

Heermann's Gull

Larus heermanni

The strikingly marked Heermann's Gull is common along the West Coast of the United States. This gray-bodied, white-headed gull breeds in Mexico and then moves north along the Pacific Coast to southern British Columbia.

Keys to Identification

Adult Description

- Medium-sized gull.
- Body gray.
- Back darker.
- Head white.
- Bill red.

Immature Description

Juvenal Plumage:

Uniformly sooty brown all over. Buff edges to feather tips, giving scaly look. Bill two-toned, with pale flesh base and black tip. Eyes dark. Legs black.

First Winter (Basic I):

Uniformly sooty brown all over. Bill two-toned, with pale flesh base and black tip. Eyes dark. Legs black. Wing feathers and tail black.

Second Winter (Basic II):

Body sooty gray. Head and nape slate black. Eyes with thin, pale white crescents above and below. Secondaries and tertials dark with white tips. Tail black with narrow white band at tip.

Second Summer (Alternate II):

Imperfect whitish hood. Body sooty gray. Eyes with thin, pale white crescents above and below. Secondaries and tertials dark with white tips. Tail black with narrow white band at tip.

Cool Facts

- The Heermann's Gull, like many other gulls, frequently steals food from other birds. The Brown Pelican is a frequent victim. An adult Heermann's Gull is most likely to try to steal food from an adult pelican, and an immature gull is more likely to steal from an immature pelican.

Measurements

Both Sexes

- Length - 18.1 - 20.9 inches
- Wingspan - 40.9 - 45.3 inches
- Weight - 13.1 - 22.7 ounces

