

93-32 exp. log

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTING

SPECIES: Lesser Black-backed Gull (Winter Adult)

LOCATION: East of the north end of the Greencastle Road at the Coralville Reservoir (Johnson County).

HABITAT: Shallow water and mudflats.

DATE & TIME: 19 December, 1993 (12:55-1:15 PM).

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240.

OTHERS: With me was John McLure, and also present were Chris Edwards and Jonnie Ellsworth. Before and after were M.Ob.

DESCRIPTION: This bird was with a large flock of Ring-billed and Herring Gulls on a mud flat. At one time a first-winter Glaucous Gull was also within 5 feet of it. The bird was lying down sleeping some of the time, but did stand up, walk around and stretch its wings. The size was definitely less than the Glaucous, but it was also less than the Herring Gull nearby and noticeably greater than any of the several Ring-billeds nearby. The back and wings were a dark gray color (not black), and the wing tips were darker. All underparts were white. The head was also white with streaking on the head and neck. The bill was yellow with a red spot toward the tip of the lower mandible. Eye color could not be determined. Legs were yellow and similar to (maybe a little duller than) the legs of the Ring-billeds. The bird was not seen in flight, and no vocalization was heard.

SIMILAR SPECIES: All other dark mantled gulls have a larger size. They also have pink legs, with the exception of Yellow-footed Gull, which has never been known to wander from Baja and Southern California. Yellow-footed gull is also considerably larger. No one disagreed with identification.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: I have seen six previous adult birds of this species, and one first winter bird.

VIEWING CONDITIONS & OPTICS: The sky was mostly sunny in early afternoon. Looking ESE at 125 yards. KOWA-TSN4 telescope (20-60X), used at 20-40X.

FIELD NOTES & REFERENCES: Field notes made as I watched bird, and no references were used. This form was typed the following day.