

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Lesser Black-backed Gull How many? 1 adultLocation? Below dam at Red Rock - (Marion County)Type of habitat? Gravel Bar below dam and churning waterWhen? date(s): Dec. 27, 1997 time: 10:20 am. to 11:10 am.
1:30 pm. to 2:15 pm. } approx.Who? your name and address: Mark Proescholdt, Box 65, Liscomb, Iowa 50148others with you: Dale and Helen Fye; Pat Miller of LaCrosse, Wisconsinothers before or after you: many others

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

This gull had a dark mantle and upper wings of charcoal gray which was very noticeable from the ^{light} gray of the Ring-Billed and Herring gulls. This bird was smaller than Herring gulls and appeared to be a little bigger than Ring-Billed Gulls. It had an all white tail of an adult seen in flight by the dam. It had a yellow eye. The bill was interesting because it had a bright yellow tip and was dark at the last $\frac{2}{3}$ of the base of the bill. On another time of looking at the bill, the bill was yellow on most of the lower mandible only on one side. It had heavy streaking on the head and neck. The legs appeared grayish in the morning and in the afternoon they looked light pinkish and grayish. The bird had real dark upper wings that were edged in white. The underwings were whitish with a large dark wedge at the primary tips of dark gray and blackish at the tips.

Similar species and how eliminated:

The other black mantled gulls (Great Black-backed, Slaty-backed, Western, and Yellow-footed) are all much larger than this gull.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain: :

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

Sunny in a.m. with sun behind me or at ~~my~~ my side, partly cloudy in p.m.

50-60 yards estimated, 8X30 binocs, 22X scope, Swarovski scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

I have seen one before at Red Rock.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

National Geographic Birds of N. America, Seabirds

How long before field notes made? before noon + this form completed? Dec. 30, 1997then before 3:00 p.m.
on Dec. 27, 1997