

Nearly all laughing gulls are in pairs and frequently copulating, ^{that} 5 are not mated are competing with pairs. The male gives a ^{more} rapid call and a higher pitched note than when calling normally. The female after ♂ dismounts call in a faster and higher mechanical call than the other gulls calling normally around.

At 1 hr and 10" before sundown checked birds 1/10 mi. NE of bridge that crosses the channel that leads NE to Reef where granite jetties carry the sands gulfwise. At this point on sandbar on NW side of channel were 121 royal terns, 8 sandwich terns, 21 laughing gulls, 18 least terns, 6 gull-billed terns and 4 Forster terns. Of this group the royal terns, sandwich terns, least terns were copulating continuously.

The royal terns were most active with 20% copulating. Cloacal contact was from 3 to 12 in one mount, ^{♂ calls continuously when on back of female.} Male carried on precourting with or without fish in bill young inexperienced ♂ always had fish in bill. The successful ♂ were generally the larger males, always larger than ♀ or young. One ♂ (young?) courted and attempted mounting 11 times without success. It followed one ♀ down stream for 1/10 mile making 8 consecutive stops on sands along the beach. One male ^(with fish in mouth) approach a pair that were in process of copulation with male on back of female. The intruder forced the fish into the other male several times with the breeding male rejecting and pecking at intruders head. Finally the intruder mounted the back of the ♂ that was on the back of the female for approx 5 secs at which time the ♀ gone way. The intruder left and pursued another female. Repeated mounting ^{by one ♂} of several ♀ was observed but usually none materialized in copulation. There were two areas of royal tern, one on wet sands and the breeding birds on higher & drier sands. The older males usually mount and remain quiet without wing movement, sometimes for 30 seconds, then start wing movement at about 45° and calling continuously. The female is general quiet but occasionally lifts head and bill upward. After copulation (3-12 contacts, cloacal) the female moves and the ♂ drop to the sand. Usually the wings of both ♂ + ♀ are held low for a few moments. The fish is sometimes taken from male but only forcefully acquired by female. Royal terns displace small terns.