

**DOCUMENTATION FORM  
UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTINGS IN IOWA**

**Species:** Thayer's Gull - adult

**Location:** Red Rock Dam, Marion Co., IA

**Habitat:** gravel bar below dam

**Date:** 1 January, 1995 **Time:** 10:15 to 10:30

**Name and Address:** Ann Johnson, 532 120th Avenue, Norwalk, IA 50211

**Other Observers:** None at the time

**Description of bird:** This gull was with a number of Herring and Ring-billed. It was definitely larger than the Ring-bills but was notably smaller than the Herrings. Structurally compared to the Herrings, the head was smaller and rounder and the bill was thinner with a less severe gonydeal angle. The bill was yellow with a red spot on the lower mandible. The mantle color was medium gray, darker than the other two species. The eye was dark and the legs and feet were bright pink. The primaries were gray and had nicely developed mirrors. The head, tail, and underparts were white. The bird was not seen in flight.

**Similar species and how eliminated:** Structure, darker mantle, dark eye, and gray primaries eliminate Herring Gull. Other gulls of intermediate size - Lesser Black-backed eliminated by relative gray of mantle, leg color, and primary color. California eliminated by leg color, primary color, and lack of black marking on bill. Iceland eliminated by dark mantle color

**Viewing conditions (light, distance, optics):** 100 yards with scope; good light

**Previous experience:** Adult bird seen in Churchill, Manitoba

**References consulted during observation:** None

**References consulted before completing documentation:** None

**Field notes made:** During observation

**Documentation completed:** Two months