

Inlet. Immediately after landing we heard and then saw an adult Piping Plover that seemed disturbed by our presence. We began to search for eggs or young, and in a few minutes, Chapman found a single young bird nearby. It ran well as it and the adult made their way westward along the sound shore.

All three observers are familiar with Piping Plovers, and with the differences between Wilson's and Piping Plovers, e.g., voice, general coloration, size and color of bill.

This breeding record appears to be only the second published from North Carolina since 1902, when Piping Plovers were last known to breed at Pea Island (*Birds of North Carolina*, 1959). Henry A. Hespenheide found Piping Plovers nesting near Ocracoke, N.C., on 10 through 12 June 1960 (*Chat*, 25:17). The Shackleford Banks breeding site apparently is the southernmost for North Carolina and the eastern United States.

A First Record for South Carolina: Black-headed Gull Photographed

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At about 1600 on 29 October 1970, I was birding at Huntington Beach State Park. The day was gray and rainy, and a strong northeasterly wind had been blowing for several days. The temperature was in the low 70s. I was watching gulls, terns, and wading and shore birds from the causeway that separates the fresh water lake from the tidal marsh area. At this time, I first saw what I subsequently identified as a Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*).

When the lake is high, as after the recent heavy rains, three culverts drain it into the tidal marsh. At the main culvert, during periods of low tide, fresh water keeps a pool filled and well attended by gulls, terns, and other birds that can secure a meal from the many fish forced to concentrate here. It was at this pool, with its huge outpouring of water from the lake, that I observed what, at first glance, appeared to be a Bonaparte's Gull (*Larus philadelphia*). In the rather poor light, the posture of the gull on the water and the black spot behind the ear gave it the appearance of a Bonaparte's. However, on closer observation this bird appeared different. It was noticeably larger than a Bonaparte's Gull, but more particularly, it had a larger bill which was yellow with a black tip. Since it was only 20 to 30 feet from me, I had an excellent opportunity to study it at close range. Swimming against the outpouring current, bobbing about in the water, its every action was like the more familiar Bonaparte's.

A quick trip home to get my camera and my wife, Renee, as a witness, and I returned to take some photographs. Although the day was dark and my equipment quite basic, several recognizable photographs were secured.

After consulting both Peterson's and Robbin's field guides and the National Geographic's *Water, Prey and Game Birds*, we are of the definite opinion that we saw a Black-headed Gull. On one occasion a readily identifiable Bonaparte's Gull was in the same area and afforded an excellent comparison as to size, bill color, and general appearance.

I saw the bird several times after the initial sighting. It was also seen by James S. Houghton of Montreal, Quebec. Mr. Houghton is a birder of about 40 years experience and it is his opinion that the bird is as described. The larger size, the bill size and coloration, the wide black band on the tail with a barely perceptible white margin terminally, the more white in the leading edge of the upper wing surface, pale reddish tinged legs and feet, all point conclusively to this bird being a *Larus ridibundus*. When in the company of the many Herring, Ring-billed, and Laughing Gulls, this one remained apart and independent from the others. It exhibited aggressive behavior toward the

Bonaparte's Gull when the latter was in the vicinity. On later occasions when seen, it was always alone, seemingly shunning the other gulls.

There is no listing of the Black-headed Gull in *South Carolina Bird Life*. The Charleston Museum has no records of prior sightings in its files. I can only conclude that it is an extremely rare visitor to this more southerly Atlantic coastal area. This description could very well be the only recorded sighting of *Larus ridibundus* in South Carolina.

[Dept. Ed.—Several color photographs were submitted with this note. While all were recognizable, they were not suitable for printing. These photographs were submitted to Chandler S. Robbins, Chief of Migratory Non-Game Bird Studies for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for confirmation. He concurs with the identification of the bird as a Black-headed Gull, as does Roxie Laybourne of the U.S. National Museum. Two of the photographs were retained for the National Photoduplicate File and were given accession numbers 55.1-1Ca and 55.1-1Cb. On the basis of this report and the availability of photographs, this species can now be placed on the official South Carolina bird list.]

Notes on the Gull Population At Roanoke Rapids Lake, N.C., Winter 1970-1971

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A very interesting gull population exists at Roanoke Rapids Lake, a man-made reservoir just north of Roanoke Rapids, N.C., extending westward about 9 miles to where Lake Gaston is formed, and situated only about 6 miles S of the North Carolina-Virginia state line. All the observations at the lake in this study were made in the winter of 1970-1971 at the V.E.P. C.O. dam forming Roanoke Rapids Lake near the northern city limits of Roanoke Rapids.

At Roanoke Rapids Lake I have found three species of gulls this winter season: Ring-billed (*Larus delawarensis*), Herring (*Larus argentatus*), and Bonaparte's (*Larus philadelphia*). Of these three, the Ring-billed Gull is by far the most abundant with the Herring Gull second in numbers. The Bonaparte's Gull was seen only occasionally in the winter.

At Roanoke Rapids there are two distinct Ring-billed Gull feeding populations: (1) a resident population that remains at the lake all day and obtains food directly from the lake, and (2) a population that commutes back and forth from the lake to other feeding areas. The second population of Ring-billed Gulls roosts on the lake at night, returning to feeding grounds in the morning. They remain at these feeding areas (plowed fields) all day and by late afternoon begin returning to the lake for the night.

On the afternoon of 14 January I counted 3,146 Ring-billed Gulls as they arrived at the lake in line and V formation between 4:00 and 5:30 P.M. The resident population of Ring-billed and Herring Gulls of between 150 to 200 individuals is not included in that remarkable total for an inland location. Only Ring-billed Gulls visit the fields. All the Herring Gulls (population average during January: 10 to 15 birds) remained at the lake or along a portion of the Roanoke River.

Gulls flying to the lake in late afternoon come from two different directions. Approximately 80% of the gulls approach the lake at the dam from the east-northeast. These birds are coming from somewhere in Northampton County and possibly from as far away as Virginia. The remaining 20% come from the south-southeast, from the direction of Roanoke Rapids.

On the afternoon of 16 January Bill Collier and I discovered a flock of about 100 Ring-billed Gulls feeding in a plowed field about .5 mile S of Roanoke Rapids Lake. We watched the birds from close range but were unable to determine what they were feeding