

BQ RAC Submission No 171: Pacific Gull *Larus pacificus*, Bongaree, Bribie Island SEQ, 12th June 2013, Submitted by Bernie & Linda McIvor.

cc: Robert Ashdown

Verdict: Accepted

This submission relates to two (2) Pacific Gulls, *Larus pacificus*, observed and photographed at Bongaree on Bribie Island, South-east Queensland on the 12 June 2013. The submission was supported by photographs that were supplied with the submission and an additional set of photographs taken by Robert Ashdown gull 10 days later.

Most committee members commented that the submission contains little descriptive information about the two gulls and that they were had to rely solely on the photographs to assess the records (this is not an ideal situation). In the photographs supplied, both the shape and the relative size of the bill (i.e. a massive, dark-tipped bill with prominent gonys and rounded nostrils) and the bird's general plumage characterisers could be determined, enabling these gulls to be identified as Pacific Gulls and separated from the other Australian gull species. The species closest in appearance in Australia is the Kelp Gull *L. dominicanus*, however this species has a much finer bill in comparison. Importantly, the observers stated that the two individuals were much larger than the Silver Gulls *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae* with which they were associating, even though this second species were not evident in any of the photographs supplied. However both Silver Gull and these Pacific Gulls were present in photographs provided by Robert Ashdown allowing size comparison between the species to be made in these second set of photographs. In other photographs of the Pacific Gull supplied by Robert Ashdown, the characteristic broad dark sub-terminal band on the tail could be seen when the gulls are preening and / flying assisting in clarifying the identification of these gulls.

This record on two Pacific Gull on Bribie Island add to the growing number of reports of this species in Queensland, most of which are immature.

David Stewart
Chairperson, Birds Queensland Rarities Appraisal Committee