

Large White-headed Gull Workshop – 2021

Large White-headed Gull Identification – North America

4 one-hour classes. \$125. These will be recorded and you will have access to them, and can download the videos for your own use.

Tues and Thurs for two weeks.

Dates: Sun. Nov 21; Tue. Nov. 23; Mon. Nov. 29; Wed. Dec. 1, 2021. 6 pm Pacific time. Zoom platform.

We will limit ourselves to the large gulls in this workshop, as that allows one to focus on some aspects, as well as to spend some time pondering general aspects of gull identification. There are overarching patterns that simplify how to think about gull identification, and particularly how not to get caught in confusing aspect of what seems like a soup of field marks. Alvaro will attempt to simplify this and put a bit of order in your thought process to make this easier, and to be able to let your field time with gulls put you closer to the goal of identifying many or even most of them. We will try not to get hung up on too many of the details and look at the big picture. We will aim to state what the normal appearance is of these gulls, and avoid too much of the oddities and variations, so that learning will not be stymied by focus on the unusual rather than the norm. Also, a comparative approach to gull identification will be employed, as gulls are often together with other gulls. Comparing one to the other is a great way to separate these species.

Topics we will cover include:

1. General aspects of identification and gull ID in particular.
2. Context and comparison – what is common in the gull flock?
3. Learn the adults first – our focus will be on adults at the start of this workshop.
4. Age relate to size and lifespan. The gull life cycle as a way to simplify ageing.
5. Gull ages simplified – most of the time it is not that hard!
6. Migration of adults vs young – home bodies vs wanderers.
7. Structure, shapes and an appreciation of field impressions.
8. Molt – what this tells you and when is it useful.
9. Understanding the wing pattern, and what it tells you.
10. Knowing your baseline common gulls where you live is key.
11. Geographic Variation – Herring Gull in particular.
12. Species – Go through adults first. Young later.
 - Heermann's Gull
 - Short-billed (Mew) Gull
 - Ring-billed Gull

- Herring Gull
- California Gull
- Western Gull
- Thayer's – Iceland
- Glaucous-winged Gull
- Glaucous Gull
- Lesser Black-backed Gull
- Great Black-backed Gull

Also some rarer species will be touched upon, some in more detail than others.

- Slaty-backed Gull
- Vega Gull
- Yellow-footed Gull
- Kelp Gull
- Yellow-legged Gull
- Taimyr (Lesser Black-backed Gull)
- Black-tailed Gull
- Mew – Kamchatka and Common gulls