

DOCUMENTATION FORM FOR IOWA BIRD SIGHTINGS

Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Avenue, North Liberty, IA 52317

What Species? Thayer's Gull

How many? 1

Location? Mississippi River, Davenport, Scott Co.

Type of Habitat? River.

When? January 7, 1996, 1:45 - 3:00 p.m.

Who? Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Ave., North Liberty, IA 52317.

Others with you: Kurt Nelson, Mason City.

Others before or after you:

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, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

Slightly smaller than nearby Herring Gulls. Bill entirely black, slightly shorter and thinner than Herring Gulls. Eye dark. First winter plumage; head and body speckled with light brown, with very little contrast between head and back. Darker brown smudge around eye. Primaries medium brown with pale crescent tips. Secondaries lighter brown than primaries. Underside of primaries plain light gray. Legs pink.

The bird was seen swimming and sitting on the ice with many Herring Gulls.

Similar species; how eliminated: Herring Gull has black or dark brown primary tips and secondaries on upperside, dark gray primary tips on underside, whitish head, larger bill. Iceland Gull has white primary tips.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification? No.

Viewing conditions: Full sunlight, 50 yards away. Viewed with 8 x 40 binoculars and 15x - 45x telescope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Minimal experience with Thayer's Gull; very familiar with Herring and Ring-billed Gulls.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None.

How long before field notes made? Fifteen minutes.

How long before this form completed? Four hours.