Olrog’s Gull Larus atlanticus in Santa Catarina, Brazil: northernmost occurrence and first state record

Olrog’s Gull Larus atlanticus is a threatened species (Vulnerable) that occurs on the Atlantic coast of southern South America. It breeds in eastern Argentina and moves north during the austral winter, reaching Uruguay and extreme southern Brazil. To date there are only a handful of records of L. atlanticus in Brazil, all of them from coastal Rio Grande do Sul. The first record was of one captured alive in winter 1971 on an island in front of Rio Grande town. Since then, the species has been reported at eight localities in Rio Grande do Sul, five of them around Lagoa dos Patos. Formerly considered a vagrant to Brazil, Olrog’s Gull is currently treated as a regular visitor in April–August.

In 2001, JOB found two different Olrog’s Gulls at Saco da Fazenda, Itajaí, Santa Catarina (26°53’–26°55’S 48°38’–48°39’W), which were seen on 11 August, 8 September, 13 October and 17 November. The first bird to be found and photographed (August) had a dark head and body with clearly paler upperwing-coverts, which permitted its identification as a juvenile (Fig. 1). The bird photographed in November had a lot of white on the forehead, the wing was dark with many fewer pale feathers, and a whitish semicollar was evident on the hindneck; it was thus largely in first-summer plumage (Fig. 2).

Several Lari have been recorded for the first time in Santa Catarina recently, and this species is also new to the state, thereby extending the known range 380 km north from the previous northernmost locality in Rio Grande do Sul, Tramandaí.

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References

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