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	RING OR DARK TIP ON BILL							
	~~HYBRIDIZATION~~	**Glaucous** X **Herring** = **"Nelson's Gull". Glaucous X Glaucous-winged = "Seward Gull"** (Alaska). **Glaucous** X **GBBG** (rare Atlantic Coast)						
SIMILAR SPECIES (large gulls compared to Herring Gull)		Shorter wings, larger, sturdier bill, bulkier head than **Iceland**.	Other "M" birds lack the bold, brownish, gray "M".	**Bonaparte's**	**Thayeri** has light brown primaries with whitish edges on folded wings. tips of primaries look darker when wing is folded. **Thayeri** has more solidly or even dark centers on tertials. Wingtips appear blackish from above, pale below. More petite bill, head & body than **Glaucous**. Rounder head, less defined pink on bill (first winter birds).	Smaller size, neater proportions, deeper pink legs and larger mirrors on outer primaries than **Herring**. Blackish primaries with bold white tips. Plumper chest. Wings well past tail. Dusky eye (usually). Petite yellow bill as adult. **Kumlien's** is more checkered or barred. Wingtips mostly white above and below (some have limited dark gray near the tip, but not black). More petite bill, head & body than **Glaucous**. 1st year **Herring, Western** & **California** gulls show blacker wingtips which contrast more strongly with back.	Compared to **Herring**, 1st winter **California** is smaller, more slender, slimmer-billed and overall more contrastingly, less uniformly patterened, showing a whiter head and face, fading underparts, bold contrast on the folded wing between the paler shoulder and the much darker greater coverts, and even darker tertials.	Gray-backed "M" bird, rather than a brownish gray of Sabine's. "M" is less pronounced than Sabine's, but more so than other "M" birds.
PLUMAGE COLOR & PATTERN (Habit 6,7)	**YEARS TO MATURITY**	4	2	3	4	4	4	2-3
	SUB-ADULT (2nd Cycle, 3rd Cycle) HEAD & NECK						Heaviest streaking on nape.	
	SUB-ADULT (2nd Cycle, 3rd Cycle) BODY (mantle, scapulars, belly, chest)	Much whiter in 2nd winter	Rarely seen in NA in 1st winter plumage. Usually juvenile or adult.				Wide variety in new mantle & scapular feathers some with dark cross-bars, others with dark centers. These feathers often have a dishevled look. Not as dark on the head as **Herring**, more white look.	White upper parts with a prominent black ear patch, black hind-collar, which wears to gray. By 1st winter shows a grayish upper back.
PLUMAGE COLOR & PATTERN (Habit 6,7) (cont'd)	**SUB-ADULT (2nd Cycle, 3rd Cycle) (cont'd) WING & TAIL [primaries (mirrors, apical spots), secondaries, tertials, wing coverts, tail, under-wing]**	Paler primaries. White wingtips at all ages. 3rd winter birds often have a brownish cast to greater coverts.	Bold tri-colored upper wing (black, white, brown), bolder than other "M" birds. Brown back & coverts, rather than gray as in adult.	First winter "M-bird"	Dusky upper wing (some individuals), white lower, white primaries & coverts. Sun bleaches primaries & coverts. Mottled less solid brown tertials than thayeri.	Pale primaries with brownish outer webs and pale inner webs from above. (**Herring** has blackish primaries). Pale brown secondaries with pale edges. Wingtips are usually brown, not black like **Herring,** however, color of primaries varies from black to tan.		Black outer primary tips. Black terminal tail-band.
	SUB-ADULT (2nd Cycle, 3rd Cycle) (cont'd) BILL [color]	Well-demarcated black tip. Bill transitioning to yellow by 2nd or 3rd winter. **Iceland** has only a pink base most of the sub-adult age.			Yellow with dark tip.	Yellow with dark tip.	Pinkish with dark tip strongly demarcated. Bill transitioning to yellow.	Bill is black, but develops a pale base in late winter.
	SUB-ADULT (2nd Cycle, 3rd Cycle) (cont'd) ORBITAL RING & EYE COLOR	pale eye by 2nd cycle			From yellow to dark	From yellow to dark	dark	
	LEG COLOR	pink			Pink	Pink	Blue-grayish.	Pinkish.