

## DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD

SPECIES: Thayer's Gull (Adult)

LOCATION: Lock & Dam #15 of Mississippi River, Davenport (Scott County)

DATE & TIME: 14 November, 1996 (1:50-2:15 PM)

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

OTHERS: None

DESCRIPTION: I was watching gulls flying below the lock and dam in downtown Davenport, when an adult bird with very little black and white at the tips of the outer primaries flew by. I watched it for the next twenty minutes. The size was obviously larger than the Ring-billed Gulls, and about the same as the Herring Gulls. It was a winter adult bird with light gray upperwings and white underparts, head and tail. There was some gray-brown mottling on the back and sides of the neck and around onto the upper breast typical of most winter plumaged adult gulls. The upperwing was entirely light gray, similar color to that of the Ring-billed adults, except the tips of the primaries, which appeared to have black or white tips. There was also a white trailing edge. The underwing was silver and white except for the very tips of the outer primaries, which were dark. The bill was yellow with a red spot at the gonys of the mandible. The legs were a bright pink, more brilliant than the dull pink I expect to see on Herring Gulls. The tail was white and unbanded. The eye appeared dark.

SIMILAR SPECIES: The amount of black and white in the outer primary tips (both upper and underwing) is much less than would be expected in Ring-billed or Herring. Ring-billed is smaller with a dark ring on bill of adult. Although a few Herrings have somewhat bright pink legs, most are a dull pink. An Iceland adult should have a lighter mantle and upperwing, and less gray (not black) on the outer primary tips.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: I saw an adult Thayer's at Davenport in the winter of 1995-96.

VIEWING CONDITIONS & OPTICS: It was a partly cloudy day in the afternoon, and I was looking mostly south with SwiftAudubon (8.5 X 44) binoculars at a flying bird at distances ranging from as close as 20 yards to 100 yards.

REFERENCES & FIELD NOTES: Field notes made in car after viewing, and National Geographic guide was viewed at that time. This form was typed on 15 November.