

## **Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*), Walnut Canyon Lakes, Coconino County**

This Lesser Black-backed Gull was photographed by David Stejskal on 15 October 2020.

If accepted, this would represent the 16th record for Arizona. There are eleven accepted records for the state with four others pending. This species is increasing with the first state record occurring in 2006, and nearly annual records in the past five years.

Lesser Black-backed Gull, an Old World species, has increased in abundance dramatically in the last two decades (or more) in N. America. Arizona recorded its first record in 2006 and it has been found nearly annually in the state since then (this would be the 15th state record in the last fifteen years since the initial 2006 record).

The i.d. features that point to this bird being a juv. Lesser Black-backed Gull and not a juv. California Gull are the all-black bill (California seems to always have some paleness at the base of the lower mandible, if not more); the pale bases to the outer three of four rectrices (California can show some paleness, but not as much as this bird), very dark tertials with a thin pale fringe (California typically shows much more patterned tertials), the very pale rump with sparse black spotting/broken barring contrasting strongly with both the mantle and the dark tail (California typically shown much less contrast and has denser spotting/broken barring), and mostly dark, unmarked greater coverts, being patterned only on the most proximal coverts (California shows more pale patterning farther out onto the greater coverts toward the base of the primaries).













*15 October 2020, photo by David Stejskal*

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