

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Species: Lesser Black-backed Gull; **Number:** 1 adult.

Location: Above Lock and Dam 15, Davenport, Scott Co., IA

Date: 4 February 1995; **Time:** 12:30 to 1:00 p.m. (est)

Name and address: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246.

Others before/with/after: Seen by several over next week.

Habitat and circumstances: Mississippi River, river open.

Description of bird: I was scoping a large flock of gulls that were resting on the water when I noticed a dark-mantled bird. It was slightly smaller than most Herring Gulls. The mantle was charcoal gray, not black. The head and underparts were mostly white. The bill was about the same size as a Herring's, perhaps thinner. The tertial white area was thin (not like a Slaty-backed). I viewed the bird from the Rock Island Arsenal and later from the Davenport waterfront. It was closer to the Iowa side than the Illinois side. Something flushed all of the gulls and they moved up river. I could not relocate the bird. Dan Dorrence arrived and I told him about the bird. I did not see the legs, nor did I see the birds in flight. [Jim Fuller told me that he saw the yellow legs when he relocated the bird the next day.]

Voice: Not heard.

Similar species: The size and mantle color exclude Great Black-backed Gull. The mantle was too dark for a California Gull. Slaty-backed Gull would likely appear larger, have a darker mantle, and more white in tertials.

Any one have reservations?: Not that I am aware of.

Light: Sunny; side lighting; **Distance:** 100-200 yards (est); **Optics:** 20x scope.

Previous experience: Have seen several.

References before/after viewing: none.

Time of notes: 5 hours; **Final typing:** same [except for added comment from Fuller].