

General Field Notes

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First Documented Record of Black Guillemot (*Cephus grylle*) in South Carolina

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On 27 November 1992, a juvenile Black Guillemot (*Cephus grylle*) was discovered at the tip of the south jetty at Huntington Beach State Park, Georgetown County, S.C. Besides myself, four others (Katherine Hunt, Nicholas Gard, Spencer Mortensen, Heather Sutton) saw the bird. After reaching the end of the jetty, we saw an alcid that had the general appearance of a guillemot. I have seen Pigeon Guillemots (*Cephus columba*) in Washington State, and others in the party were familiar with Black Guillemots. After consulting our field guides, we decided that the bird was a juvenile Black Guillemot. We first saw the bird at 1015 h (high tide) for 30 minutes at ≥ 8 m. I returned at 1415 h to further observe and photograph the guillemot.

A Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*) swimming close to the guillemot allowed direct size comparison. The Black Guillemot's neck was long but noticeably shorter than the grebe's and both species were the same body length. The guillemot was chunky in appearance and swam high on the water. The wings were darker than the rest of the body. The scapulars were tipped with white, and the white wing patch was broken up by dark-tipped feathers. When shown in flight, the underwing (almost white with darker trailing edges) and

bright reddish-orange legs were distinctive. The bird's upperparts were whitish, with prominent black areas on the hindneck and nape. The mantle, back, and rump were mottled black and white and the underparts were white.



Fig. 1. Juvenile Black Guillemot at Huntington Beach State Park, S.C., on 4 December 1992. Photo by Jack Peachey.

The guillemot used the rock jetty as a feeding area. We observed the bird consume small fish and what appeared to be a starfish. The bird would swim away from the jetty (< 100 m) to preen and loaf or when disturbed by human activities around the jetty.

There have been two reports of the Black Guillemot in South Carolina (Probst 1976). The first was an adult on 21 September 1958 at Morris Island by A. Mikell and was reported by A. Sprunt, Jr., in J. D. Donchue's column in the *Charleston News and Courier*. The second sighting also was of an adult by Probst and his party on 17 April 1975 at Huntington Beach. The guillemot was 150–180 m offshore, and could not be photographed. Based on the first report, Sprunt and Chamberlain (1970) listed Black Guillemot as hypothetical. Black Guillemot is classified as Provisional I by Post and Gauthreaux (1989) and only the second sighting is accepted by the authors.

This is the first record for Black Guillemot in South Carolina that is documented with a photograph. The sighting report and photograph were accepted by the S. C. Bird Records Committee. Black Guillemots normally winter adjacent to their breeding range, and are usually seen as far south as Rhode Island. They are casual south to Long Island, New York, and southern New Jersey (Harrison 1985).

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Western Races of the Common Nighthawk on the East Coast of North America

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On 4 October 1974, Robert B. Berry and F. Prescott Ward found a Common Nighthawk, *Chordeiles minor*, dead on the beach at Assateague Island, Worcester County, Maryland. The bird (USNM 575735) was an immature male, testes 2 x 1 mm, with molt on the head and neck (wing 188.0 mm, tail 99.1 mm). Laybourne identified the specimen as *C. m. sennetti* by its extremely pale gray coloration and fine vermiculation in comparison to a series of *C. m. minor* in the U. S. National Museum of Natural History (USNM). This western form of the Common Nighthawk breeds only as far east as southwestern Minnesota (American Ornithologists' Union [A.O.U.] 1957). Extralimital records of *sennetti* east of the Mississippi River are three collected in Ohio in August and September (Aldrich 1936, Hicks 1938), and one taken in Kentucky in September (Mengel 1965).

On 16 October 1983, Post collected an unusually pale buffy nighthawk during the course of a mist-netting operation on Sullivan's Island, Charleston County, South Carolina. It was captured in a 20 x 50 m grassy opening between two dense thickets of wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*). The specimen (USNM 600021), an immature female (wing 192.0 mm, tail 99.6 mm, weight 58.5 g), was identified by Laybourne and R. W. Dickerman as *C. m. howelli*. It was compared to six juvenile specimens of *C. m. sennetti* (USNM 5595, 240406, 404957, 576014, AMNH 61220, 825220) from northeastern Kansas, North Dakota and South Dakota, and two juvenile specimens of *C. m. howelli* (KU 15971, USNM 589925) from southeastern Kansas and New Mexico, in addition to the *C. m. minor* in the USNM. The dorsum of this specimen is more rufescent and black and not as finely vermiculated as the juvenile *sennetti*. The markings