

Thayer's Gull 12-28-97

Kelly J. McKay

This pale 1st. winter gull was observed with a few hundred Herring and Ring-billed Gulls just south of Muscatine, Ia., Muscatine County standing on ice shelves. The bird was about the size of a herring gull (slightly smaller), but much paler.

The wing and back feather edges were lighter in color giving a scalloped appearance. The primaries were slightly darker than the mantle, but much paler than on young Herring Gulls - the primaries appeared washed out. The bird had a dark eye and a completely dark bill. The tarsi and feet were pinkish.

One time I was able to observe the pale tail band. Gerry White also observed this bird. I was using Leica Ultra 10x42 binoculars and a Kowa TSN 822 20x-60x spotting scope.

note by Kelly J. McKay