

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What species? Black-legged Kittiwake How many? 1 ad.
South side of
Location? On Cedar River between Cedar Falls and Waterloo opposite George Wyth S.P.
Type of Habitat? Open river front
When? date(s): December 21, 1997 time: 1:10 pm. to 1:20 p.m.
Who? your name and address: Francis L. Moore, 336 Fairfield St., Waterloo, IA 50703-1628
Others with you: Al Brown, Opal Uher, Maurice + Ruby Hanson
Others before or after you: ~~Tom Stone before~~ Tom Stone before

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.

Tom Stone had just told us where to find a Black-legged Kittiwake on the Cedar River on CBC day. We drove to the end of North Hackett Rd. on the Cedar and started looking for it. Within about a minute a gull the size of a Ring-billed Gull was seen up river about 200 yards. As it slowly made its way down river toward us I noticed that it was an adult plumaged bird. At that point 3 Ring-billed Gulls joined it. The Kittiwake was ~~the~~ looked the same size as the 3 Ring-billed Gulls. It started flying around with them.

The birds body was white; white slightly forked tail, white belly and breast, white head except for a smudge halfway behind the eye and the back of the head larger than the shape of its eye and extended up onto the nape of the bird. The eye was black, the feet were black and the bill was completely yellow and looked quite small. The mantle was a medium gray color as were the upper surface of the wings. The outer primaries were black with no windows or mirror spots showing, above and below. The inner primaries were not as dark as the mantle and secondary areas.

Similar species; how eliminated: No other adult gull has this combination of fieldmarks, ^{all} yellow bill, black legs, black outer primaries, smudge on back of head onto the nape, black eyes, rest of body all white, white slightly forked tail.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? No
If yes, explain:

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

Cloudy, clear viewing of bird as it flew by above river. Approx. 50 yards at closest. 10x40 binoculars and 20x70 Telescope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen numerous immatures of this species in Iowa in the last 20 years, this is the first adult plumaged bird.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None

How long before field notes made? At time of this form completed? 7 hrs.
sighting

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).