



Adult Winter California Gull

Danny Tipton/ Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (ML310589881)



Second Summer California Gull (molting nonbreeders common on the beach in late spring/summer)- *photo by Tim Rodenkirk*



First Winter California Gull

Michael Brothers/ Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (ML 39652287)

California Gulls are medium-sized four-year gulls, obviously smaller than a Western when side by side. **Adult** has a **paler gray mantle**, **pale greenish-yellow legs**, yellow bill with red and black spot. The first- and second-year birds have **pale grayish-green legs**- the only gull with these colored legs. In the late spring and early summer the smaller “ratty” looking gulls common seen on beaches are heavily molting nonbreeding first and second summer birds. Later in the summer the juveniles show up and they are variable in color and are an even mottled brown, with pinkish legs, and a pink bill with a black tip. Californias can be present in the thousands on the outer coast- mainly from late summer through fall, when the numbers can be truly astounding. By most Decembers their numbers have usually dropped off and on CBCs we sometime only find a few. It is often confused with Ring-billed Gull. Ring-billed Gulls are common in many places in Oregon but not on the south coast. In addition to the ring on bill, the adult has bright yellow eyes and bright yellow legs. In Curry County, Ring-billed Gulls are **RARE** (you may never see one). In Coos they are very uncommon and usually only occur “locally” at certain places including Mingus Park, Pony Slough, and the upper bay off Millicoma Marsh- in very small numbers, like ones and twos.



Adult Winter Ring-billed Gull

Mason Maron/ Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (ML 41057529)



Adult Short-billed (Mew) Gull

Logan Brunner/ Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (ML624281025)



Adult Winter Short-billed Gull (left) & Adult Winter California Gull (right)

Lisa Walker/ Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (ML 625847091)



First Winter Short-billed Gull

Clayton Peoples/ Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (ML 625908141)

The Short-billed (Mew) Gull is a small three-year gull. Adults are smaller than all our regular gulls except Bonaparte's and have pale yellowish green legs- smaller even than California Gulls. The **bill on adult** is very distinctive because is the smallest bill on any of our regular gulls and it has **no spot** and thus is relatively "clean" (on the second winter bird it may have a little mark but no spot like on California). The winter adult usually also has some streaking on the head and neck. The immature is more difficult, it can look like some other species (especially Ring-billed). It has a tiny pink bill with a black tip. The wingtips are completely dark brown to black. These birds spend much time offshore but during stormy winter weather they head inland and can be common on beaches and even further inland in pastures where large numbers of them will sometimes congregate. Remember, in big gull flocks it is usually the smallest gull present and is dwarfed by the larger four-year gulls and even by California Gull (and Ring-billed).



First Winter Ring-billed Gull- bill longer/larger than Short-billed.

Brad Walker/ Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (ML25183861)