

First record of the Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* Linnaeus, 1758 for Brazil

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RESUMO. Primeiro registro de *Larus fuscus* Linnaeus, 1758 para o Brasil. O primeiro registro de *Larus fuscus* no Brasil foi feito na costa oriental do Estado do Ceará, em 15 de novembro de 2005. O exemplar fotografado apresentou características diagnósticas de *L. fuscus*, de acordo com a literatura específica.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Larus fuscus*, Laridae, ampliação de distribuição, Brasil.

KEY WORDS: *Larus fuscus*, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Laridae, range extension, Brazil.

The Lesser Black-backed Gull, *Larus fuscus* Linnaeus, 1758, has been expanding its worldwide distribution from the original range in Europe, and was recorded for the first time in the Americas in 1850 (Boettmann 1994). The closest record to the Brazilian territory was made in French Guyana (Devillers 1979). According to Grant (1986), two subspecies are recognized: *L. f. intermedius* Schioler, 1922 and *L. f. graellsii* Brehm, 1857, the latter colonizing predominantly the western hemisphere (Post and Lewis 1995a). Other authors (e.g., Cramp and Simmons 1983, Glutz von Blotzheim and Bauer 1982) consider the existence of two other Eurasian forms, which Grant (1986) identifies as subspecies of the Herring Gull, *Larus argentatus* Pontoppidan, 1763.

In November 15, 2005, A.C.M. and C.P.N.S. photographed (Figure 1) a solitary gull in the eastern coast of the state of Ceará (at 4°28'04"S, 37°44'31"W), near the mouth of the Jaguaribe River. The bird corresponded to the description of *Larus fuscus* provided by Harrison (1985), Post and Lewis (1995a,b), and Olsen and Larsson (1994). Other possibilities considered were the Great Black-backed Gull, *Larus marinus* Linnaeus, 1758 and the Kelp Gull, *L. dominicanus* Lichtenstein, 1823. The former has never been recorded in Brazil, while the latter is a common species in the southern Brazilian coast that only eventually reaches waters further north to the coasts of Espírito Santo or southern Bahia. Nonetheless, neither of them has such a slender, grayish bill with a black tip at any age, and the Kelp Gull also lacks the white tail feathers with a subterminal black band visible in the pictures (Figure 1).

The individual photographed presumably had three years of age, apparently lacking only one molt to attain mature plumage (B. M. Whitney *in litt.* 2005). Color versions of the photographs will be published in the site of the Brazilian Ornithological Records Committee (<http://www.cbro.org.br>) as supplementary documentation for the record. Small numbers of *L. fuscus* have been observed wintering throughout the Caribbean in November–April (Olsen and Larsson 1994),

coinciding with the period when the species was observed in Ceará. This record reinforces the possibility of an expansion of the wintering range of the species. We suggest the use of the name “gaivota-de-asa-escura” in Brazil, indicating its dark wings, for the species already has a Portuguese name (in Portugal): “gaivota-d’asa-escura” (Costa *et al.* 2000).



Figure 1. Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* photographed at Aracati, Ceará, on 15 November 2005.

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