

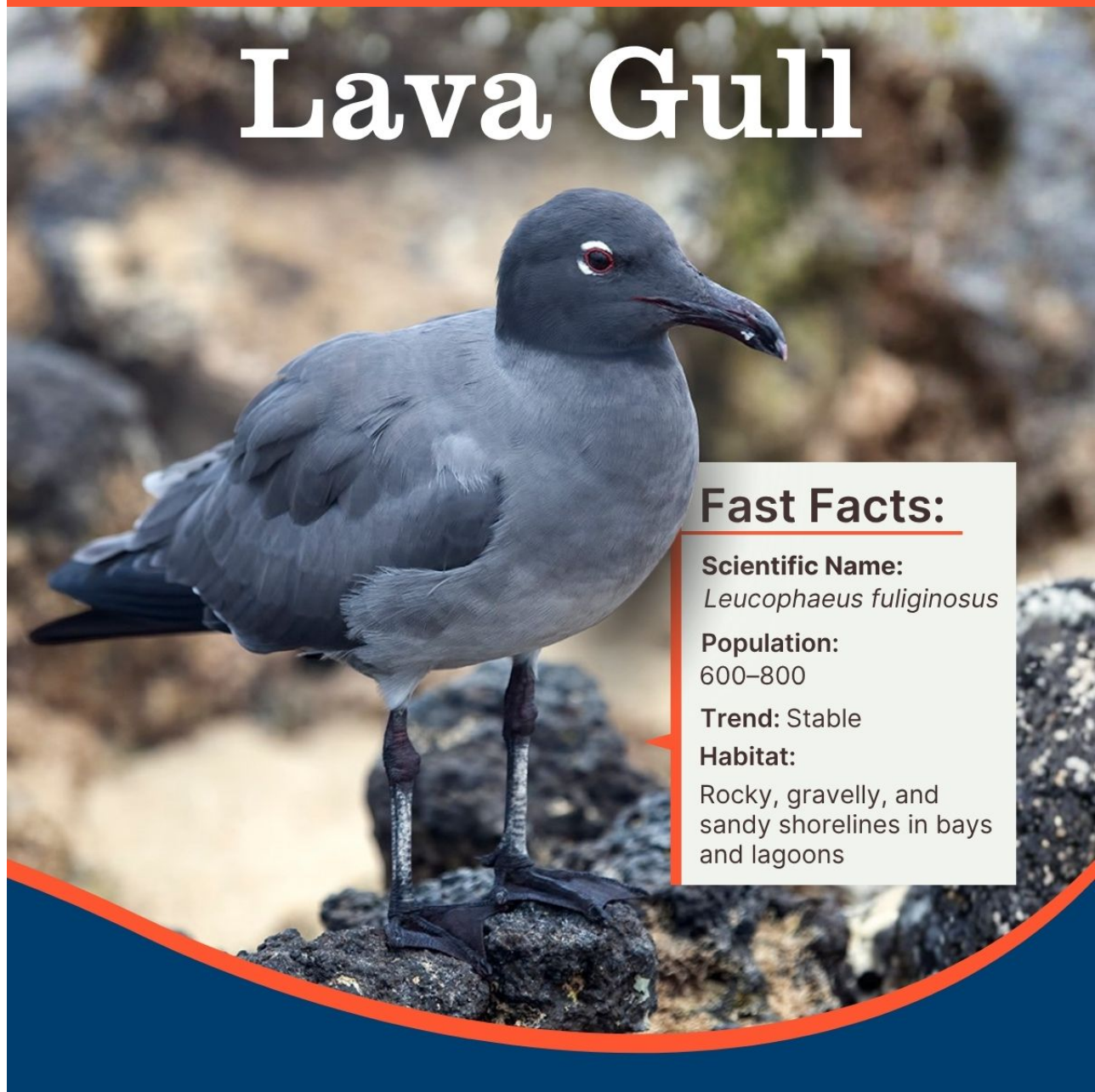
From: BirdOfTheWeek@abcbirds.org info@abcbirds.org
Subject: Lava Gull: Rarest of Its Kind
Date: October 10, 2025 at 9:37 am
To: Mary Steggles maryannsteggles@icloud.com



American Bird
Conservancy

Bird of the Week

Lava Gull



Fast Facts:

Scientific Name:

Leucophaeus fuliginosus

Population:

600–800

Trend: Stable

Habitat:

Rocky, gravelly, and
sandy shorelines in bays
and lagoons

Although gulls are widely regarded as super-abundant (sometimes

even characterized as pests), the handsome **Lava Gull** is a rare exception and is a sought-after sighting among avid birders.

The use of "lava" in this bird's common name refers to the dark basalt lava rocks of its favored coastline habitats. This dark-plumaged "dusky gull" (a former nickname) can only be found in the Galápagos Islands. The Lava Gull is closely related to the **Laughing Gull**, a species common along beaches throughout the Americas. The Lava Gull, like the Laughing Gull and other "hooded gulls," sports crisp plumage on its head in the breeding season. But the Lava Gull retains its "hood" year-round, while others molt their head plumage at different times of the year.

The Lava Gull is exceptional for another reason: It is the rarest gull in the world. **What are the reasons behind this gull's unusual scarcity?**

Learn More About the Lava Gull





Lava Gulls are primarily **threatened by fishing activities**, especially being caught on hooks as bycatch. They also suffer from human overfishing and overharvesting of other aquatic resources.

Invasive non-native species, particularly cats, rats, and dogs, plunder Lava Gull nests. Introduced diseases, such as Newcastle disease, brought into the Galápagos with domestic chickens, pose a particularly high risk to Lava Gull populations.

Lava Gulls, along with other seabirds, are threatened by **marine plastic pollution**. Birds can swallow plastic trash, with fatal results, or become trapped or strangled by plastic materials.

The greatest densities of Lava Gulls occur within the three main ports of the Galápagos Islands, which lie in unprotected urban areas. These ports are also vulnerable to the rising waters, changing ocean currents, and more extreme weather events happening due to **climate change**.

Read on and find out more about how ABC is helping to conserve this species »

Get in Focus:





Win Binoculars and Help Conserve Birds!

Tomorrow marks the year's second **World Migratory Bird Day**, this one in honor of the journey migratory birds make each year to their nonbreeding grounds. With billions of birds on the move, **it's the perfect time to support American Bird Conservancy's mission to conserve wild birds and their habitats**, and thanks to a generous ABC supporter, there's an extra-exciting reason to do it:

We're raffling off a pair of Zeiss 10x40 SFL binoculars — a \$1,700 value!

Raffle tickets are \$50 each. The winner will be drawn on **Friday, October 17**, along with five additional participants who will each receive a prize pack full of ABC goodies and gear! **Get your ticket now >>**

Plus, you'll help ABC reach our ambitious **From Wonder to Action 1:1 Match Campaign** goal to raise **\$2 million for bird**

the raffle campaign goal to raise \$2 million for bird conservation by December 31!

ENTER NOW

Raffle ticket purchases, including for multiple raffle tickets, are not tax deductible up to the retail cost of the binoculars, which is \$1,700. If you are not already an ABC Member, the purchase price of one \$50 raffle ticket will entitle you, in addition to the chance of winning the binoculars or an ABC prize pack, a one-year Membership to American Bird Conservancy. ABC Staff and Board Members are not eligible to win.

A photograph of a Northern Bobwhite bird standing on the ground covered with dry leaves and some snow. The bird has brown and white mottled feathers with a distinctive yellow face. In the background, there are green evergreen branches.

Northern Bobwhite | Danita Delimont/Shutterstock

Join a FREE Webinar!

Bringing Back Bobwhite

RSVP NOW



Explore more related bird species:



Web-footed One:
Galápagos Petrel



Galápagos Giant:
Waved Albatross



Coastal Clown:
Laughing Gull



Climate Change
Challenges:
**Galápagos
Penguin**

Banner image credits (from top to bottom): Lava Gull by Dave Rintoul, Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Lava Gull in flight by HunsabKK, Shutterstock; Baltimore Oriole by Jim Nelson, Shutterstock; Female Northern Bobwhite by Danita Delimont, Shutterstock; Tawny-bellied Hermit by Owen Deutsch, owendeutsch.com

Related birds image credits (from left to right): Galápagos Petrel by Kirk Zufelt; Waved Albatross by Don Mammoser, Shutterstock; Laughing Gull by Mark R. Johnson; Galápagos Penguin by wildnerdpix, Shutterstock



Mary, thank you for caring about birds. You can support ABC's mission to conserve wild birds and their habitats by **making a gift today.**

Manage your email preferences, update your contact information, and more »



American Bird Conservancy
P.O. Box 249
The Plains, VA 20198
United States

United States

If you believe you received this message in error or wish to no longer receive email from us, you may [unsubscribe](#).

