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DESCRIPTION OF A NEW RACE OF THE LESSER BLACK- BACKED GULL, FROM THE AZORES

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A series of seventeen gulls from the Azores, recently acquired for The American Museum of Natural History, has been kindly placed at my disposal by Dr. L. C. Sanford. I am also indebted to Mr. Outram Bangs of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy for the loan of two other gulls from the Canary Islands. These birds are strikingly different from any of the hitherto described races of *Larus fuscus* and, as the dates of capture range from August 22 to March 10, it is probable that they represent a form resident upon these islands and upon others off the African coast. For this reason I have named them after the fabled island or islands of Atlantis.

Larus fuscus atlantis, new subspecies

SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.—Similar to *Larus fuscus affinis* but larger, the legs, feet and bill heavier, and the mantle a paler "light neutral" gray, instead of "deep neutral gray."

MEASUREMENTS.—Male: wing, 427; tail, 175; tarsus, 68; toe without claw, 58; claw, 10; culmen, 55; depth of bill at base, 19.5; at angle, 20.5.

TYPE.—No. 14304, collection of L. C. Sanford; ♂ ad.; March 10, 1922; Fayal Azores; J. G. Correia.

SPECIMENS EXAMINED

Larus fuscus atlantis, Azores, 8 ♂, 6 ♀, 3 juv.; Canary Islands, 1 ♂, 1 juv.

Larus fuscus fuscus, 6 ♂, 3 ♀, 2 juv.; 6 not sexed.

Larus fuscus affinis, 5 ♂, 4 ♀, 1 juv.; 5 not sexed.

Larus fuscus taimyrensis, 1 ♀.

Compared with *affinis*, the nearest race both in color and in distribution, the mantle of *atlantis* is a clearer, paler, bluer gray without any of the brownish tinge that marks all the other races even in perfectly fresh plumage, and, furthermore, when adult males are compared with males, and females with females, the average larger size is obvious.

Larus fuscus fuscus is a dark neutral gray often quite fuscous, browner with wear, almost as dark as *Larus marinus*; the race *affinis* is a deep neutral gray, very slightly brown-tinged, and of the same shade as *Larus occidentalis livens*; the race *taimyrensis* seems to be merely a large

affinis; while *atlantis* is the palest gray of any and similar in shade to *Larus occidentalis occidentalis*.

One may well wonder if this new race does not represent the birds that Godman years ago called *argentatus* in listing those of the Canaries and Madeira (Ibis, 1872, p. 222), having seen them in June on the Azores (Ibis, 1866, p. 103). Later writers have referred such birds to *cachinnans* (*leucophæus*), among them Ogilvie-Grant (Ibis, 1890, p. 444) and Lowe ('British Birds,' VI, 1912-13, p. 5); but without examination of actual specimens, I should be loth to exclude this species from the Atlantic fauna where it has been repeatedly recorded by a number of reliable observers.

Like *fuscus* and its races, *cachinnans* when adult has yellow feet, but the wing-pattern is quite different; *argentatus* and its races have flesh-colored feet, but again the wing-pattern is different from that of either *fuscus* or *cachinnans*. Those who have available specimens would do well to settle the question whether *cachinnans*, a species of more eastern distribution, breeds much west of the Black Sea region.

		Wing	Tail	Tarsus	Toe With- out Claw	Toe With Claw	Culmen	Bill Depth at Base	Bill Dept at Angle
Type No. 14304	♂	427	175	68	58	68	55	19.5	20.5
14305	♂	428	178	68	58	68	57	18	19
14307	♂	422	171	67	54	65	57	18.5	20
14306	♂	420	175	65	56	65	54	18.5	20.5
14309	♂	425	164	66	54	64	56	18	19
14308	♂	420	162	66	56	65	56	19	20
14310	♂	422	168	66	55	65	53	18	19.5
14311	♂	412	171	67	57	66	54	18	19
M. C. Z. No. 69036	♂	428	167	67	56	66	54	19.5	20.5
Average		422.7	169.8	66.6	56.0	65.8	55.1	18.5	19.8
14312	♀	406	165	66	53	60	54	18	19
14313	♀	405	164	61	52	61	48	17	18.5
14314	♀	398	164	60	51	59	49	16	18
Br wdoin College	♀	405	170	59	51	60	48	17	18
14315	♀	397	153	62	53	62	50	16.5	18
14316	♀	395	158	62	54	61	53	17	18
Average		401.0	162.3	61.7	52.3	60.5	50.3	16.9	18.3

Specimen numbers refer to the collection of L. C. Sanford, except where otherwise noted. Measurements are in millimeters.